Standing with the Earth

From Cosmopolitical Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities
[1]

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> The humans of the Earth, those in power in the 21st century, have often been classified as naturalists … they believed that there was continuity between all physiological processes from the most simple to the most complex…. You might say that in our historical moment, everybody knows that that is not true. For example, between HI (human intelligence) and AI (artificial intelligence), there is no continuity of physical processes, even if we may feel that there is continuity to techniques of reasoning or knowledge processing…. Conversely, Earthlings often perceived the various levels of self-experience to be discontinuous. (Bonefoy 2010: 454)

In the science-fiction trilogy *Polynesia*, an archaeologist from the future offers this analysis after exploring galactic space-time and finding a text about Descola's four ontologies (animism, analogism, naturalism and totemism) in one of its folds (Descola 2013). The conversation between him and a friend is punctuated by the commentary of their two Biocoms, or biological telephones, a kind of external hard drive attached to humans which takes the form of a miniature animal that

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion (2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

1

continuously changes its appearance, from lizard to small bird, for instance. When the archaeologist muses about a time when humans still lived on earth, "Certain groups of humans could be seen as totemistic … for them, if they had the same physiological mechanisms as their totems, which only seems rational, they may have thought they also shared a sense of self-awareness with the totem animal," his Biocom replies by asking, "Am I your totem?" (Bonnefoy 2010: 456). In this universe, in which polymorphous biomachines reflect on their own subjectivity, the humans who discover the ontologies of days gone by begin to test—in cults— their understanding of naturalism, totemism, analogism and animism's past definitions.

In the following essay, we are going to see that the exhaustion of the earth, of certain ontologies, and of our creative forces, are all interconnected, just as the ethico-aesthetic responses to this exhaustion are inseparable from cosmopolitics.

The Reinvention of Ontologies

Polynesia's description of cults seems to be partly inspired by current New Age movements which draw on various Amerindian and Celtic rituals, as well as other pre-Christian practices, which some of the practitioners then recreate as pantheistic or Neopagan in order to revalourize the Earth. The inventive reinterpretation of all these rituals is often political, as is evidenced by the yearly May Day Parade in Minneapolis which celebrates the old rural tradition of the Maypole dance as much as the working-class struggle (see Linebaugh 2016 and Sheehy 1999: 79-89).

In the 2016 parade which I observed, black families dressed entirely in purple and held placards paying tribute to Prince, a famous son of the city and singer of "Purple Rain." Other signs denounced racism and police violence in support of the Black Lives Matter movement. These black families walked side by side with Amerindian families from the North and South Americas wearing dresses adorned with feathers and sequins, and sporting placards denouncing the

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion (2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

2

extractive industries that threaten their land. Other families marched with their faces and clothes painted brown like the earth, green like the forest, blue like the sea, pink like crustaceans, or multi-coloured like the many animal and plant species endangered by various kinds of pollution. The parade's placards and banners, some of which were full of humour, also invited participants to make like an animal and jump into the procession of witches with pointed hats and brooms, slowly advancing on stilts, scooters, bikes, floats and foot. The crowd was full of joy. The parade culminated with an immense concert on the shore of a lake. The concert opened with a tribute to Mother Earth led by ten participants who represented the cultural—and spiritual—diversity of Minneapolis: a sacred fire was carried to a site consecrated to the four winds before being thrown into the lake. Then followed a dance of giant puppets among which was a Prince figure in a purple toga and others representing the Mississippi river and Mother Earth. The show, featuring classical, electronic and soul music, was interspersed with lectures conveying the repentance of civil society; admissions that it had heretofore failed to recognize the presence of Indigenous peoples, that it had abused people of colour, that it hadn't been welcoming enough towards refugees and had not taken care of the land, but that it would commit to changing things from that moment on. Thousands of people with their children gathered together to participate in these joyful festivities, bearing witness to a form of serene conviviality that went beyond mere entertainment to offer a beacon of hope.

