INTRODUCTION
This brief essay aims to illustrate the key features of 21st century radical ecology, showing the reader how the operative radicalization of antagonist ecology will inexorably lead to eco-terrorism. To be more precise, from an ideological point of view, there are no relevant differences between radical ecology and eco-terrorism. To this purpose, we will define both radical ecology and eco-terrorism, and we will adopt the methodological approach of Vittorio Franco Pisano for the latter. Furthermore, the essay will take into consideration the analyses of eco-terrorism made by a number of leading governmental intelligence agencies and conclude with an analysis of Swiss Italian Marco Camenisch, eco-terrorism’s most important representative.
1. Radical ecology
The schools of thought of contemporary eco-terrorism are many, but those that use an antagonist theoretical-practical approach can be identified in deep ecology, feminist ecology, Marxist ecology, primitivism, degrowth ecology, the Slow Food movement, ecology, animalism (which together with vegetarianism is a logical consequence of radical ecology) and, finally, eco-terrorism. In this sense – beyond the often demagogic rhetoric – eco-terrorism does not differ from the above-mentioned schools of thought because of its ethical-philosophical assumptions but rather by the operative procedures through which its antagonism is carried out. Therefore, an ideological community exists, whether implicit or explicit, in the main schools of thoughts of ecology and eco-terrorism. These schools of thought, however, can be associated with the idea of radical ecology.

2. Definition of radical ecology
While continuing to take the complexity of current ecology into account, the expression “radical” is used to indicate extremely antagonist ecology, from Pinochet’s utilitarian conservationism, which was deeply anthropocentric and aimed to rationalize the use of nature toward a lasting economic exploitation, to Haeckel’s neo-Darwinian approach, Tanskey’s view, Lotka’s trophic-network ecology, and finally, Odum’s thermodynamic approach. Firstly, radical ecology comprises the holistic preservationism of Thoreau, Emerson, and Leopold, ecofeminism, political ecology, deep ecology, primitivism, social ecology, the degrowth movement, the Slow Food movement, eco-regionalism, animalism, and eco-terrorism. Secondly, although the list of the organizations is not complete, it is important to underline that the several “-isms” do not exclude the possibility of profitable contaminations among the different schools of thought. Thirdly, the epistemological, political and philosophical features shared by the above-mentioned schools of thought can be identified as follows:

1. they all support a structural modification of the current economic system and are against the supranational institutions that control global capitalism, in particular, the IMF, the WTO, and the World Bank;
2. they are in favor of the anti-globalization movement, and know its limits and potentials;
3. they share an eco-centric, bio-centric, anti-anthropocentric, holistic and sometimes organicistic perception of natural reality;
4. they are against a mechanistic vision of reality such as Bacon’s and Descartes’, and are in favor of legal extensionism;
5. they support a relevant extension of representative democracy or a radical exceeding of it in favor of an anarchic, neo-tribal society, or a participatory democracy;

6. they share and develop apocalyptical and radical scenes of current society’s environmental and economic condition;

7. they advocate a change in the ethic of western civilization through an eco-pacifist reorientation carried out by counter-information;

8. they are against military institutions and share a typical interpretation of irenic pacifism;

9. they are against the use of biotechnologies in agriculture and the civil and military use of nuclear energy;

10. several members of radical ecology share a new interpretation of nature according to neo-romantic or oriental philosophies (such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism and Zen philosophy);

11. many scholars and activists belonging to radical ecology embrace animalistic and vegetarian views which they deem deeply coherent with an ecocentric vision of nature.

12. Finally, several exponents of radical ecology refer to 1968 culture, and to underground American and tribal cultures.

In short, regarding the operative procedures carried out by the several schools of thought or radical ecology, we should point out the difference between non-violent and terroristic ones. There are three levels of antagonist procedure: a) non-violent practice strictly antagonist toward political and legal institutions; b) non-violent practice with an entryist political logic toward national and supranational political institutions; c) publically terroristic practice. We should, nevertheless, underline the differences between positions a) and b) both of which are well-organized and opposing: the first clearly condemns the use of terroristic procedures, the second supports terrorist procedures – but without putting them into practice – and is therefore ambiguous.

