“Green” Subjectivity and its Limits : Eco-logical “contre-conduites” in the case of the Arctic

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Abstract

In light of the complexity and the magnitude of environmental degradations in the last decades, recent environmental scholarship has come to the conclusion that structural or systemic transformations need, at some point, to be carried out by individual actions. In other words, individuals *must* play their parts. What is now understood as the “green citizenship” literature offers one way to conceptualize individual rights and responsibilities in lessening the burden of economic (neo)liberalism and techno-industrialism. By re-defining the environment as common good to human survival, it hopes that an appeal to reason and Justice will be sufficient to install a green deliberative democracy. But this moralistic “green citizenship” obscures the multiplicity of ethical “environmental subjectivities” already at work in society, and stays silent on their aporetic relation to neo-liberalism. Following a close re-reading of Michel Foucault and Peter Sloterdijk, this paper proposes to continue the recent reflexions another vision of individual responsibilities, not as “green citizenship” but as a “green subjectivity” intrinsically linked to a “governmentalized” environmental activism. What interests us particularly is the process of “subjectivation” common to this governmental activism, focusing on what Foucault called “practice of self”. After having detailed the often obscured conceptual difference between “pastoralism” and “asceticism”, and having telegraphed our discussion on the case of Greenpeace and the Arctic, we hope to propose a broader understanding of Green activism and the ethical questions it poses.

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> “Je pense qu’il y a à soupçonner quelque chose qui serait une impossibilité à constituer aujourd’hui une éthique du soi, alors que c’est peut-être une tâche urgente, fondamentale, politiquement indispensable, que de constituer une éthique du soi, s’il est vrai après tout qu’il n’y a pas d’autre point, premier et ultime, de résistance au pouvoir politique que dans le rapport de soi à soi **[...]** [S]i on entend par gouvernementalité un champ stratégique de relations de pouvoir dans ce qu’elles ont de mobile, de transformable, de réversible, je crois que la notion de gouvernementalité ne peut pas ne pas passer, théoriquement et pratiquement, par l’élément d’un sujet qui serait défini par le rapport de soi à soi” (Foucault, HS 241)

> Cet espace a une structure existentielle dans la mesure où les dimensions de la verticalité et de l'horizontalité ont ici un sens éthique, et pas une signification géométrique. L'horizon symbolise ainsi l'expérience et la “discursivité” [...] la verticale symbolisant le niveau hiérarchique et la faculté de décider, pour autant que *la hauteur existentielle implique la dimension de la décision*. On aperçoit ainsi un concept de l'éthique dans lequel ce ne sont pas les valeurs, les normes et les impératifs qui tiennent la place centrale, mais les orientations élémentaires dans le “champ” de l'existence (Sloterdijk, TD 235 emphasis added)

In light of the magnitude of the environmental issues, ecologists have come to explore a broad spectrum of solutions[1]. Although a large extent of environmental problems are due to structures inherited from late-capitalism or more generally industrialism, the assumption made is that solutions cannot remain limited to structural adjustments: individuals *must* play their part. From here the challenge raised is to define the “correct” attitude towards Mother Nature. The answer proposed by many is to promote an environmental citizenship that would make the wished behaviours civic duties: a rightly dosed compromise between legal obligations and a quest for justice (Dobson, 2003; Bell, 2005; Dobson & Bell, 2005; Cannavò, 2010).

Although the avenue seems at first sight promising, we believe environmental citizenship lies on three moving foundations. First, it remains stuck in the endless debate about defining Justice. What could be sufficiently just to legitimise the imposition of legal obligations to free citizens? Second, it presents environmental citizenship as if it is something to be in a hopefully not too far future, overlooking the existing environmental subjectivities that are promoted today by environmental groups and theorists, governments, etc. Third, environmental citizenship is presented as the emancipatory ideal that would lead the modern world out of its environmental crisis, as if the emancipated citizen could solve all environmental problems by virtue of being**.**

[1] We indeed postulate that there *is* a general consensus on our “difficult” relation to our (De-Natural) environment.

Following Michel Foucault and Peter Sloterdijk, two philosophers critical of (and necessary for) emancipatory projects, we want to look at present constructions of environmental subjectivities and their limits. This being said, we don't argue that environmental citizenship could provide no benefits to safeguarding (or even "improving") the present state of the environment. We instead look at contemporary green "subjectivities" : who, by whom, how ? Our theoretical argument is that these environmental subjectivities, understood as "practices of self", are more than a beneficial awareness of and commitment to the environmental cause. Keeping on with the rich governmentality literature, we see these subjectivities as the result of multi-faceted power relations (Darier, 1999a; Rutherford, 2007; Hobson, 2013). However, we also postulate that they must be understood in ethical terms. This doesn't mean that one must weigh on a scale of values the ethical validity of environmental subjectivities, but that these subjectivities are constructed along ethical commitments to virtues, through hierarchical relations between masters and disciples. It is in that sense that we read the term "ethical". Accordingly we see environmental subjectivities as ethical codes of behaviours (and thoughts) that must be respected and practised in order for one to be virtuous. However, following Foucault and the concept of governmentality, these *ethics* don't lie outside of politics: they need to be understood in relation to other discourses of truth and (anthropo-)techniques of power in order to be able to see the political construction of these ethical green subjects.