In his dialogue with Pierre Charbonnier, Philippe Descola notes that "one can easily sign up for a course in shamanism online or participate in New Age rituals in St. Germain forest. But that doesn't mean that naturalism has perfectly integrated animism or analogism. Because in these cases … we're dealing with forms emptied of their content and only the most superficial elements of these cosmological *dispositifs* have been conserved. From this perspective, I'm not sure that this will have a profound impact on the ongoing reorganization of naturalism" (Descola 2014: 304). Of course, the practice of rituals is not enough to shift ontologies and modes of existence towards a transformed collective milieu. In recent years, however, more and more activist movements fighting to denounce

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion (2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

3

the destruction of living environments, especially due to extractive industries that precipitate climate change and pollute the air and water, are looking for alliances and sources of inspiration among peoples, such as Amerindians, that have a vision of the Earth different from one which denies Nature under the pretext that it has surrendered to human technologies. Looked at in this way, I believe that certain hybrid movements are currently reinventing at least one new form of ontology.

The accelerationist tendency of geoengineering, so well critiqued by Frédéric Neyrat (2014 and 2016), shows that Western history, by way of its colonizing development of both peoples and lands rich in resources, has come to assert that nature does not exist any longer for it has been "consumed" by the technological productions of culture. The Earth is drained, exhausted, but is perhaps not done surprising us through the descendants of those who, colonized and classified at different moments in history as animists, totemists, pantheists or pagans, today attempt to resist the technological cannibalization of nature by inviting us to see her, nature, as living in constant spiritual interaction with human beings. Even the proposition of *rewilding* or renaturalizing parks, which includes photo safaris of "protected" animals, only imagines an artificialized nature. Similarly, safaris of human populations enclosed and exploited on reserves are offered in all parts of the world and illustrate the arrogance behind a conception of nature as something to be mastered or conquered (Glowczewski 2015). This sort of arrogance was further confirmed during the conversation between Bruno Latour (presented as a sociologist rather than anthropologist) and architect Rem Koolhaas at the "Nuit des Idées au quai d'orsay" (Night of Ideas at Quai d'Orsay) on January 27, 2016. The two interlocutors both affirmed that the planet Earth no longer had an exteriority because it had been entirely urbanized or impacted by the conditions that allow for urbanization. By contrast, whether it is the multinaturalist perspectivism invoked by Viveiros de Castro with regard to Amerindians, the reticular cosmogeography of Australian Aboriginals with whom I have been working for more than thirty-seven years, or those of various shamanisms from all parts of the world, these points of "seeing," as Deligny used to say, and the relation between interior and exterior they articulate, do not fall within the

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion (2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

4

Western "perspective" limited to a reappropriation of the Earth's surface as a foundation for construction and drilling.

This form of materialism, which thinks the planet as a surface to be mined, a spacecraft to continuously reconfigure, and which no longer knows any exteriority, is fundamentally different not only from shamanic ontologies, whether they be of Northern or Southern Amerindian or of Australian Aboriginal provenance, but also from ontologies that have been reconfigured by both Indigenous peoples and activists, as well as all those who try to experience the fact that we can be inhabited or traversed by exteriorities. These kinds of ontological exteriorities arise from other types of materiality which assume that spirit is not just interior to a body but multiplied across visible or invisible spaces. To accept these kinds of transversalities is the condition of a convivial relation not only with the Earth but any milieu inhabited by humans, those "from here" and those who come from "elsewhere," be they migrants and asylum seekers or spirits. To be inhabited or traversed by exteriorities does not speak to some kind of transcendence. On the contrary, it means to recognize immanence within oneself. For Australian Aboriginals, this immanence of exteriority is lived in the way every birth of a human is related to the incarnation of a spirit of the Earth; throughout their entire lives, Aboriginal men and women actualize in themselves other spirits that are shared with different totems, or Dreamings, *jukurpa* as the Walpiri and their desert neighbours say. In other words, totemism does not here resolve itself in a continuity of resemblance between an individual and an animal—"I am like this snake which is at ease everywhere it goes, which can live both in the water and on firm ground … like the snake I avoid confrontations.…" (Jowandi Wayne Barker: personal communication). Instead of a unique and essentialized attribute, each person is an assemblage of several contextualized analogies, of relations that change throughout the course of life, with a singular constellation of totems or Dreamings. A given animal or plant, the rain, the wind or fire are lived as multiple virtualities in a process of becoming that is context dependent, in humans as well as nonhumans, and terrestrial and extraterrestrial sites considered as a partial materialization of a trace, an emanation or an organ of a given totem. That is why

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion (2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

5

I speak of *Totemic Becomings* and the *Cosmopolitics of the Dreaming* (Glowczewski 2016). Every man or woman is the guardian of a constellation of Dreamings for which he or she has the responsibility of regularly celebrating rituals which consist of mapping the sites and itineraries of each Dreaming through body paintings, songs and dances; a responsibility which stems from each person being recognized as a mutable manifestation of a given Dreaming which corresponds to them, either by his or her own design (as revealed in a dream), by inheritance from the family group, or through alliances created over the course of their life.

