Cocks, Joan. "Conclusions and Extrapolations." *On Sovereignty and Other Political Delusions*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014. 125–140. *Bloomsbury Collections*. Web. 26 Apr. 2023. <<http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781780933573.0006>>.

Downloaded from Bloomsbury Collections, www.bloomsburycollections.com, 26 April 2023, 09:03 UTC.

Copyright © Joan Cocks 2014. You may share this work for non-commercial purposes only, provided you give attribution to the copyright holder and the publisher, and provide a link to the Creative Commons licence.

Conclusions and Extrapolations

Intimations of non-sovereign freedom

Given that the conquest and rule of peripheral regions by imperial centers has typified much of the world for much of human history, it would be odd to claim that the West created empire as a political form. The more modest and accurate charge is that modern imperialism was born when Western nation-states began to look to overseas and continental European territories as their own exploitable possessions. Ironically, the West also provided the world with the sovereign nation-state model as the political answer to imperial penetration abroad as well as to the oppression of ethnic minorities at home. By centralizing political power over a territory with sacrosanct boundaries, a formerly subjugated or diminished people could hope to win negative freedom from outside interference and positive freedom in the sense of national and at least ostensibly popular self-rule.

The sovereign nation-state, however, has turned out to be no less problematic than its imperial predecessors. Although they benefited from asymmetrical relations between different peoples, empires by the same token were willing to accommodate heterogeneous collective identities with their own customs, beliefs, norms, and even self-referring laws. In contrast, the modern nation-state, while underwriting the solidarity and political-legal equality of its citizens, either championed the interests of a pre-existing homogeneous population at the expense of ethnic strangers or tried to weld together—via overtly or covertly coercive processes of assimilation, exclusion, or extermination—a homogeneous population out of the diverse elements it found in the territory it claimed for itself. Today, as multiplying pressures on its aspirations to impermeability and homogeneity make the sovereign nation-state seem more and more of a relic from another age, a new

question demands its as-of-yet unfathomable answer. How might political communities be re-constituted to combine ethno-cultural heterogeneity, the “positive moment” of empire, with individual equality of legal protection and political voice, the “positive promise” of the nation-state?

Unfortunately, political psychological sensibilities that have hardened as a result of modern imperialism and modern nationalism present tremendous obstacles to such a synthesis. The Israeli/Palestinian conflict is a perfect case in point. The regional inequalities characteristic of the age of Western imperialism, the domestic furies unleashed by the homogeneity fetishism of the nation-state, and the passion for sovereign power as the antidote to both coalesced in the Jewish struggle for sovereign freedom and the Palestinian counter-struggle for the same putative good. The scars, as Memmi would put it, that their distinctive but interconnected experiences have left on Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs make it difficult to see how either party ever would be willing to participate in a joint project of any sort, not to speak of the project of creating a new entity in which each people could enjoy the practices to which it is attached, foster bonds of solidarity with one another, and exercise equal political agency. It would require an optimism of the intellect—one almost as great as Herzl’s sunny estimate of how a new Jewish state would be greeted by its neighbors—to rely on the fact that history has taken unpredictable turns before, even when it had seemed fated to repeat a deterministic logic *ad infinitum*. The chances of a “miracle of action” with respect to any deep and recalcitrant conflict are by definition very slim. Still, it is possible to find rays of hope in actually existing exceptions to sovereign politics in Israel/Palestine that intimate what freedom could look like under conditions of *non*-sovereignty. Let me point very briefly to just two of those exceptions, in which those who have managed to wrest themselves free from rigid self/other antinomies attempt to engage in a relationship without exerting sovereign power against one another.

The first exception takes us back to the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, which we met in Chapter 3. Under the aegis of

that organization, Israeli Jews, Palestinians, and international volunteers have worked together to reconstruct (at least for the moment) Palestinian domestic spaces bulldozed on orders of the Israeli government. By their actions, these rebels reassert the Palestinians' right to a physical home in the world that is one of freedom's bedrock conditions. By those same actions, they also instantiate a miniature multi-ethnic public more generous and worldly than one confined to the members of a tight "family circle." Moreover, they do so not by committing foundational violence but by restoring that which was erased by foundational violence.¹ Through its efforts to exert creative political agency against the destructive powers of the sovereign ethnonational state, ICAHD can be said to be building a house where freedom *actually* can live.