With this theoretical framework in mind we proceed to analyse the environmental subjectivity promoted by a major environmental activist group, namely Greenpeace. We find that Greenpeace's scientificism, anthropocentric control of nature and heroic responsibilisation reproduce behaviours and promote virtues that are associated with the production of the environmental problems as the group defines them. From this empirical analysis we hope to illustrate the downsides (and upsides) of this subjectivity, and to glimpse at the limits of environmental subjectivities and citizenship in general. This being said, before we look at Greenpeace in depth, we first examine environmental citizenship, explore its limits and argue our preference for the concept of subjectivity. Then we turn to a theoretical discussion of Foucault's understanding of subjectification that we wish to complement with inputs from Peter Sloterdijk's philosophy. That will set the ground for looking at two contemporary modes of subjectivation deeply intertwined in Greenpeace[2]: *pastoralism* and *asceticism*. Both have similarities as well as differences : the former imperial, masculinist promoting a colonial submission of Lady DeNature[3] via intense *preaches*, the latter marked by *acrobatic* feats of masters and virtuoso. This haute voltige is what *individually* invites the subject to jump over the impossible. Here might be some live possibilities for *ethopoiêsis*.

[2] Both forming inside "Greenpeace green subculture", formed by pastors and lambs, masters and disciples, inside the great feminised eco-system in need of salvation (in our language : Anthropo-technical sphere of onto-auto-production of humankind… arbitrarily fixed)

[3] See for instance Hogue & Castagner 2013 on "homo viridis" (paper presented at CPSA 2013)

Environmental citizenship is a nest of vipers: circumventing the endless debate over Justice

Critical of common approaches that promote fiscal incentives to influence individuals to adopt environment-friendly behaviours, proponents of environmental citizenship seek an alternative that could assure lasting changes. In their eyes market-oriented approaches targeting rational individuals are at best beneficial on the short term only and at worst inefficient and counter-productive (Dobson, 2007: 277-9). Consequently, if money ends up as an insufficient tool, one must look at a stronger bond to link individuals to the environment that would make sustainable behaviours natural, not merely calculative. A bond that would see, as says Beckman, "[p]eople ... do good because they want to be virtuous" (Beckman in Bell, 2003: 3), not because they want to maximise their benefits. Therefore to create this bond theorists of environmental citizenship propose to bring the environment into the core of the social contract: environment must be defined as a common good and environment-friendly behaviours as just. A large part of the debate then is to find a way to ground the environmental citizenship in contemporary theory of citizenship.

Different authors put forward their own vision of how modern citizenship can be greened. Dobson, for one, pleads for a post-cosmopolitan environmental citizenship[4]. Although he identifies four characteristics the main pillar of his proposal is the idea that citizens' "environmental responsibilities follow from environmental rights as a matter of natural justice" (Dobson, 2007: 280). This results from the material observations, first, of Earth's limited capacity to support the human race and, second, that the rich Northerners consume much more than the vast majority of people and much more than their fair part. Then if one recognizes to all an equal right to an equal share of the planet's resources, consequently it can only be justice that those who today take too much should reduce their consumption, read have environmental responsibilities, to assure that others can exercise their environmental rights. Environmental citizenship thus demands that individuals' environmental behaviours be in line with justice for the well-being of others (Dobson, 2007: 280-2; for an exhaustive presentation of his proposal, see Dobson, 2003).

In a different fashion, but with similar intent Bell (Bell, 2005), and Neuteleers after him (Neuteleers, 2010), tries to define liberal environmental citizenship, one that can reconcile ecological duties with the free, liberal subject. Bell begins with the observation of the inadequacy of the common conception of the environment: more than a property, the environment is our "means of survival" (Bell, 2005: 183). For the author, "the conception of the environment as provider of basic needs" should become the elementary definition of the environment because "[a]ny reasonable doctrine will recognise the fact that human survival depends on the physical environment … Similarly, any reasonable doctrine will regard survival as a good" (Bell, 2005: 184). Two conclusions follow. Firstly, justice recognises a right to a clean environment and duty to keep the environment clean in order for it to continue to provide for our basic needs. Secondly, it means that the many possible visions for the environment are to be arbitrated

[4] Following the author's latter work, we do not make any difference between environmental and ecological citizenship.

through through democratic deliberations, provided that there visions accept the founding assumption that the environment is men's provider (Bell, 2005: 186-189). Environmental citizenship thus passes by a double redefinition of both justice and the environment so that the latter can be interpreted as a non-negotiable foundational character of society to which individuals will have to conform.

The weight of justice

The two authors, that we believe illustrative of the environmental citizenship literature, establish their respective citizenship in redefining the social contract in a way to insert in its core the environment. In equating protection of the environment with justice they leave no other choice than to give it a prime importance collectively, but also for individuals. At the same time that a clean environment becomes a right, it also becomes a legal duty as well as a primary value to defend and cherish. However, these two conceptions of environmental citizenship are not free of inner problems. They both face the problem of defining justice which cannot be but a political act, as we doubt there can ever be a true, natural Justice. Their biases are brought to light and what looks like a theoretical and ethical argument is revealed to be a political manoeuvre to restrict democracy to who is already a friend of the environment. In a way these propositions of environmental citizenship become in reality attempts to construct environmental subjectivities.