3. The historical predecessors of radical ecology

According to Livorsi, the genesis of radical ecology can be easily traced from a historical point of view to the philosophical and religious interpretation of Bachofen and the Marxist psychoanalysis of Reich as well. The author of the “Canticle of the Sun” (“Cantico del Frate Sole”) not only asserts the sanctification of the world by God – in other words, the sun, the moon, and the animal world – but also refers to Mother Earth, anticipating the modern concept of “Gaia”. Moreover the heterodox pantheism of Saint Francis implies a brotherhood between human beings and creatures

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1 Gaia, figure of Greek mythology, known also as Gea, a goddess that embodies the earth.
according to an ecocentric and egalitarian view. The French philosopher Rousseau, in his “Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men” (“Discours sur l’origine et les fondements de l’inégalité parmi les homes”), emphasized the goodness of the state of nature and the existential authenticity of the human being in this pre-civilized context, while condemning in the meantime private property and therefore civilization determined by technique. Moreover, unlike civilized society, tribal society conducted an ecocentric, egalitarian and communal style of life. Bachofen, in his reinterpretation of the history of civilization, emphasized the existence of a gynocratic, anti-patriarchal view in pre-Achaean society in which there was no private life, there was sexual freedom, nature was accepted as a living organism, and above all, the modus vivendi was built on egalitarian pacifism.

In short, regarding Reich, the rise of patriarchy brought about the triumph of capitalism, the closed family, and sexual repression. The natural and erotic man who struggles for a libertarian socialism has reemerged only rarely in history, such as in the Paris Commune in 1871, for example.
DEFINITION OF TERRORISM AND ECO-TERRORISM

According to Pisano, terrorism can be defined as a non-conventional form of conflict because it lies outside both democratic, organized and civil dispute and the traditional battlefield of war regulated by international law. Terrorism is characterized by three elements: a) physical and psychic criminal violence, b) political, religious political or social political movement, and c) the use of illegal structure. Traditional terrorism, as Pisano explains, together with neo-terrorism, coexist both as a threat and as a concrete aggression. Neo-terrorism is performed by dynamic and polymorphous schemes that can intertwine while preserving their methodological and operational autonomy at the same time. Pisano indicates ecologic terrorism, narco-terrorism, the NRBC, and cyber-terrorism as the most important. Ecologic terrorism (the topic of our research) is based on lay and/or religious ideological ideas and from an organizational point of view is carried out alternatively by cellular organizations with no hierarchies and by binary structures that are cellular and propagandistic at the same time. Ecologic terrorism furthers its antagonism through several operative procedures: 1) obstructive human barriers (lock box), 2) machinery sabotage, 3) arson and explosive detonation, 4) legal instruments focused on reporting abuse by police, 5) assemblage and road blocks, 6) intrusion within military installations or scientific and university institutions, 7) wide use of misinformation through media, internet and magazines, and 8) instigation to tax evasion. The enemies or targets to strike are several in number as well: 1) national and supranational capitalism, 2) the state, which defends its interests and consolidates its power, 3) national and supranational military institutions, and 4) scientific and university laboratories. In a nutshell, eco-terrorism presents two fundamental trends: animal (such as ALF, ARM or JD) and environmental (e.g. Earth First!). In conclusion, Pisano suggests that the dangers of eco-terrorism are linked to the potential strengthening of its organizational power, creation of operative or ideological ties with traditional terrorism, and the consolidation of its relations with the anti-globalization movement (which we discussed in the volume Problemi e prospettive dei movimenti antagonisti del Novecento).
ANALYSIS OF ECO-TERRORISM