In light of this, the tragedy that constitutes the destruction of a sacred site does not only result from the fact that a totemic site is "an ontological incubator, i.e. the site where the identity of the members of a collective is formed in very concrete ways, the common root for a group of humans and nonhumans" (Descola 2014: 328). Each of these sites negotiates virtual relations with other sites (other humans and other beings). To destroy a site associated with any given totem amounts to endangering other sites and their guardians: all those who are connected to the same "line" of Dreaming, the Songline that links hundreds of sites spanning an ancestral totemic people, and all the sites belonging to other totemic lines which intersect the path of the endangered site. I have said elsewhere that access to the spacetime of Dreaming within those sites was "holographic" (in the sense proposed by Roy Wagner): through each sacred site one can virtually access the other sites (Glowczewski 1991). This holographic capacity indicates that everything is related as in an open mega-ecosystem or cosmosystem: everything that affects a site or one of its human or nonhuman becomings can have an impact on all that is living and the forces of the universe. The rituals celebrating the Dreamtime journeys contribute to the caretaking of sites belonging to these reticulum, but also other lifelines that it encounters. To dance for the Rain Dreaming, for instance, is also to take care of animals and plants that are in need of rain. To sing to a plant is to care for the animal that feeds on this plant and for all the unborn children whose totemic becomings will be the Dreaming of this plant, or the animal which feeds on it.

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical   6
Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion
(2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

It is important to note that this gigantic meshwork of Dreamlines is not fixed. Apart from the "accidents" or events that make up the features of a rugged landscape, which do need to be considered, the ways of moving through it change according to the seasons and the climate which continuously transform the landscape. Australian mythical stories even account for transformations of a geological scale: the Fire Dreaming, for instance, refers to the ancient volcanoes and uranium deposits; the Kangaroo Dreaming evokes the marsupial megafauna that have long gone extinct on the continent; while the Emu Dreaming of the Northern Coast at the Indian Ocean accounts for paw prints recognized by specialists as belonging to diverse species of dinosaurs. Today, astrophysicists study the so-called mythical narratives about meteors that fell from the sky to leave sacred craters. Similarly, all coastal groups of Aboriginals relate stories about the continent's flooding and the subsequent separation of approximately 4000 islands which presently surround continental Australia, a geological event that has been dated by a team of geologists as 7000 years old (Gough 2015, Glowczewski and Laurens 2015).

This kind of interconnection between sacred sites and vital forces can also be found in the Xapiri's spiderweb of shamanic spirit paths which, according to the wonderful account by Yanomami Davi Kopenawa, traverse the Amzonian forest like a network that is invisible to the naked eye but sparkles like a crystal for the shamans (Davi Kopenawa and Albert 2013; see also Viveiros de Castro 2007). There are as many Xapiri paths as there are birds, plants or other forms of biodiversity. So for Indigenous people and numerous other alarmed voices, the streets and great dams which redirect rivers risk the destruction of the multiple paths that link all living forms. Stripped of its biodiversity, the forest has already been partially transformed into savannahs or deserts where human and nonhuman inhabitants of these lands suffer, increasingly due to the pollution of local waters with mercury (used in gold mining) and other contaminants such as oil. Scientists, for their part, have been able to demonstrate that the disappearance of oxygen due to the local destruction of the forest severely threatens the rest of our environments across the *planet* (Werf, G. R. van der, et al. 2009).