By trying to legitimize their environmental citizenships through an appeal to justice, Dobson and Bell are confronted with the exclusionary nature of the concept of justice. Although the material links between justice and environment proposed by the authors seem rather natural and thus hard to challenge, at second thought they are not so obvious. Both definitions of the environment are conceived in instrumental and anthropocentric terms, as providers for human needs. However these conceptions are not exempt of controversy as nature has no purpose. Nature exists outside its relation to humans and recognizing its significance through its relation to humanity is a form of collective appropriate not so distant from property discourses. But more importantly grounding environmental citizenship on the moral superiority of justice is slippery. There is no Justice that can be elevated above men. Justice is a production of men, the result of a struggle of power. Foucault is no less explicit in his critique of Justice as he is of Freedom and Truth: "it seems to me that the idea of justice in itself is an idea which in effect has been invented and put to work in different types of societies as an instrument of a certain political and economic power or as a weapon against that power. But it seems to me that, in any case, the notion of justice itself functions within a society of classes as a claim made by the oppressed class and as justification for it" (Chomsky, Foucault and Elders, 1971). In our case the oppressed class is the environmentalists fighting the capitalist hegemony.

Furthermore, if the proposed definition of justice qua environment protection naturalizes the political decision of elevating the environment to a higher moment[5], it still leaves unexplained a

[5] Dobson acknowledges the political nature of his definition of justice and the paradox created by the alleged neutrality of the liberal state and the collective defence of environmental values, but his theoretical attempt to justify his project falls short of being convincing. Although we do not share all of his criticism, we must agree with Hayward (Hayward, 2006: 436-441a) that Dobson's logical link between politics and justice is tautological. In Dobson's project, the political defines justice, but at the same time it is because an equal share of Earth's capacity to sustain humanity is naturally just that the environment qualifies for the political realm, i.e. moves from individual morality to collective political justice. Here, natural justice creates the political which, in return, define justice.

number of questions: what does a clean environment mean? Is there a certain level of pollution that could be considered acceptable? How does one know the environment and who determines the problems? How does one protect the environment? According to the authors, these questions are to be answered through democratic deliberations. This reliance on procedural justice is again not so simple. It is not clear why deliberative democracy would inevitably promote environment-friendly politics. To say so is to implicitly assume that those who participate to the deliberations share environmental values a priori, for in an open-ended world deliberations may also lead to the unexpected and undesired. It is precisely environment citizenship that is supposed to make all participants care for the environment and express this importance in deliberation, not the other way around. If the logical reasoning appears inverted, it is we believe because the authors shortlist those they want to see in these deliberations, thus implicitly excluding the others who do not share their environmental views. (for a convincing argument on the exclusionary nature of deliberative democracy, see Mouffe, 2000: 17-59). In the end justice, far from being a practical analytical tool, seems rather like a nest of vipers.

The political nature of the diverse proposals of environmental citizenship cannot, and should not, be understated. Environmental citizenship, the political manoeuvre consisting of the redefinition of the social contract and justice in order to equate justice with environment, may be a wise strategy in the ongoing environmental struggle, but is of poor use in a theoretical analysis. In our understanding environmental citizenship needs to be read as an attempt to expand environmental consciousness and obligations to individuals, thus as specific form of environmental subjectivity. This explains why it remains silent on other, existing or promoted forms of environmental subjectivities (see Brand, 2007; Hobson-Haggerty, 2007; Paterson & Stripple, 2010; Rumpala, 2011; Hobson, 2013). In light of our criticism of environmental citizenship, we prefer to pursue the analysis using the concept of environmental subjectivity in order to find, following Hobson, "what sorts of environmental citizens are being 'worked up', through what means, and to what ends?" (Hobson, 2013: 57). We want to turn our attention to environmental subjectivity that are constructed outside the statist and legal frame. For this reason we turn to Foucault's analysis of governmentality.

Governmentality: thinking subjectivity beyond the law

Thinking through the lens of governmentality allows seeing subjectivity beyond the sovereign and the law and consequently opens spaces of emergence of subjectivity that could be less expected like the environmental activist culture. In his 1977-1978 courses to the Collège de France, Foucault develops his concept of governmentality in reaction to sovereignty. For Foucault, sovereignty is a form of relation of government, predominant in European Middle age, based on the rule of law and obedience to the king. From the 15th to the 18th century a number of questionings of how to rule and organize the political led to transformations in the form of government. Rather than ruling by laws this new government, what Foucault call governmentality, works through the establishment of guidings to direct the natural mechanisms of populations (Foucault, 2004: 91-113).

Foucault defines governmentality as: "the ensemble constituted by the institutions, procedures,

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Dobson does not propose any way out of this circular reflection (see debate between Hayward, 2006a; 2006b; and Dobson, 2006).

analyses and reflections, calculuses and tactics that allow to exercise this specific, although very complex, form of power which has for target population, for major form of knowledge political economy, for essential technical instrument dispositifs of security[6]" (Foucault, 2004: 112-3). It looks at "how governmental power works" and as such focuses on governmental practices and rationality. However the term governmental must not be equated to state, but to what is relative to the action of governing. The interest then is not so much on the state, although it remains a significant actor, but on the distribution of governmental functions between different authorities from the state to private organizations to individuals in accordance to the specific rationality of government that inform the practices of power and the management of the population. Here population is the object of power, but it is also in a way a subject of power. Reduced to its simplest form the population as individuals play an active role in its own management for "each art of government entail[s] certain conceptions of the nature and obligations of those who [are] its subjects, those who [are] to be governed" (Rose, O'Malley & Valverde, 2006: 86; see also Burchell et al, 1991; Oels, 2005: 186-189).