1. Eco-terrorism in the analysis of the Defense Intelligence Agency*

In the article by Stefan H. Leader – member of the US Defense Intelligence Agency’s Joint Intelligence Task Force-Combating Terrorism – entitled “The Earth Liberation Front and Environmental Terrorism”, the two most representative eco-terroristic movements are the Earth Liberation Front and the Animal Liberation Front. The author traces their historical genesis as follows: “The Earth Liberation Front was established in 1992 in Brighton, England and dedicated to saving the environment. It was founded by the more radical members of the activist environmental group, ‘Earth First!’ who believed criminal acts would better advance their environmentalist agenda than would legal protest. The American branch announced its creation in October 1996 with an arson attack on a US Forest Service truck in Oregon’s Willamette National Forest. The decoupling of ELF from Earth First! enabled the two organizations to focus on their respective constituencies. Earth First! recruits those who believe in peaceful, non-violent protest. The ELF, in contrast, draws those who favor direct action and revolutionary violence. The goals of the two groups are similar. They differ primarily in the means to be employed. The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) was formed in Great Britain in the 1970s as an outgrowth of groups such as Greenpeace and the Sea Shepherds Conservation Society. It predates ELF and is predominantly concerned with animal rights issues. Over the years, ALF has become increasingly radical and violent. Traditionally, the agendas of the two groups have overlapped and, in an open 1993 communiqué, ELF declared solidarity with the ALF. Since then, increasingly, there has been a convergence of leadership, membership, agendas and funding.” The ELF organizational structure, which hinders easy penetration, is extremely relevant: “By operating in cells (small groups that consist of one to several people), the security of group members is maintained. Each cell is anonymous not only to the public but also to one another. This decentralized structure helps keep activists out of jail and free to continue conducting actions.” This organizational choice is not random. “The use of loose networks of groups that share similar goals has made the work of law enforcement agencies and the intelligence services much more difficult. Without any formal chain of command, such groups are difficult to penetrate as the operational elements may draw from disparate organizations for a single operation, disbanding once the task has been completed.” The ideological content consists of two key concepts, biocentrism and deep ecology: “Two fundamental concepts motivate environmental terrorists: biocentrism and deep ecology. Biocentrism is the belief that all organisms on earth are equal and deserving of moral rights and considerations. They see biodiversity and wilderness as absolute goods. Believers in deep
ecology favor a rollback of industrialization/civilization and return to a way of life seen as more consistent with preservation of the environment. Deep ecologists favor restoration to its imagined pristine state, of an environment they believe has been despoiled by the selfish actions of the human race. In practice, this would mean return to pre-industrial, subsistence agricultural communities.” In light of this orientation, it is easy to determine which targets to hit: “Underlying the first guideline is a fundamental hostility to the US capitalist economic system and a belief that the system is a fundamental threat to global environment. ELF leaders, at the very least, appear to believe that the capitalist system must be destroyed. In interviews and public statements, spokesman Craig Rosebraugh has made his anticapitalist agenda quite clear. For example, the organization has targeted large corporations such as Monsanto as well as university offices and laboratories engaged in genetic engineering of crops, or related research. Competition for headlines may well drive ELF to carry out more spectacular and inherently more dangerous operations.” The author describes the techniques to achieve these aims both in websites and in actions: “ELF’s prime weapon is arson, which it views, as a legitimate act of political protest and correctly notes can be more destructive than explosives. The ELF website contains a detailed instruction manual on creating incendiary devices of all kinds, using a wide variety of commonly available materials. As can be seen in Table 1, about a third of the ELF attacks carried out between 1996 and 2001, and certainly its most destructive, were arson attacks. In addition, ELF relies on sabotage and vandalism, or what is known in the movement as ‘monkeywrenching’, which includes such activities as spraypainting slogans on buildings and vehicles, applying super glue to locks, breaking windows, destroying equipment and records, and other forms of property destruction.”

*Source: www.dia.mil

2. US measures against eco-terrorism*

To prevent and at the same time suppress ecoterrorist activism, the American Congress passed the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA), approved by the US Senate on 29th September 2006 and signed by President George W. Bush on 27th November 2006. This law forbids anyone from using force, violence or threats to damage or interfere with the operations of an animal enterprise. It should be observed, however, that this Act does not interfere with the First Amendment because pickets and sit-ins are not forbidden by law. Compared to the previous law of 1992, the AETA grants legal instruments greater power in promptly and appropriately responding to the threats posed by extremist animalistic movements and expands the meaning of “animal enterprise” to cover commercial or academic firms that sell animals or animal products. Moreover, it increases the
existing sanctions applied to those who intentionally raise threats of death and serious bodily injury. Given its particular importance and the amount of opposition raised by animal organizations – such as PETA, in particular – we think it would be useful to publish the document in its full length. This Act may be cited as the “Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act”.