In relation to the survival of human and nonhuman populations, the affirmation of the interconnectivity of sites traversed by ancestral traces and tracings that are both material and spiritual, visible and invisible, can be found as a critical issue in all the ontologies that Descola distinguishes (totemic, animist, analogist, or even naturalist). I for one believe that common practices make it possible to bring certain ontological traits, traits of singularity as Guattari would say, closer together in a way that doesn't deny their diversity. For instance, some groups that Descola distinguishes according to his ontological categories (Australians as totemists and Amazonians as animists) are less different when one looks at their shamanic practices. In the same way, certain Indigenous conceptions of intersubjectivity that associate the self, others (human or not) and the environment in extended relations of aliveness create a new form of ontological "commons": such a process of subjectification can offer a response to the current challenges of global climate change and social injustice, a posture that is radically opposed to the one held by those responsible for these threats or those who speculate on accelerationism and transhumanism (Srnicek and Williams 2013). [2]

In the 1960s and 70s, a new appreciation of Indigenous peoples crystallized in a valourization of nature shared by the so-called hippie movement, groups advocating vegetarian and later GMO-free diets, and philosophies of organic architecture. In part, this new appreciation grew out of various Indigenous struggles to affirm a mode of existence in close spiritual relation with the environment, a struggle that passed through claims for land rights and land use. Thus in 1983 the Arrernte women of the Alice Springs region held that the construction of a dam that would destroy Welatye Therre or "Two Breasts," their sacred site related to mother's milk, imperilled the fertility and nursing quality of not only the site's guardian women, but also of women from other linguistic groups who guard the Dreamline that connects this site to other places from Southern Australia all the way to the Tiwi Islands in the North. Furthermore, these guardians of Arrernte land and law insisted that the breastfeeding and fertility of

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical   8
Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion
(2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

all the women living on the Australian continent would be affected by the destruction of the site. They then received massive support from other women, Aboriginal and otherwise, and well as Australian and international feminist movements.

At the time, these protests were successful in protecting the site and I evoked this example in a 1984 article entitled "Les tribus du rêve cybernétique" ("The Tribes of the Cybernetic Dream"). New digital technologies that were then invented in California tried to combine a set of values respectful of the Earth with the notion of generalized interconnection. That is what seduced Félix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze in their writings which were later taken up by many practitioners and thinkers of cyberspace.

SF and Slow Anthropology

> We can ask ourselves if the Aboriginal notion of the Dreaming, which links society and nature by energetic self-referential feedback loops, does not offer a philosophy adapted to our epoch in search of theories concerning matter and energy. The fascination that Aboriginal people provoke (among some people) is probably part of this intuition. We are close to a science fiction universe when we think that these peoples have survived 40,000 years of the Earth's geographical transformations and that they speak today of sacred sites where we find petroleum and uranium. Aboriginal people say that we must not destroy these energies, because they are part of a vast regulatory cycle that gives meaning to the life and death of humans. Thus it is with as much ease as detachment (which troubles our evolutionary values) that they adopt all of the material goods that our technological cornucopia proposes: houses, cars, and media can be used, they say, but the most important is to keep contact with the energies of the Earth and the Dreaming.... In American military bases isolated in the desert, engineers sometimes have peculiar visions. For example, the vision of an Aboriginal man would appear out of nowhere in the computer room, then evaporate, but not before saying in a cavernous voice, that they must cease what they are doing there.... (Glowczewski 1984: 162)

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion (2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

9

When I wrote this in 1984, Félix Guattari suggested that I read Vico, Whitehead and Simondon, and to use the notion of "singularity" to translate the Aboriginal understanding of energy as "image-forces" that actualize and re-virtualize themselves through ritual in order to distinguish this from the non-renewable energies produced by humans. [3] The rumours of Dreaming voices haunting the US bases of the Central Australian desert inspired Wim Wenders to direct his 1991 science fiction film set at the end of the 21st Century entitled *Until the End of the World*. With a nuclear satellite having lost control, the film tells of an eccentric scientist who is obsessed with controlling time through the technological visualization of dreams, and works in a secret laboratory in the Australian desert where he experiments on the brains of his wife, his son's partner Claire and even on himself, up until the point of total exhaustion: the death of his wife, the delirious fixations of Claire and the final destruction of the research base.

The generalized interconnectivity and transversality of human and nonhuman, animal and machinic subjectivities that Deleuze and Guattari theorized in their writings is today—it seems to me—sometimes misunderstood by those who use them to support transhumanism and those who cite them all the while reproaching Deleuze and Guattari for legitimizing a "geo-engineering" that aims to modify the climate rather than change our modes of existence in relation to the milieu. Of course, we do not know what they would say with regards to the evolution of the world since the 1990s. But I do not think that Deleuze and Guattari would support absurd geo-engineering projects since these projects fundamentally fall outside what they valued and defended most: the responsible and ethical influence of the micropolitical on the macropolitical, creative of dissensus. [4] Evidence of this, amongst others, is the particular interest that Félix Guattari expressed in the Walpiri people's relationship to dreams when he read my thesis in 1983, which nourished his cartography of four semiotic types in mutual tension with one another.