For both Foucault and Sloterdijk, understanding "subjectivity" means making an ontology of the present, an ontology of our-selves (GSA 22)[7]. Having an ethical concern[8] for the possible conditions of the creation of self by self (Darier 1997:7). Accordingly, this means looking at three intertwined elements[9] : 1) knowledge and its truth-telling (dire-vrai ; véridiction) ; 2) power relations (not as emanating from a sovereign core, such as legal understanding of power, but in the techniques used to *govern* mankind) ; 3) the various modes of constitution of subjects (as practices of self to self) (CV 10). In other words, to understand the idea of "subjectivity" (green or not), one must look at the very same time to the modalities of truth-telling, modalities/techniques of power, and modalities of the constitutions of the subjects, where the individuals themselves become "moral subjects" of their conducts (CV 62). As said before, this helps us understand power relations in a much broader stance than the one used in the liberal-environmental citizenship frame. Indeed, a look specifically at the attempt of creation of environmental subjects by various actors in society reveals that the efficiency of this power "is based on the ways in which the very agent is constituted as an already subjugated subject, that keeps reproducing the subjection: 'This is a subject whose freedom is a condition of subjection. ... in order to act freely, the subject must first be shaped, guided and moulded into one capable of responsibly exercising that freedom through systems of domination'" (Dean, 2003, p. 165). One can sees here how humans are "conducted" even in its most "rightly enforced" freedoms. Therefore, what might be called environmental subjectivity is the one subjected, in his/her personal conducts, by "internalised" "counter-conducts".

Many authors have thus answered the theoretical call of Foucault to look beyond the "rights vs. duties" debate. The dominant view is dominant view among Foucauldian analysis is that nowadays, environmental subjectivities, as counter-conducted subjectivities, are part of a "green

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[6] Our translation ; "Security" and "freedom" have two complementary roles in governmental bio/eco-political knowledge of reality.

[7] See *You Must Change your Life* and the *Spharen* trilogy from Peter Sloterdijk in this subject.

[8] These three terms : ethic (more as a mode of being), moral (more as relations of power) or Justice (more as an idea of the good), must be conceptually grouped.

[9] See for other reading of them : Rutherford 2007 ; Oels 2005 ; Darier 1999; Hobson 2013 ; Paterson and Stripple 2010.

governmentality" framework of governing the people, a frame not so distant from the dominant conduct of conduct in contemporary Western societies. If the environmental subjectivation reproduce many of the dominant (neo)liberal assumptions (eco-systemism and anthropocentric control of Nature, notably ; ie. the two first poles of the three interrelated elements)[10], what interests us more here is the "practice of self" that is asked for environmental subjectivities. Some authors have already followed the task of describing what this might mean, and they came to a general but devastating conclusion : environmental subjectivities are constituted via the individual effortful responsibilisation of the subject him/herself. Again, this is for them a profound (neo)liberal bias of what is asked for in order to reach climate good : auto-responsibilisation.

Green subjectivity: pastoral and ascetic

In the pages to come, we propose to review these conclusions by looking at the combined thoughts of both Michel Foucault and Peter Sloterdijk. To do this, we will explore the process of "subjectivation" understood by these two authors. We will artificially separate the "pastoral" from the "ascetic" - the ever return of Classical motives (Nietzsche) - dimensions in this process. This will allow us to move the debate from the idea that "the individual's auto-responsibilisation is problematic" towards a focus on the relations of the individual with its "pastor" and the exemplary "acrobat". At the end, we might help to reveal the aporetic tension between pastoral and ascetic modalities of environmental subjectivation represented here by Greenpeace "subculture", the power dynamics underwritten, and finally, the questions that this heroic-preaching mode of government of Self and Other poses.

Subjectivity 1: Differentiating Pastoralism and Asceticism

Both pastoralism and asceticism pass through the constitution of the subject - or subjectivation - that itself is inherently a "practice of self" *via* the practice of the Truth. Both pastoralism and asceticism closely connect to the "government of people".

But as Foucault's genealogical instinct have revealed, the current (green) "governmental" or "bio/eco-political" is strongly built on the former "pastoral" mode of "conduct" of mankind[11]. Both have a lot in common : an idea of salvation (of the anatomo-individuals, the bio-community, the "eco-system equilibrium", etc.), an idea of laws (to submit is to contract your own will in order to achieve total obedience to the law of God/Nature), and an idea of truth (based on zealous individual and global surveillance, guilt, etc.) (STP 170, 180-181). In both, "pastors" are taking care of "sheeps".

Pastoral mode of conduct requires the subject to "know him/herself" (***gnôthi seauton***). Indeed, the pastor's constant "surveillance" of his/her sheep's consciousness invites the later to work, via guilt-inducing practices, on what was later called "false consciousness" : lies, mistakes,

[10] See Hogue & Castagner 2013 (paper presented at CPSA Annual Convention) for an analysis of the first two aspects

[11] The greek metaphor of the "pilot" of a ship to be guided is well known to relate to this pastoral thinking in "green governmentality" literature : *kybernan*. Both pastoralism and aceticism use those terms related to the navigation of self in life worldly/waterly events. But asceticism links it to govern yourself back to homeport, yourself.

ideology[12]. This Western fetishisation of the "know yourself" over the "care of yourself" was well articulated by Plato : via a *conversion* to the divine/rational/natural in him/herself, the individual might obtain the key of its always-divinely-induced-salvation. This is for Foucault a form of "trans-subjectivation"[13]. The converted obeying the law of God/Reason is divine/rational him/herself.

What is understated in this literature is the difference between this pastoral mode of conduct (or, stated differently, this mode of subjectivation) and the ascetic mode of conduct. For Foucault, historically, "pastoralism" was itself preceded (and later challenged) by an more ancient way of subjection : *asceticism*. Instead of a "subjection" understood as "being conducted" as sheeps by a good (and almost-omni-potent) pastor, the idea of asceticism (*askêsis*) implied a "subjection" to a long and vertical process of exercise and self-mastery. Its austerity, rigidity and rule-obedience was later adapted to Christian "morale" in its constitution of an ethical responsible subject. But originally, *askêsis* had important differences versus the "sheep"-style pastorale. For Sloterdijk, it might even be the always-dominant mode today[14].