SEC. 2. INCLUSION OF ECONOMIC DAMAGE TO ANIMAL ENTERPRISES AND THREATS OF DEATH AND SERIOUS BODILY INJURY TO ASSOCIATED PERSONS.
(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 43 of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows: “§ 43. Force, violence, and threats involving animal enterprises
“(a) OFFENSE.—Whoever travels in interstate or foreign commerce, or uses or causes to be used the mail or any facility of interstate or foreign commerce—“(1) for the purpose of damaging or interfering with the operations of an animal enterprise; and“(2) in connection with such purpose—“(A) intentionally damages or causes the loss of any real or personal property (including animals or records) used by an animal enterprise, or any real or personal property of a person or entity having a connection to, relationship with, or transactions with an animal enterprise;“(B) intentionally places a person in reasonable fear of the death of, or serious bodily injury to that person, a member of the immediate family (as defined in section 115) of that person, or a spouse or intimate partner of that person by a course of conduct involving threats, acts of vandalism, property damage, criminal trespass, harassment, or intimidation; or“(C) conspires or attempts to do so; shall be punished as provided for in subsection (b). “(b) PENALTIES.—The punishment for a violation of section (a) or an attempt or conspiracy to violate subsection (a) shall be—“(1) a fine under this title or imprisonment not more than 1 year, or both, if the offense does not instill in another the reasonable fear of serious bodily injury or death and—§ 3880—2 “(A) the offense results in no economic damage or bodily injury; or “(B) the offense results in economic damage that does not exceed $10,000;“(2) a fine under this title or imprisonment for not more than 5 years, or both, if no bodily injury occurs and—“(A) the offense results in economic damage exceeding $10,000 but not exceeding $100,000; or “(B) the offense instills in another the reasonable fear of serious bodily injury or death;“(3) a fine under this title or imprisonment for not more than 10 years, or both, if—“(A) the offense results in economic damage exceeding $100,000; or “(B) the offense results in substantial bodily injury to another individual;“(4) a fine under this title or imprisonment for more than 20 years, or both, if—“(A) the offense results in serious bodily injury to another individual; or “(B) the offense results in economic damage exceeding $1,000,000; and“(5) imprisonment for life or for any terms of years, a fine under this title, or both, if the offense results in death of another individual. “(c) RESTITUTION.—An order of restitution under section 3663 or 3663A of this title with respect to a violation of this section may also include restitution—“(1) for the reasonable cost of repeating any experimentation that was interrupted or invalidated as a result of the offense;“(2) for the loss of food production or farm income reasonably attributable to the offense; and“(3) for any other economic damage, including any losses or costs caused by economic disruption, resulting from the offense. “(d) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section—“(1) the term ‘animal enterprise’ means—“(A) a commercial or academic enterprise that uses or sells animals or animal products for profit, food or fiber production, agriculture, education, research, or testing;“(B) a zoo, aquarium, animal shelter, pet store, breeder, furrier, circus, or rodeo, or other
lawful competitive animal event; or “(C) any fair or similar event intended to advance agricultural arts and sciences; “(2) the term ‘course of conduct’ means a pattern of conduct composed of 2 or more acts, evidencing a continuity of purpose; “(3) the term ‘economic damage’— “(A) means the replacement costs of lost or damaged property or records, the costs of repeating an interrupted or invalidated experiment, the loss of profits, or increased costs, including losses and increased costs resulting from threats, acts or vandalism, property damage, trespass, harassment, or intimidation taken against a person or entity on account of that person’s or entity’s connection to, relationship with, or transactions with the animal enterprise; but “(B) does not include any lawful economic disruption (including a lawful boycott) that results from lawful public, governmental, or business reaction to the disclosure of information about an animal enterprise; “(4) the term ‘serious bodily injury’ means— “(A) injury posing a substantial risk of death; “(B) extreme physical pain; “(C) protracted and obvious disfigurement; or “(D) protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty; and “(5) the term ‘substantial bodily injury’ means— “(A) deep cuts and serious burns or abrasions; “(B) short-term or nonobvious disfigurement; “(C) fractured or dislocated bones, or torn members of the body; “(D) significant physical pain; “(E) illness; “(F) short-term loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty; or “(G) any other significant injury to the body. “(e) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.— Nothing in this section shall be construed— “(1) to prohibit any expressive conduct (including peaceful picketing or other peaceful demonstration) protected from legal prohibition by the First Amendment to the Constitution; “(2) to create new remedies for interference with activities protected by the free speech or free exercise clauses of the First Amendment to the Constitution, regardless of the point of view expressed, or to limit any existing legal remedies for such interference; or “(3) to provide exclusive criminal penalties or civil remedies with respect to the conduct prohibited by this action, or to preempt State or local laws that may provide such penalties or remedies.”