> - semiotics of subjectification (including architecture, town planning, public amenities, etc.) operate like existential territories (real and virtual).

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical   10
Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion
(2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

- techno-scientific semiologies, (plans, diagrams, programs, studies, research) operate like machinic phylums (actual and possible).

- economic semiotics (monetary, financial, and accountancy mechanisms) operate like Flows (actual and real).

- juridical semiotics (property deeds, various legislative measures and regulations) operate like incorporeal universes of value (possible and virtual). (Guattari 2000: 48)

Later, Deleuze cited my book *Du rêve à la loi chez les Aborigènes* (From Dream to Law Among Aboriginal people) with regards to the cartographic relation between the imaginary and the real: "This is why the imaginary and the real must be, rather, like two juxtaposable or superimposable parts of a single trajectory, two faces that ceaselessly interchange with one another. Thus the Australian Aboriginals link nomadic itineraries to dream voyages, which together compose 'an interstitching of routes,' in an immense cut-out [découpe] of space and time that must be read like a map" (Deleuze 1997: 63). From the perspective of transversal assemblages of singularities, the Aboriginal approach to reticular thinking allowed me to explore their multiple relations to space and time as a cosmopolitics, in the sense that Isabelle Stengers defines the term (Stengers 2005). Contrary to the cosmopolitanism promoted by Bernard Henry Lévy and Guy Scarpetta in 1981 who went to war against all claims for identity or territory [5], for Stengers, the notion of the cosmopolitical is inspired as much by her critique of scientific *disenchantment*, as by the emergence of new alliances, such as those forged between the ecofeminists and the movement of Wiccan witches, who have revived an interest in the *reenchantment* of a political world equally anchored in the body, mind and flesh, as well as in mineral, vegetal and atmospheric matter (Stengers 2011).

Wenders' film, where the scientist does not understand the creative breadth of Aboriginal dream-work, as well as the novel *Polynesia,* where the cults fall back onto ontological categories that become caricatural, stay within a certain science

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion (2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

11

fiction tradition where science and its technological fantasies are the main motor of dramatic intrigue. Quentin Meillassoux opposes this literary tradition, in the name of a certain speculative realism, to what he calls a science fiction "outside science," as the only path to imagine other worlds (Meillassoux 2015). In its own way, this notion of science fiction "outside science" refuses the accelerationist logic of the sciences and echoes what Isabelle Stengers calls "slow science." She elaborates the idea through the polysemic notion of "SF," which for Donna Haraway can be equally read as "science fiction," "scientific fact," or "string figures" (in reference to the figures made during string games) (Haraway 2013 et 2015). Stengers explains that the correlations at work in "slow" scientific reasoning correspond to the necessary correlations for passing from one string figure to another, a passage which always implies a relation, as the input of one person's hands changes the string figure held by the other. The process implied in the transformations of these figures is an image (but not a metaphor) for expressing what Stengers calls speculative gestures that can "slowly and softly" change reality (Stengers 2015). I accept her invitation to think how the "slow" social sciences could create the conditions to promote string figures as well as science fiction. "The plea of Whitehead regarding the task of universities thus also aimed at a 'slowing down' of science, which is the necessary condition for thinking with abstractions and not obeying to abstractions.… I would then characterize slow science as the demanding operation which would reclaim the art of dealing with, and learning from, what scientists too often consider messy, that is, what escapes general, so called objective, categories" (Stengers 2011 : 6-7 et 10). A science fiction "outside science" joins in its own way the "slowing down" of science: at the level of anthropology it offers one way to break out of causal and exclusive reasoning that traps us in the sciences, exhausting our power to imagine other worlds, and other ontologies for living on this Earth.