In asceticism, the individual still needs at some point to "know him/herself", the prime order rests on the "care of him/herself" (*epimeleia heautou*). What the *care of self* implied was that truth is never given, but *accessed* following (and through) a deep transformation of the self (HS 17). At the heart of this transformation lies an end goal: the completeness of the self, in the relation of self to self. This is achieved through a *conversion to self*[15]. In its later-pastoral understanding, conversion resulted in self-renunciation, and therefore meant *obedience* and the mortification of the will faces the transcendental divine; in *askêsis*, it means a *liberation* inside the immanent field of existence itself: to be freed from what we are not able to master, and to master what we can (HS 202).

Subjectivity 2: Double-double-subjectivity

Both in pastoralism and asceticism, the reader would find a intrinsic and intimate relation to a knowledgeable other. In pastoralism, the pastor/priest/*Aufklärer* has a the place of manager of the Human Parc. The sheep is "subjectified" and "masterized" by this Other. Pastoralism therefore implies the power relationship stated by governmentalist literature, even if it is in a sense a *media* of the Greater good, as a *pilot*, or as a commander of the green soldiers. The fundamental process of salvation *via* truth has been linked in the pastoral mode to the "guilty confession", nowadays part of priesthood, medicine, psychiatry, environmentalism, etc. From that very moment, for Foucault, the "confession" or to tell the truth on yourself in order to get to the Truth, was forever linked to processes of "we-ness" and/or social (or religious) excommunication. It is in this sense that we might perceive the pastoralist governmental insights on Green movements and the general Other "shaming" bad habits or "false consciousness", as an "abnormal" to be erased from the totality[16].

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[12] Sloterdijk on the emancipatory ideals and polemical attaques of Reason : an other pastoralism (*Critique de la Raison cynique*)

[13] See HS 206

[14] Anywhere "discipline" is present (TD)

[15] Not "conversion" as self-renonciation and mortification of the will, in the pastoral shape

[16] See for instance Paterson and Stripple's discussion on the *peer pressure* of MySpace (2010)

In the ascetic case, the whole process of *askêsis* (exercise) requires more a "trainer" or a "master": he/she operates *via knowledge* the reform of the individual. So the Self is in an intimate and *affective* relation to the Other. This master, in a sense, is the virtuous who *already* mastered him/herself and therefore speak true. Courageously, out of normal ways for Foucault (HS 388, GSA 64). Sloterdijk identifies this master nowadays to any *acrobats*[17]. Here we have more a relation to an *example*: inciting the to-be-subject to follow a path to altitude, or towards the impossible, but not necessarily to follow the path "prescribed". The master offers an *equipment* (*paraskeuê*) to the individual so he can be continuously transforming in order to be prepared for life events (HS 306). This might help us to find the deepest sense of *activism* : to be *activated* by a virtuous *activator*. Here, the salvation relationship gets "indirect". One's salvation impacts the eventual-salvation of another "to-be-subjected". We are far from the "conquista" style of pastorale to install Heaven on Earth, but more a con-tageous (*tangere*, or, to be touched) immunitary "mobilisation" to walk afar of vertical improvement, the ever-lasting *ethopoiêsis*. Here we might see more what some have said about the environmentalist movement, and Greenpeace specifically : giving some tricks, letting go. But the quick-fixes some have understood as problems, we might also see them as a never ending routine of transformation. In Sloterdijk's understanding, the subjectivation induced by the virtuous acrobat leads one to know its habits and get over them.

> Tu dois changer ta vie! Tel est l'impératif […]. Il définit la vie comme un dénivelé entre ses formes inférieures. Je vis certes déjà, mais quelque chose me dit, avec une autorité irréfutable : tu ne vis pas encore comme il faut. L'autorité numineuse de la forme jouit du privilège de m'interpeller en disant "tu dois". C'est l'autorité d'une autre vie dans cette vie [...] Elle est mon "pas-encore" le plus intime. Dans mon moment le plus conscient, je suis touché par l'objection absolue contre mon *status quo* : ma transformation, voilà ce qui est urgent. (TD 44)

Transition

In the previous pages, we covered some conceptual elements of the process of subjectivation. Firstly, remembering how important to *not* consider only citizenship/law, but more broadly the knowledge/discourse around it, techniques of power which conditions the whole thing, and practices of self that suppose the rest. Second, understanding the "green governmentality" implies to be aware of the differentiation and continuities between the "pastoral" mode of subjection, and its own ancestor, the "ascetic" one. Third, where we have asceticism, we have *salvation*, but not only via an injunction to "know yourself", also and mostly via a *morale* of "care for your self". Fourthly, pastoralism and asceticism have different relation to the Other as-a-guide, while fifthly, a difference that also spreads on the question of the salvation and ethical dimension. Finally, they also differentiate on the relation to the truth said and its technically-ensued practice of self.

[17] The fundamental of subjectivity and its intimate other, before arriving in "the world", is beyond the space allowed for its treatment in this paper. See *Sphären*. This relation Self-Other is reproduced in the columns of support of the exo-uterus, such as the Nation-state or the *skolê*.