Another intimation of non-sovereign freedom lies in the actions of Palestinians in villages such as Bil'in,² who, flanked by Israeli leftists and international peace activists, have protested weekly for years against the West Bank barrier that separates them from their olive groves and also against the ideological separation of human beings into airtight and unequal categories. In confronting Israeli soldiers and West Bank Jewish settlers with an insistence on their own right to dignity, political agency, and economic sustenance, the villagers exert the moral force of a self-organized popular body against sovereign military force. Just as significantly, they demonstrate their recognition of the Other's humanity by calling on the Other to respond to them in a human way, even as that other is armed to the hilt and seems impervious to their suffering. Anyone who has witnessed these weekly confrontations should be forgiven for concluding that the enlargement of freedom in this corner of the world hangs not on the success of the Palestinian fight for sovereign power, but on the acceptance by the Other of the villagers' invitation to step outside the limitations of a sovereign/subject relationship and into a human-to-human frame. To be sure, a human response to a human need by a single group of soldiers would interrupt the downward spiral of a bad dialectic only for a moment and only on a micro-level. But generalized throughout

society, such a miracle would have the best chance of paving the way to the emancipation of Palestinians from their restricted circumstances and the emancipation of Israeli Jews from the straitjacket that the struggle for sovereign freedom has designed for them.

Erasing the past

The destruction of familiar landscapes and the sentiments and social practices they support is not only a function of the founding of a new sovereign polity or the victory of one ethno-nationality over another. The bountiful winter hunting grounds and spring fishing waters of seventeenth-century Native Americans, and their ability to move freely from one to the other without being halted by fences, were as vulnerable to the development of a capitalist economy based on private property accumulation as they were to the territorial ambitions of the young United States. The olive groves so carefully tended by twenty-first-century Palestinian villagers are likely to be as jeopardized by an independent Palestinian state, if one is finally born and follows the typical pattern of modernization, as they have been by Israel's ethnonational expansion.

This raises, among other quandaries, the question of whether what Michael Oakeshott has called the love of the familiar is a legitimate human value that should be defended against the juggernaut of what we call progress, or whether that love is no more than reactionary nostalgia for a disintegrating past on the part of dominant groups to whom the familiar has been especially kind. To prevent too quick a jump to the latter charge, let me rephrase the question as follows. Do ways of life and their material expressions that are enjoyed by the many, or if by the few, then not at the expense of the many, deserve to be championed against what can seem to be the obliterating forces of time itself?

Certainly at one pole of the spectrum, erasures of the past are truly inevitable and so lie beyond the purview of critique. At this pole, valued

thoughts, practices, and their material manifestations constantly “go under” almost of their own accord as one generation dies and another is born with what will become different tastes, sensibilities, and desires. Still, the organic process that Hegel summed up with the quip that the birth of the child spells the death of the parents means that history is as much an accretion of losses as it is an accretion of gains. Intellectual life is hardly exempt from this unfortunate rule. In my own field of political theory, for example, although canonical works continue to be revered, perhaps too revered, over many centuries, all sorts of elegantly turned and illuminating arguments and texts have fallen by the wayside as a result of nothing more insidious than the restless, or should we say heartless, movement of the human mind over time. I began Chapter 1 with W. B. Gallie’s 1950s essay on essentially contested concepts partly to honor such half-buried but still suggestive lines of thought.

At the contingent and hence politically contestable end of the spectrum, erasures occur as a result of determined assaults on existing social habitats and habits by those who are able to amass the resources to launch such assaults and bring them to a successful conclusion. In the modern age, individuals who produce dramatic upheavals in the daily lives of others are most often not Machiavellian princes, emperors, or conquistadors but more ordinary human beings situated at key nodes of a structure of power so much larger and more complex than themselves that the assaults would continue regardless of whether any one of those human beings lived or died. As I intimated in my reference to olive groves above, one great culprit of such intentional yet impersonal demolitions have been modernizing projects undertaken by established states aspiring to greater wealth and power, including states to which movements for national self-determination have given birth. Whether modernizing states are ruled by dictators or democrats, and whether they are wedded to capitalism, industrial communism, or some strange amalgam of the two, they tend to exhibit an intense animus toward untamed landscapes, nomadic and rural existence, local knowledge, small-scale productive and market relations, vernacular architecture, “irrationally” ordered neighborhoods, material culture

inherited from the past, and idiosyncratic or unpredictable thought and action at the grass roots level. As no scholar in the discipline of political science has done more to explore these effects of this animus than James C. Scott, I need only point interested readers to his life's work.³