An example of a science fiction "outside science" that invites one to think another liveable world here and now, and that changes the relationship to time and "objective" categories of exclusion (between races, species, and spiritual phenomena), seems at work in the recent television series *Cleverman* created by

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion (2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

12

Australian Aboriginal filmmaker Ryan Griffen, whose title references the Australian medicine men (see Burke 2016 and Griffen 2016). The series stars a young Aboriginal man as its hero who inherits a superpower allowing him—in spite of his initial rejection of it—to intervene in an Australia where strange beings from another dimension, called "the hairy people," are sequestered behind a security wall or locked in prison. These characters hark back to ancestral monsters from the Dreaming that are present in the mythology of several Aboriginal groups in Australia. But the series chooses to incarnate them in the role of a "prehuman" minority that has been given the right to live amongst humans. In the series, the acceptance of the Hairy men and women (monsters who scared Aboriginals long before they appeared in the science-fiction series) stands in for an acceptance of Australia's diverse peoples: Aboriginals, whites, and the waves of other migrants from the Pacific, Asia or Africa, as much as the refugees and asylum seekers. The Hairy people are "monsters" and their traits resemble the Neanderthals, the ancestors of man. [6] The fantastical cinema of superheros has garnered extreme popularity the world over, particularly amongst youth who "recognize themselves" in it, not just as if they share in a popular culture but more as if they themselves participate in the refounding of a veritable mythology. It is not a question of creating a monolithic culture, but of valourizing possibilities for human and nonhuman diversity where different spaces and times intermix. We cannot underestimate the subjectifying force of these stories since they circulate across the world. The truth of their impact cannot be evaluated by separating their form (films, video games, costumes and accessories) from their content, and pretending to define this content as the basis for the ontology of a society or a religion. The popularity of superheros and other human-nonhuman hybrids (demons, zombies, vampires, werewolves, humanoid robots or clones, aliens, etc.) must be understood beyond their symbolic efficacy or the autheniticty of their foundation. Something asignifying about them, in the Guattarian sense, puts intensities and collective assemblages of enunciation into play that act and traverse subjectivities, creating a complicity, a shared world that could elicit a new mode of collective existence. An activist mockumentary shot in black and white featured an Aboriginal man in a superman costume named Superboong—a reappropriated

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical   13
Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion
(2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

insult—who intervenes against racism and injustice (see "The Rise of the Aboriginal Superhero"). The invention of worlds proposed by superheros participates in the production of new myths whose wide visibility gives rise to a new "cultural patrimony"; an SF interactive imaginary with a real role for youth, that also produces new forms of subjectification reinforced by the way the audience comments on all of this and actualises it in their lives using social media. For instance, JK Rowling, the author of Harry Potter is currently being criticized on Twitter for supporting Donald Trump's rhetoric on free speech, and has also come under recent scrutiny from Native Americans for the way she uses their mythology in her latest book and film.

In this context, an Aboriginal auteur's use of the TV series format to develop a Cleverman superhero, who has a white mother and refuses to accept his father's ancestry of Aboriginal medicine men until he finally decides to accept the superpowers and become an avenger of justice in a contemporary urban landscape, reflects an ontological strategy in the ecosophic sense of Félix Guattari, in that it is at once aesthetically, ethically and politically critical (a strategy that knots the mental, social and environmental ecologies, in a milieu that is equally technical and natural). If university criticism with respect to superhero films can exhaust or exhaust itself in academic rhetoric, just like many films of this genre that incessantly repeat stereotypes, this Aboriginal s director's reappropriation of them invites us, rather, to imagine and produce new ontological alliances.

Ecosophy and Indigenous Alliances

> They open the door for us so that we can enter
> but they close their heart and mind and plug their ears.
> What can we do?
> Plenty of things, even a hunger strike.
> But there is one thing we must never do:
> We must never give up our rights, never!!
> ("Bonne nouvelle de l'ONU")

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion (2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