Greenpeace and the "Arctic": subjectifying the green self

An overview of Greenpeace's pastoralist and ascetic activism on the issue of the Arctic is something that, at first sight, might be seen as problematic. Firstly, the situation of ice-cap melting, endangered species, polar resources exploitations, security rationales and business opportunities, may look as something far from individual daily "self-responsibilisation". Contrary to "recycling", "carbon conduct", "sustainability" or any effortful ecologism, the Arctic thematic may appear "too big to influence". But in our view, this "common good" problematization does not change our main postulates so far : Greenpeace still operates through both pastoral and ascetic motives. In the following pages, we propose to "track down" these motives via its website and its blogposts, as an expression of the "preach" and as a media to diffuse their "acrobatic" skills and the testimonies from the successful.

Pastoral Greenpeace: commanding an army of green subjects

By understanding nature as a coherent whole with a specific emphasis on the systemic interrelations, Greenpeace gives a primary importance to the idea that common survival depends on individual one. As example of modern metaphysical beliefs, Greenpeace's vision of humans is much dichotomised: good individuals are separated from evil ones by their actions toward the Arctic. Both Nature and mens are understood as part of the ecosystem which deeply needs equilibrium. Therefore, who better than Greenpeace acting as a prophet who can read the "signs" of the upcoming environmental and human catastrophe to assure the world's survival?

The catastrophic reading of reality is linked to the injunction to "know yourself" and "convert to salvation". The pastoral appeal to obedience addresses the "potential recruits" of Greenpeace: those that are, until their conversion to the environmental truth, pests for nature. Their destructive industries destabilize the Arctic and planetary ecosystems. They exploit the Arctic in a way that goes beyond its capacity to give. Industrial men progress by total destruction of its environment: it is only "[a]fter having fished out many of the stocks in temperate waters [that] the industrial fishing fleets … [turn to the] Poles for new stocks to exploit" (Page et al., 2009: 6). The true problem with modern men is their greed that lead them to disruptive actions. Their insatiable desire for money pushes them to act irrationally: oil companies are ready to risk a catastrophe in the Arctic for "only three years' worth of oil to the world" (Greenpeace International, 2012) just as "opening the area up to industrial fishing would be an act of madness" (Page et al., 2009: 6). Greedy men choose profit over the "health" of "the Arctic" and "the planet": over the *survival* of life.

But all hope has not disappeared. Rational scientific knowledge and a particular sensibility to Arctic's messages provide a positive model of subjectivity. This model that Greenpeace embodies acquires its quality by living in "symbiosis" with nature. In other words just as modern men proved wrong by their devastating actions on the Arctic, "green" men demonstrate their "goodness" by behaving in ways that do not threaten the Arctic and by working to assure its, as well as men's, sustainability. Again, this behavior must conform to anthropocentric and technical-disciplinary rightness and obedience to scientific rationale (linked, at some point, to economic/financial reading of resources management and demography, but that's an other story). From now on, the individual must be "subjected" to Greenpeace's "green" self.

However, Greenpeace's pastoralism is stucked in the classic imperialist, colonial and polemic *pathos*, which appears anytime there must be a "battling for Truth", before and after conversion and obedience. The preacher at war for the Survival of his/her flock, demands obedience from *them all*, but also obedience from *an always* feminized "Mother Nature" (or Lady DeNature, as you wish) in need of protection. This position Greenpeace and green mankind in a war against modern "false consciousness" for the protection of the Arctic. It is a war of David against Goliath on the Arctic "frontline" where the solidary forces of eco-subjects face "the most powerful countries and companies in the world" in order to "creat[e] the conditions for a radical change in how [they] power [their] lives, accelerating the clean energy revolution that will fuel the future for [their] children" (Greenpeace International, 2012). The enemy may be strong, as Greenpeace's preach says,*"[b]ut together we have something stronger than any country's military or any company's budget. Our shared concern for the planet we leave our children transcends all the borders that divide us and makes us - together - the most powerful force today"* (Greenpeace International, 2012; emphasis in the original). This bellicose rhetoric is necessary as "the Arctic is calling" (Greenpeace International, 2012), in a strangely nationalistic fashion, for help and protection. With this heroic oration Greenpeace calls to action an army of believers in defense of their common motherland: the Arctic and the whole Earth.

If the overt objective is collective survival, nevertheless it is only made possible if individuals gather together behind their shepherds and live by the right gospel. Individual submission to Greenpeace's truth takes the immediate form of a global petition that asks "world leaders to create a global sanctuary in the uninhabited area around the North Pole and a ban on oil drilling and industrial fishing in Arctic waters" (Greenpeace International, 2012). Live from the petition webpage, all can see the other lambs joining the flock as an invitation to follow their lead. At the time of writing more than 5 millions, by appending their signature, agreed to convert and become a soldier of Greenpeace's army against drillers and fishermen. However the pastoralism of Greenpeace's preacher is deeply enmeshed with the asceticism of the activists on the field of immanence, as the next section observes.

Greenpeace pastoralism blends with asceticism: the heroic shepherds

The activist in Greenpeace which, at the bottom or the surface of the ocean, *fights* the battle, is telling. Here it is easy to see Greenpeace's activism as a masculinist "showoff". The adventurous self is apparent in the mediatic non-violent direct actions undertaken by Greenpeace activists.