*Source: http://www.govtrack.us/congress

3. Eco-terrorism in the FBI analysis*

The analysis of James F. Jarboe, in charge of FBI Domestic Terrorism Section, is extremely relevant in regard to both the definition of terrorism and the analysis of eco-terrorism. The methodological approach used by the FBI distinguishes two categories of terrorism: “The FBI divides the terrorist threat facing the United States into two broad categories, international and domestic. International terrorism involves violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any state, or that would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or any state. Acts of international terrorism are intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, influence the policy of a government, or affect the conduct of a government. These acts transcend national boundaries in terms of the means by which they are accomplished, the persons they appear intended to intimidate, or the locale in which perpetrators operate.” Contrary to international terrorism: “Domestic terrorism is the
unlawful use, or threatened use, of violence by a group or individual based and operating entirely within the United States (or its territories) without foreign direction, committed against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.” The FBI makes a further distinction: “A terrorist incident is a violent act or an act dangerous to human life, in violation of the criminal laws of the United States, or of any state, to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political, social objectives. A terrorism prevention is a documented instance in which a violent act by a known or suspected terrorist group or individual with the means and a proven propensity for violence is successfully interdicted through investigative activity”. The FBI has had to deal with the serious dangers of eco-terrorism: “During the past several years, special interest extremism, as characterized by the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), has emerged as a serious terrorist threat. Generally, extremist groups engage in much activity that is protected by constitutional guarantees of free speech and assembly. Law enforcement becomes involved when the volatile talk of these groups transgresses into unlawful action. The FBI estimates that the ALF/ELF have committed more than 600 criminal acts in the United States since 1996, resulting in damages in excess of 43 million dollars.” The main themes of the eco-terrorist message are: “the extreme fringes of animal rights, pro-life, environmental, anti-nuclear, and other movements. Some special interest extremists – most notably within the animal rights and environmental movements – have turned increasingly toward vandalism and terrorist activity in attempts to further their causes.”

With these remarks in mind, FBI analysts decided to provide terrorism with a new definition and explicitly formulate the concept of eco-terrorism: “The FBI defines eco-terrorism as the use or threatened use of violence of a criminal nature against innocent victims or property by an environmentally-oriented, subnational group for environmental-political reasons, or aimed at an audience beyond the target, often of a symbolic nature.” ALF is extremely relevant in this sense, and the author provides an outline of its history. “The ALF, established in Great Britain in the mid-1970s, is a loosely organized movement committed to ending the abuse and exploitation of animals. The American branch of the ALF began its operations in the late 1970s. Individuals become members of the ALF not by filing paperwork or paying dues, but simply by engaging in ‘direct action’ against companies or individuals who utilize animals for research or economic gain. ‘Direct action’ generally occurs in the form of criminal activity to cause economic loss or to destroy the victims’ company operations. The ALF activists have engaged in a steadily growing campaign of illegal activity against fur companies, mink farms, restaurants, and animal research laboratories.”
The Earth First! movement is equally relevant: “Disaffected environmentalists, in 1980, formed a radical group called ‘Earth First!’ and engaged in a series of protests and civil disobedience events. In 1984, however, members introduced ‘tree spiking’ (insertion of metal or ceramic spikes in trees in an effort to damage saws) as a tactic to thwart logging. In 1992, the ELF was founded in Brighton, England, by Earth First! members who refused to abandon criminal acts as a tactic when others wished to mainstream Earth First!. In 1993, the ELF was listed for the first time along with the ALF in a communiqué declaring solidarity in actions between the two groups. This unity continues today with a crossover of leadership and membership.” One of the technical innovations invented by Elf is “monkeywrenching”: “a euphemism for acts of sabotage and property destruction against industries and other entities perceived to be damaging to the natural environment. ‘Monkeywrenching’ includes tree spiking, arson, sabotage of logging or construction equipment, and other types of property destruction”. The achievement of strong unity between these organizations comes as no surprise: “Jonathan Paul and Craig Rosebraugh at the 1998 National Animal Rights Conference held at the University of Oregon, promoted the unity of both the ELF and the ALF movements. The ELF posted information on the ALF website until it began its own website in January 2001, and is listed in the same underground activist publications as the ALF.”