14

These are the concluding words of a text written in 2004 during a hunger strike at the United Nations by seven Indigenous delegates—including Alexis Tiouka, a Kali'na activist from French Guiana. [7] The hunger strike is yet another ecosophic type of ontological strategy that accompanies the struggles of Indigenous people. In 2007, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was signed by all countries except four—Australia, the United States, New Zealand and Canada—who all later decided to support the declaration after changes in government. In 2008, Australia and Canada held large national ceremonies to ask their Aboriginal populations to pardon the abuses they have suffered, such as the forced separation of children from their families. The very same year in Ecuador, then in 2009 in Bolivia, the principle of *Buen vivir* (living well) was adopted into the constitutions of these two countries recognizing "the rights of nature" associated with Pachamama, the name of an Andean goddess revered by the Amerindians of the Amazon and other members of these countries, including Christians. Figures such as Pachamama, "by their political-symbolic dimension, their hybrid position between nature and culture, and their utility in spreading the revolutionary message, can be sufficiently large to hold various cosmologies within them.… A prime example is how movements which are sometimes opposed to one another, such as urban feminism and the trade unionism of rural women, or Indigenous animists and analogists, by converging around Pachamama and the rights of women, have been able to ally their positions on a number of points" (Landivar and Ramillien 2015: 36).

In 2010, at Cochabamba in Bolivia, 35,000 delegates from 45 countries signed the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth that has for its preamble "that we are all part of Mother Earth, an indivisible, living community of interrelated and interdependent beings with a common destiny" ("Universal Declaration"). [8] Mobilization around this declaration also proposes amendments to the Rome Statute of the Criminal Court that would recognize the crime of "ecocide." [9] The internationalizing of the concept of Pachamama as the "maternal spirit of the Earth," like Indigenous reappropriation of superheroes in TV series, shows the impact of new mythologies and rituals as active not only during a performance at

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion (2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

15

the UN, but as tools that traverse the daily lives of all of the Earth's actors. This impact of the large scale recosmopoliticization of ancient and local cosmological concepts stimulates the virtuality of new subjectivities and ontologies that function differently depending on the circumstances. In addition to its spiritual sense, for some, the Pachamama ceremony for Mother Earth or Mother Nature is a political protocol comparable to the Maori haka danced by New Zealand's sports teams (or the mao'hi from French Polynesia, executed by various overseas bodies during the Bastille Day parade in 2011) or the national anthems that reference the God of Christianity even when one part of the country's population is not Christian. But in contrast to national, and even nationalist rituals, the Pachamana ceremony is a transnational proposition that extends the recognition of the living above and beyond the human.

At the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues held in New York during May 2016, along with the rest of the audience, I took part in the Pachamama ceremony that opened a session on the condition of Indigenous women that was followed by a number of declarations and recommendations to states, including a letter from Ecuadorian women to China, denouncing its destruction of their lands and livelihood by oil, gas and large hydraulic dam projects. Here again, the local approach of a community from Ecuador, that addresses itself to the Chinese state and a transnational company, echoes the problems faced by the Aboriginals of Australia, particularly those from the northwest of Kimberly where the Chinese have bought land and become the largest landowner in Australia in order to undertake a massive shale gas fracking project. As has now been revealed, not only have the two companies corrupted some Australian political representatives with astronomical sums of money, but the continent that partly depends on this region's water is under the threat of a complete drought (Cole 2016).

The Kimberly groups in Australia are engaged in a soil "cleansing" program, a term used to describe the traditional practice of controlled small bush fires during the wet season that prevents good plants from being overrun by weeds that are susceptible during the dry season to wildfires which destroy everything on their

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical   16
Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion
(2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

path for hundreds of kilometres. [10] Scientists needed time to understand the wisdom of this ancient practice that today is encouraged by all of the natural parks that hire Aboriginal men and women for their knowledge. The strategy has proven itself to be an impressive way to cut carbon emissions which are exceedingly high in Australia due to—amongst other reasons—fires that ravage the continent each year. It is promoted as a model that can be exported and it qualifies for what is called REDD+ (Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation), a form of monetary compensation for carbon emission reducers, in this case Aboriginals represented by the KLC (Kimberly Land Council), but also their sponsor, Shell, which thus appears to be cleared of the emissions caused by its extractive activities. [11]

During the COP 21 (2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference), diverse official and unofficial meetings discussed the ambiguity of REDD+ and the trap of "commodifying" nature. Certain communities don't have any choice but to participate in the REDD+ programs that at least allows them to stay in the forest in a process of permanently negotiating with the resource extraction companies. But Indigenous peoples are increasingly looking to replace these accords with collective land-based programs that inherently oppose extractivist industries, from fossil fuels to renewable energies, as well as large scale dams, falsely presented by some as a "clean" solution even though they destroy the ecosystems by diverting the river networks that maintain the forest's biodiversity. As the Alliance of Mother Nature's Guardians underline in their text, if the Indigenous peoples are the guardians of the forest, rivers and roots, their ethnocide also constitutes an act of "ecocide" (Alliance des Gardiens de Mère Nature 2015: 163). [12] Through these sorts of transplanetary meetings, new awarenesses are formed and new alliances forged. That is not to say that all differences are flattened in an ecumenical mould. In fact, the different Indigenous speakers at the UN insist on their respective singularities but allow themselves to compare their respective practices to build bridges and find common solutions to issues that affect the entire planet, and call us to change our economy and lifestyles.