It is through the "Arctic 30" extravaganza that we can see at its best the "masculine" heroic that turned out to be a test of value - for both male and female *activists*. In September 28th, 2013 Greenpeace activists and 2 "independent journalists", on board of the "mothership" Arctic Sunrise, tried to board the first Arctic drilling platform (operated by Gazprom) in international waters, near the Russian sea border. As widely stated in the Mediascape, the expedition crew was "unlawfully" held for "hooliganism" on September 19th, 2013 and freed (and later to be amnestied) by Vladimir Putin presidential decree on December 18th, 2013. Immediately after their arrest, Greenpeace organized a worldwide support "campaign" (again, that militaristic word) to call for the liberation of those who were "Held for defending the climate", and later

"amnestied for a fault they did not commit"[18]. For Greenpeace, acrobacy is not a crime. #FreeTheArctic30 wants us to believe the complete opposite.

For the campaign coordinator Christy Ferguson: "By going to the Arctic and protesting drilling in the very place where it is happening, Paul, Alexandre, and all the crew of the Arctic Sunrise exposed a dangerous secret to the whole world–one that will not be soon forgotten." (27 décembre 2013). Indeed, it this "secret", this "madness" was quite revealed and "kept alive"[19] in the Mediascape and : 860 protests in 46 countries and 150 cities ; 2.6 million people writing to Russian embassies ; many pop figures, politicians, and Nobel laureates denouncing the act of the Russian government[20].

Looking at few testimonies given by the activist after being arrested by "armed Russian commandos"[21], "stormed by masked men wielding knives and guns."[22], "[q]uite a terrifying moment I must admit, surreal, out of an action movie."[23], might be an interesting way to catch the very *exercise* that "[t]hese [...] real people who have put everything on the line to protect the Arctic"[24] were all being summoned to pass. At some point, we have a glimpse at the inside story of their *askêsis* post-combat. For one:

> I trembled as I walked through the grounds of Murmansk prison on the 26th September. Inmates watched me and the arrival of the other notorious 29 new prisoners through their cell windows. It was pitch black outside, but the prison was alive. Alive with the sound of barking dogs, prison alarms and prisoners shouting through their barred windows. A guard handed me a plastic mug, a tin steel bowl, a spoon, a folded up mattress and a sheet. That's all I had, that and a toothbrush and a book in my pocket, when the guards closed the steel green door on me. The sound of the slamming door echoed throughout the corridor. I was alone and afraid. As days in prison passed I became stronger. As weeks passed I became hopeful. In prison they take away your freedom, your dignity and

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[18] http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/fr/Blog/les-30-de-larctique-de-retour-chez-eux/blog/47854/ ; Indeed, there is no amnesty for Nature ((November 26th 2013 "(http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/Blog/out-of-prison-but-not-yet-free/blog/47532/))

[19] *Alexandre Paul, 27th October to Greenpeace supporters (*http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/Blog/arctic-30-50-days-of-injustice-in-their-own-w/blog/47298/) (November 8, 2013) http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/recent/Canadian-Greenpeace-activists-held-in-Russia-for-three-months-arrive-home/ ; http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/recent/Russian-parliament-votes-to-grant-amnesty-to-Arctic-30/ (18 déc)

[20] (http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/recent/Russian-parliament-votes-to-grant-amnesty-to-Arctic-30/) 18 décem.

[21] http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/recent/Russian-parliament-votes-to-grant-amnesty-to-Arctic-30/ (18 dec. 2014 ; consulted march 15 2014)

[22] (November 26th 2013"(http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/Blog/out-of-prison-but-not-yet-free/blog/47532/)

[22]

[23] (November 26th 2013"(http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/Blog/out-of-prison-but-not-yet-free/blog/47532/)

[23]

[24] (November 26th 2013"(http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/Blog/out-of-prison-but-not-yet-free/blog/47532/)

> your family but they can't take away hope. That's the one thing they couldn't touch and I wouldn't let them.[25]

Master what you can, endure the *ponos* which makes you stronger. And *ponos* there were[26]:

"The hardest moment was the first night in prison – none of us knew where we were or what conditions the detention held, or whether we would be separated, left to navigate the unknown alone. Being shown to my cell and introduced to a couple of strangers was frightening, to say the least." — Kieron Bryan, 27th October to Sunday Times

"Considering the circumstances I am doing well at the moment. Once in a while a rat crawls across the floor. Lost weight and don't sleep too well, but I am still holding my head high." — Faiza Oulahsen, 18th October to Dutch journalist

"Being in prison is like slowly dying. You literally wish your life away and mark off the days. It's such a waste of two months and I really hope it's no longer. Saying that, I am getting used to it. I'm doing a bit of yoga. I find it hard to meditate, though – too many worries on my mind as I'm sure you can understand." *— Alexandra Harris, 13th October to family*

Having reports from their criticism of "meals", living conditions, and frightening dark Nature reveal that even inside heroic activist circles, *conversion* is never wholly completed:

"Sundays also mean it's revolting meatball night! Yuk! The girls laughed that I knew the food schedule already. But we got a shower today so that's good. The shower is like a waterfall. It's nice." *— Alexandra Harris, 13th October to family*

"*It's very cold now. It snowed last night. The blizzard blew my very poorly insulated window open and I had to sleep wearing my hat. I'm nervous about spending winter here. I have a radiator in my cell but it's the Arctic breeze that makes the place very cold. I heard that from December Murmansk is dark for six weeks. God, I hope I'm out by then." — Alexandra Harris, 13th October to family*

Once their heroes jailed, the "Arctic 30" campaign was asking for the activation of the witnesses (and eventual recruits) of these hypermediated events. The first, obviously, was channelled through donation for the sacrifice of the few : "The 30 people on the Arctic Sunrise put their freedom on the line to protect the Arctic for all of us. Now in return we must do everything we can to help the cause they were fighting for" (November 26th, 2013). Otherwise, lets spread the incomfort via the electronic Mediascape, as for the Canadian case, "Ask @HonJohnBaird to bring home Paul Ruzycki and Alexandre Paul". What was important, was that the record was kept alive. Indeed, the same old acrobatic skills were all expressed in solidarity moves, *other climbing* in support for their imprisoned co-heros. On November 20th, 2013, in Montréal, "three climbers, Andréanne Lalonde, Philippe Dumont and David Major, scaled the globe-like structure associated with the Biosphère environmental museum to unfurl a 15 x 10 metre banner calling on Russia to free the Arctic 30, 28 Greenpeace activists and two freelance journalists. It reads

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[25] (http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/Blog/you-cant-sink-a-rainbow-you-cant-seize-a-sunr/blog/47961/) (22 janvier 2014).