The other great culprit implicated in the destruction of familiar landscapes and ways of life, to which I alluded in my reference to fences, is the capitalist compulsion towards infinite expansion in the pursuit of infinite profit. Like modernization, with which it is deeply entangled although not synonymous, capitalism relentlessly remakes the world in the name of development, advancement, and progress, but like the cases of republican-to-liberal democracy and ethnonationalism we examined in this book, it does so in the name of freedom as well, although the freedom of the individual rather than the demos or the ethnos. If its "progress" claim is highly debatable, its "freedom" claim is positively weird, as one of the most significant outcomes of capitalist development is the growth of mammoth concentrations of private power that dwarf the agency of any person and indeed surpass the clout of many sovereign states.

No critic of the domination effects of the capitalist "free market" can match the systematic rigor and acuity of Karl Marx, but on the question of capitalism's erasures of prior modes of production and the ways of life in which they were embedded, his habits of mind are less than fully satisfactory. To borrow Wendy Brown's metaphor of capital as a global sovereign that is "perpetual, absolute, and unifying" and "the source of all commands,"⁴ Marx directs most of his scathing ire at *this* sovereign's rule to the exploitative capital/wage labor relation it "authorizes." He is less incensed by capital's acts of conquering non-capitalist environments and remolding them for capitalist use, although he is happy to sling barbs at bourgeois ideologies that romanticize those triumphs. Marx is hardly unaware of and in fact relishes in describing capitalism's destructive capacities—destructive not only vis-à-vis the pre-capitalist past but also vis-à-vis the capitalist-made present. However, his almost awestruck appreciation of capital's creative capacities and his belief in

a historical dialectic lead him to anticipate a happy higher end to the whole destructive/creative process. Anyone who wishes to see the real uncolored by a teleological ideal will have to refuse to apply the term “progress” to the actualization of so-called objective historical ends. Anyone who wishes to see the real uncolored by bourgeois romanticism will have to reject the different notion that what happens in the future must be an ever-growing improvement over what happened in the past. That is, the critical realist must demote “progress” from a capital “P” concept that signifies either movement towards a grand historical telos or change as an automatic additive good-in-itself, to a lowercase “p” concept that signifies merely the degree to which any individual or collective actor has come closer to whatever goal that actor is trying to reach. After such a demotion, capitalism’s onslaughts against ways of life incompatible with its own ethos and imperatives can slide into analytic view without those ways of life being branded by that token as “undeveloped,” “regressive,” or “backward.”⁵

Its theory of history aside, Marxism is best known for disclosing the structural violence inherent in the capitalist/wage labor relation. However, there *are* minor chords in the tradition that convey the foundational violence, whether physical blows are used or not, by which capitalism defeats “foreign” modes of imagination, sentiment, and endeavor in the vicinity of its initial emergence, expands the geographical orbit of its sovereign power, and captures new arenas of practice in areas it already has “settled.” One of those minor chords is struck by Marx himself in the closing section of the first volume of *Capital* on “the so-called primitive accumulation.” Here he excoriates the methods by which land, raw materials, and labor-power were wrested from non-capitalist contexts to form the “first capital,” those contexts disintegrating in that often bloody process.⁶ An even fierier condemnation of capitalism as a demolition project can be found in the last seven chapters of Rosa Luxemburg’s *The Accumulation of Capital*, which detail capitalism’s struggles against cooperative modes of productive life in pre-capitalist European peasant communities, in the small-scale stage of capitalist enterprise, and in non-capitalist

countries colonized by the West.⁷ In a respectively more literary and more historical vein, the British Marxists Raymond Williams and E. P. Thompson evoke the felt experience of loss, and the capacities, attachments, and outlooks of ordinary people that have since been lost to us, as a result of capitalist transformations of England that soon would radiate into the rest of the world.⁸ Most recently, the Marxist geographer David Harvey has tracked new processes of “accumulation by dispossession” that increase capitalist profit by stripping away communally *and* individually enjoyed features of social life from developed and developing capitalist settings alike. Such processes include the privatization of formerly public goods from seeds and water to streets and ideas, the industrial depletion of the environmental commons, and the steamrolling over face-to-face relations of production and exchange by economic monoliths.⁹ Although Harvey doesn’t say it, those processes also include the sacrifice of private property in Hannah Arendt’s sense of a secure home in the world for the many to the aim of increasing sheer quantitative wealth for the few. In sum, dispossession and erasure, which are here two sides of the same coin, constitute a key route to profit-making today. As Scott would add, this is a route that modernizing and modern states alike help to clear. In such a context, and as the June 2013 Taksim Square uprising in Turkey partly demonstrates, social movements to conserve material elements of a popularly enjoyed and habitable past against an imposed and asymmetrically rewarding future must be counted as a form of anti-sovereign politics, and a radical, not reactionary, form at that.