Glowczewski, Barbara. "Standing with the Earth: From Cosmopolitical   17
Exhaustion to Indigenous Solidarities." *Inflexions* 10, "Modes of Exhaustion
(2017). 1-24. www.inflexions.org

The political importance of these alternative modes of existence to our present ways is confirmed by the fact that Indigenous leaders are often threatened. What may appear to some to be anecdotal or exotic forms of resistance, when put into practice on the ground, become sufficiently threatening to the giants—mining companies and other powers—who try to get rid of these little Davids, first with money, destruction, and child abduction, as recently seen in Mexico, or with assassinations, like those of the Guarani in Brazil or of ecological activists, like Berta Cáceres, leader of the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) (see "Environmental and Indigenous Rights Leader Murdered in Honduras"). In conclusion, it seems vital that an ecosophic ontology reinvents itself from day to day, to support Indigenous peoples in their ontological becomings that they continuously redefine in synch with new transnational and transdisciplinary alliances that resist and confront other international economic and financial alliances that destroy the planet and all that lives—and stands—on and with it.

Notes

[1] Translated from a talk given at Earth Day 2.0: How Not to Eat the Earth, 9 June 2016, EHESS: https://atoposophie.wordpress.com/2016/05/12/terre-2-0-journee-detude/

[2] See also Matteo Pasquinelli's "The Labour of Abstraction. Seven Transitional Theses on Marxism and Accelerationism" and Frédéric Neyrat's comment on it in *Multitudes* 56.

[3] The text "Espaces de rêve. Les Warlpiri, séminaires 1983 et 1985," originally published in *Chimères* 1, is now translated into English in *Totemic Becomings* (Glowczewski 2015: 43-72).

[4] An approach very different from Bateson's consensual conflict resolution is found in Félix Guattari's late lecture "Producing a culture of dissensus: heterogenesis and an aesthetic paradigm" (Guattari 1991).

[5] See Lévy's "Le fascisme à la française" and Scarpetta's "Le cosmopolitisme, encore, plus que jamais" in *Art Presse* 45 (1981) and my response in *Art Presse* 47 (1981), page 2.

[6] This is far from what the Breakthrough institute, reinforced by Latour's "Love Your Monsters," calls for: manmade technological products.

[7] The hunger strike signatories include: Adelard Blackman, Buffalo River Dene Nation, Canada; Andrea Carmen, Yaqui Nation, Arizona, Etats-Unis; Alexis Tiouka, Kaliña, Guyane française; Charmaine White Face, Ogala Tetuwan, Sioux Nation Territory, Amérique du Nord; Danny Billie, Traditional Independent Seminole Nation of Florida, Etats-Unis; Saul Vicente, Zapoteca, Mexique. See Tiouka 2015 and 2016.

[8] Article 12: "Human beings have the responsibility of respecting, protecting, preserving, and if necessary, restoring the integrity of the cycles and equilibriums that are essential to the Earth, and of putting precautionary and restrictive measures in place in order to avoid the human activities that lead to the extinction of species, the destruction of ecosystems or the alteration of ecological cycles." See also: http://www.naturerights.com.

[9] In 2014 the "Charter of Brussels" officially asked for the establishment of an International Criminal Court of the Environment and of Health: "The Charter introduces Environmental crime as a crime against Humanity and calls for the recognition of this principle by the United Nations"
(http://www.naturerights.com/site/campagne_page-10.html).

[10] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqqU-RNkfWk and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSn2gv3tP60.

[11] "Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (*REDD*) is an effort to create a financial value for the carbon stored in forests, offering incentives for developing countries to reduce emissions from forested lands and invest in low-carbon paths to sustainable development" (http://www.un-redd.org/how-we-work).

[12] See also article 6 in the same publication and Glowczewski 2016.

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