[26] The following quotes are coming from the same source: (http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/Blog/arctic-30-50-days-of-injustice-in-their-own-w/blog/47298/), (November 8, 2013)

"Libérez nos activistes #FreetheArctic30."". Knowing their performance diffused was intense satisfaction for the inmates : "I heard the Arctic sunrise mentioned on the radio the other day. It was in Russian so I couldn't understand it but it's great to know the world is talking about us. On a good day I get to see my lawyer and hear news of protests all over the world. You wouldn't believe the difference the news makes. It really makes me feel better and I thank every single person who has joined a protest or sent an email. If there's one good thing to come of this horrible situation it's just that - the world is talking about Arctic oil and I've played a role in that. That's why the 30 of us are here." — *Alexandra Harris, 10th October to James Lorenz*

Out of jail, the artists came changed: "I'm a different person now; stronger. I cry less, which is a good thing. And I'm so appreciative of life. I will not take anything for granted now." — *Alexandra Harris, 13th Oct to family*

Surely, no regrets, no doubts : "It is only because of questions from media that I have to grapple with the question whether I regret the action. The exciting question for me is 'Why don't I regret it?' It is my conviction that protecting the Arctic and reducing our CO2 emissions is very necessary for preserving the livelihood of future generations. I believe that we as a global collective can succeed in making these measures happen, it doesn't leave any room for doubt or regret." — *Marco Weber, 28th October to Swiss paper*

Greenpeace at all

The mobilisationary preach (not exempt of "spectacular offensive" of self-completion) as any metaphysical battle for Survival via self-renunciation, is deeply imperialistic. As it can sound from the militaristic rhetoric developed by the movement, this heroic activism and imperialistic preaches are in part about managing the dark face of humanity, replacing the common subjectivities with environment friendly ethics. This "subjectivation" also implies dominating Nature via managerial discourses and techniques of power. If it may seem less destructive, it is no less domination as it tends to control nature in order to assure its permanent sustainability and through this the eternal reproduction of present humanity. What is needed is to follow the divine plan. Greenpeace's subjectivity then appears as an eco-Panopticon, monitoring "the Arctic" - and nature more globally - and its lambs to better control their (a)biotic "behaviours". As such, they do not differ that much from what they oppose : current neo-liberal governmentality. The imperial subject still mobilises nature for its own reproduction. *Nature is violently turned into an eco-technical womb that assures the onto-production of humans*. "Save the Arctic" is not so much about saving the Arctic, but about saving humans through the violent technologization of the planet for our own finitude. The pastoralist "subjection" processes working under this difficult biases of eco-systemism and anthropocentrism, such as guilt-inducement and surveillance of consciousness *as well as* industrial development and eco-systemic globality are all important technique to link truth and practices, or "subjecting" the green subjectivity. We can also see, that intimately connected to this process of disciplinary formation of "God/Nature's soldiers"[27], is the "subject" already fighting, the acrobats, to take as examples and to follow via hypermediascape.

[27] See, for instance, Sloterdijk in *Folie de Dieu*

http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/fr/campagnes/Energies/Arctique/

Opening conclusions

Some quick final remarks. The very idea of individual ethics passing through an *askêsis* intimately connected to an idea of subjection might be difficult to sell to "environmentalist" literature. It might even be so to "green governmentality" which are quick to denounce any "neo-liberal" concepts starting with the prefixes "auto-" or "self-". Whatever the degree, there is always an understandable *malaise* when it comes to "auto-subjectivation". Lets quote at lenght Paterson and Stripple : "The neoliberal relationality at the heart of these practices is not so much that their individualising character attempts to effect a depoliticisation of climate change, but rather that it reshapes the boundary between these two dimensions of social life, as well as what each concretely means. Climate politics as `My Space' simultaneously operates as a vanity-oriented, virtue politics of self-denial, sacrifice, and neocolonial offsetting, and something that calls into question the freedom-oriented discourse of neoliberal politics. Individualism becomes interpreted increasingly as responsible agency, not quite active citizenship in the republican sense, but nevertheless acting in the private sphere to pursue a public good." (Paterson & Stripple 2010:347).

We tried here to explore this paradox. Beyond any notions of "green citizenship", the paper tried to understand differently the relation of the individual and its obedience to the law. In our "governmentalist" analysis, we proposed instead to open up the question of subjectivation *via* a return to classical motives. Taking this deep dive allowed us to differentiate "pastoral" and

"ascetic" process of subjectivation. Finally, exploring the case of the Arctic, and the glimpse at the individual *experience* as an acrobat, might challenge our scepticism to "auto-subjectivation" in the environmental matters. At the same time, it is tempting to know if that means opening up the possibility of a real *askêsis*, one not corrupted by "pastoral" (imperial-masculinist or not) submitting both humans and DeNature, or to close it for now on.

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