The political emancipation of wandering Jews

In his brilliantly offbeat *The Jewish Century*, Yuri Slezkine distinguishes between Apollonian and Mercurian social types, contrasting their different relationships to nineteenth-century nationalism and their opposite fates in the contemporary age. In pre- and early-modern societies, Apollonians (who, Slezkine jokes, turn into Dionysians when

drunk) are majorities rooted in the land and attached to a set of venerated customs and traditions. They are parochial in outlook, robust in physique, agrarian or pastoral or military by occupation, suspicious of foreigners, hostile to cities, and angered by cosmopolitan mentalities. Conversely, Mercurians are itinerant exiles from other places and ethnic strangers where they happen to live. They are multilingual by necessity, urban by inclination, intellectually dexterous, and entrepreneurial as merchants and traders, with a talent for creating ideas and designing artifacts. My distinction in Chapter 1 between freedom as the ability to enjoy patterns of life to which one has grown attached and freedom as the ability to create something new is not unrelated to this Apollonian/Mercurian duality.

While diaspora populations are quintessential Mercurians, and while Jews were, before the birth of Israel, the quintessential diaspora group, Slezkine argues that processes of modernization press everyone to develop Mercurian traits in the long run. In the shorter run, however, nationalist movements compensate uprooted peasants by valorizing the ancient customs and rural culture of the nation, and they attack ethnic strangers for putatively undermining both. This potent mixture of valorization and attack put nineteenth-century European Jews, who were ethnic strangers in every nation-state, in a position even more unnerving than their also threatened or soon to be threatened analogues: the Indians in East Africa, the Lebanese in West Africa, the Chinese in South East Asia, the Parsis in India, the Armenians and Greeks moving back and forth between the Ottoman and Russian Empires.

As we have seen, Zionism proposed that Jews should stamp out their Mercurian virtues and re-fashion themselves as Apollonians by becoming peasants who could shoot in their own nation-state. Slezkine, however, reminds us of two other formidable answers to the Jewish Question. One was Russian communism, which attempted to transcend the alienation between Apollonians and Mercurians by blending the two types into one cosmopolitan yet popular mass. The other was American capitalism, which had turned Mercurianism into

the ethos of a state and majority culture. Slezkine concludes that the American solution to the predicament of diasporic minorities proved more viable than the other two. Jews who had gravitated to Bolshevism with great internationalist passion and, as skilled Mercurians, rose to top positions in institutions from the Bolshoi to the Cheka became the target of purges after the Hitler–Stalin pact in 1939. The rise of Apollonian Russian nationalism in the 1940s, in combination with the Holocaust, greatly increased the appeal of Jewish nationalism to Russian Jews. But the Zionist alternative led the Jews who chose it from Mercurian strangeness “to a new kind of strangeness.” It built an Apollonian polity based on “violent retribution” and “undiluted ethnic nationalism” just at the moment that the West was shedding Apollonianism for Mercurianism.¹⁰ Although Slezkine doesn’t say it, it was also just a moment before many Apollonians all over the world would metamorphose into Mercurians as a result of global capitalism’s destructive and creative aspects; environmental crises; state collapse, civil wars, tyrannical rulers, corrupt elites, and other expressions of a general failure of political classes and institutions; and the shocks to the individual personality of such destabilizing turmoil.

Increasing numbers of “Jews” wander across the globe today—in the Palestinian case, as a direct result of the Zionist attempt to turn wandering Jews into Apollonians. The consequently outdated practice of hinging the political rights of individuals on their birth in a specific sovereign state territory or their exhibition of a specific sovereign people’s blood type raises the question of how citizenship might be reconfigured so that people can exercise free political agency wherever they go and whoever they are, at least with respect to problems that affect them. Such a reconfiguration cannot be achieved simply by devising the right set of abstract laws and norms—as if in 1948, by the mere theoretical concoction of laws dictating the equal treatment of all individuals or of rules for conducting rational discourse between people with discordant perspectives, Jews and Arabs in Palestine could have been magically reconciled with one another. As Jabotinsky realized years ago, the anxiety-driven prejudices of natives towards foreigners

(not to speak of the anxiety-driven prejudices of foreigners turned natives) is the far harder nut to crack, even and perhaps especially when the whole native/foreigner distinction has begun to break down. Neither can mere theoretical deconstructions of the nation vanquish the deeply felt solidarities and antipathies of those who see themselves as belonging to the same national group.¹¹

There are, however, signs of progress, with a small “p,” in the political emancipation of Mercurians, from the winning of rights for residents of certain Western cities to participate in local politics regardless of their national citizenship status, to the legalization of free movement of persons across national borders within the (admittedly still exclusive) European Union, to the fostering of social empathy and political identification across nation-state and ethnic boundaries by global communication technologies.¹² Even at the level of the sovereign state, there have always been examples of relatively hybrid and hybridity-welcoming citizen bodies, or at least there have been periods in which hybridity has been welcomed by them. Indeed, notwithstanding its original sin against Native Americans, the enslavement of Africans by its early landowning elites, the ongoing ambivalence of many of its citizens (including former immigrants) about foreigners arriving at its shores, and the desire of a (fortunately declining) number of Americans that it remain Christian and white, the United States itself is testimony that a polity can comprise heterogeneous peoples from elsewhere without disastrous after-effects. When Slezkine suggests that America is the best of the three answers to the Jewish Question, this is mostly why.

Natural freedom versus sovereign mastery of the earth

The tension between a preservationist ethos towards valuable aspects of the past and the footloose Mercurian social type can be fruitful rather than fatal if the Mercurians of the world learn to cultivate an Apollonian care for place, in distinction from a claim to sovereign

power over national spaces. To explain why the care for place has become as critical to wellbeing in the twenty-first century as the individual right to political agency, let us take a brief detour through one of Patchen Markell's Arendtian-inflected arguments in *Bound by Recognition*.

Markell calls finitude a basic condition of human life, by which he means the vulnerability of every self to other selves as well as to the natural needs and mortal limitations of the body. The fact that finitude is ineliminable does not prevent people from trying to acquire sovereign power so that they can force others to "bear a disproportionate share" of vulnerability's costs and burdens.¹³ Through class domination, for example, some selves shift the burden of sustaining their own biological life by exploiting the labor of others. Through democratic or ethnonational domination, as we have seen here, whole peoples can demand that others forfeit to them their familiar habitats.

Markell sees attempts to win freedom from finitude through sovereign invulnerability at the root of the refusal of dominant groups to recognize the equal humanity of those they have subjugated or marginalized. Subordinated groups that focus on the struggle for recognition of their identities and press sovereign states to enforce attitudes of "equal respect" for them may not merely misrecognize and help re-entrench the misrecognition of collective identities as essential and fixed. They also unwittingly may obscure the material interest in an unequal shouldering of the burdens of vulnerability that is the secret of much discursive cruelty, and that will not be corrected and may even be protected by reforms in how groups speak to and about one another. The Indian Treaty System and the Zionist struggle for Palestine in different ways illustrate Markell's point. The U.S. government's recognition of Indian tribes as sovereign nations served both as a veil over material asymmetries between settlers and indigenous groups and as a mechanism by which those asymmetries were worsened by legitimating "dispossession by consent." The Zionist project of turning the Jews into the majority people of Eretz-Israel required them to shift the burdens of minority vulnerability to Palestinian Arabs, with Jewish

refusals of recognition to Palestinian Arabs the effect, not the cause, of that required shift.

There is, however, one search for sovereign freedom from finitude that does not give rise to struggles for recognition on the part of those forced to bear a disproportionate share of vulnerability's burdens and costs. However problematic Markell has proven such struggles to be, the absence of any opportunity for them is even more problematic, as this final case of sovereign freedom attests. This is the attempt of the human species to gain sovereign mastery over the earth so that it may vanquish all objects of aversion and manipulate everything else for the sake of satisfying human desires. The conceit that one element of nature can rise above the web of life in which it is embedded to achieve perfect freedom from that web is more delusional than any other type of attempt of a subject to free itself by becoming a king who can command others without their consent. In fantasy, the human species may be able to lift itself to a superior position outside and over the natural universe. In reality, regardless of how much scientists come to know about atoms, molecules, forces, gases, rays, genes, and planets, not one of them can ward off the effects on those atoms and planets of the actions of billions of human beings, or the boomerang effects on human beings of those effects.

The human ideal of mastering the earth (with mastering outer space as the next ambition) rests on a refusal to acknowledge the inevitable impacts of the natural world on the human species as an internal part of it, often although not always as a result of that part's interchanges with other parts. But that ideal also rests on a refusal of humans to recognize other elements of the natural world as values-in-themselves. Unfortunately—since winning recognition, for all its pitfalls, can be the first step towards pushing for more profound improvements—those elements are incapable of challenging refusals of recognition at the discursive level. Much more unfortunately, most life species are incapable of defending themselves physically against the actions of human beings as would-be earthly sovereigns. As the environmental effects of those actions multiply, every life species, including our own,

will be at the mercy of natural processes with a far greater power to turn the world into “a desert and wasteland” than Vladimir Jabotinsky ever had.

Political theory is professionally preoccupied with political freedom, but at this moment in history a concept of what I will dub “natural freedom” needs to be elaborated and defended, too. This is the freedom to enjoy bodily life as one element of a non-dystopian universe, in which all species can exist at the level of, not bare life, but flourishing life. For our species, this means, quite banally, the freedom to breathe clear air, drink unpolluted water, and be outdoors without fear of catastrophic changes in the weather. But it also means the freedom to indulge in the sensory delights to be had in the physical world around us, including the delights of meeting natural life forms that are entrancing because they are neither like us nor for us.

How might the human species win the natural freedom described above, to the extent that it is still possible to win it? First, we would have to abandon delusions of sovereign mastery over the earth for a realistic view of ourselves as one especially potent element of nature in a relationship of delicate interdependence with all other elements, as well as cultivating an ethical view of other life species as having as fundamental a right to exist as we do (and a much more fundamental right than the “right” of any state to exist, given the artificial as opposed to organic nature of the state form). Second, we would have to acquire, very quickly, a far lighter ecological footprint on the earth than we have now. Third, as billions of people around the world already live at the lowest possible level of consumption for sustaining life, we would have to redistribute resources so that a lighter footprint would not be too painful for those billions to bear. With respect to recognizing these three requirements of natural freedom, indigenous movements around the globe have been in advance of the rest of us.

While we are so little masters of the earth that we cannot continue our way of life without destroying the conditions of even bare life for ourselves and other species, the changes that natural freedom demands are so drastic that it is impossible to conceive of their being made

voluntarily, especially as they would severely curtail the freedom of the so-called sovereign individual. This makes it tempting to fantasize about a benevolent monarch with absolute power to impose earth-friendly rules of behavior on the entire human race. The clash between the free pursuit of desires as they are currently felt by many people across the globe and even the minimal conditions of natural freedom for all species of life puts ecological politics in a much bleaker position than the other forms of political resistance that are intimated by the thrust of this book. The struggle to preserve familiar practices and landscapes against powerful political and economic forces that would destroy them is ongoing, even if, given the complicity of global capital and modern or modernizing states, it is extremely difficult to wage or win. The struggle to secure the individual's political rights outside classic sovereign state parameters so that wandering minorities can enjoy political agency without having to become oppressive majorities is promising, although it has only just begun. More urgent than both, and less evidently the fruit of "more democracy" than either, the struggle to win natural freedom through a non-sovereign relation to the earth has the longest odds against it of all.

Still, even here there are surprises. If, against Herzl's earlier formulation, first there is, not the idea, but the context and crisis that provoke the idea, breakthroughs in thought can spark "miracles" of action that destabilize that context and create new openings for transcending that crisis. When breakthroughs in thought are addressed to a global audience, they have a chance to rattle thought and action on a universal scale. Thus, I hope I may be forgiven for concluding my remarks on the struggle for natural freedom, not with radical ecologists' visions of sustainable futures, and not with experimental paths to those futures that grassroots groups have tried to clear, but with an explicit assessment of the world's situation and an implicit call to action by the new Catholic Pope. Soon after his appointment, Francis denounced a global economic system "which tends to devour everything which stands in the way of increased profits ... whatever is fragile, like the environment, is defenseless before the interests of a deified market,

which becomes the only rule.”¹⁴ Clearly, the spiritual leader of a global institution has no more power than any other individual to overturn that rule, and not only because he has no earthly coercive force at his disposal. But with respect to the reasons why *we* should contest the sovereign freedom of capital—and the sovereign freedom of every other self-aggrandizing force, for that matter—who has made the point more aptly, more fiercely, or with a more unexpected jolt to the reigning “common sense”?