The danger posed by this phenomenon induced the FBI to take specific action: “The FBI has developed a strong response to the threats posed by domestic and international terrorism. Between fiscal years 1993 and 2003, the number of Special Agents dedicated to the FBI’s counterterrorism programs grew by approximately 224 percent to 1,669 – nearly 16 percent of all FBI Special Agents. In recent years, the FBI has strengthened its counterterrorism program to enhance its abilities to carry out these objectives. Cooperation among law enforcement agencies at all levels represents an important component of a comprehensive response to terrorism. This cooperation assumes its most tangible operational form in the Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) that are established in 44 cities across the nation. These task forces are particularly well-suited to responding to terrorism because they combine the national and international investigative resources of the FBI with the street-level expertise of local law enforcement agencies.” This synergy of forces has produced excellent results: “The FBI and our law enforcement partners have made a number of arrests of individuals alleged to have perpetrated acts of eco-terrorism. Several of these individuals have been successfully prosecuted. Following the investigation of the Phoenix, Arizona, arsons noted earlier, Mark Warren Sands was indicted and arrested on 6/14/2001. On 11/07/2001, Sands pleaded guilty to ten counts of extortion and using fire in the commission of a federal felony.” The operation against EMETIC was extremely important: “Marc Leslie Davis, Margaret Katherine
Millet, Marc Andre Baker, and Ilse Washington Asplund were all members of the self-proclaimed ‘Evan Mecham Eco-Terrorist International Conspiracy’ (EMETIC). EMETIC was formed to engage in eco-terrorism against nuclear power plants and ski resorts in the southwestern United States. In November 1987, the group claimed responsibility for damage to a chairlift at the Fairfield Snow Bowl Ski Resort near Flagstaff, Arizona. Davis, Millet, and Baker were arrested in May 1989 on charges relating to the Fairfield Snow Bowl incident and planned incidents at the Central Arizona Project and Palo Verde nuclear generating stations in Arizona; the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Facility in California; and the Rocky Flats Nuclear Facility in Colorado. All pleaded guilty and were sentenced in September 1991. Davis was sentenced to six years in federal prison, and restitution to the Fairfield Snow Bowl Ski Resort in the amount of $19,821. Millet was sentenced to three years in federal prison, and restitution to Fairfield in the amount of $19,821. Baker was sentenced to one year in federal prison, five months probation, a $5,000 fine, and 100 hours of community service. Asplund was also charged and was sentenced to one year in federal prison, five years probation, a $2,000 fine, and 100 hours of community service.”

Equally important are the remarks contained in the FBI report on terrorism of 2000/2001. In the first place, the agency notes that: “animal rights and environmental extremists in the United States and elsewhere have increased in frequency and intensity” using: “arson, harassment, death threats, animal releases, and razor blade threat letters to intimidate individuals and businesses they perceive to be abusive to animals or destructive to the environment. The victims include, but are not limited to, fur farmers and retailers, research laboratories and personnel, circuses, zoos, fast food restaurants, forestry services, and large corporations”. The ideological roots of these actions may be easily traced: “These terrorist acts are committed by persons and groups who believe all animals and all parts of the ecosystem, no matter how small or seemingly inconsequential, have the right to exist, be respected, and be protected from destruction by humanity. The use of violent criminal means to achieve these goals represents a departure from the larger and more mainstream animal welfare and environmental movements, which support the humane treatment of animals and the protection of the environment and its resources, but operate within existing laws to promote these causes.” ALF has particularly deep roots in the USA: “The ALF’s ideology is one of unwavering support for the liberation of captive animals by any means, including criminal activity. ALF activists in the United States have generally adhered to the movement’s stated mandate of protecting human life during the course of its ‘direct actions’ while simultaneously causing severe economic damage to various retailers, fur farms, laboratories, and other animal enterprises. ALF activities in the United States during the past 25 years have included a wide variety of tactics with a
broad range of sophistication. A review of the movement’s literature, which includes a running tally of ALF activities nationally and internationally, indicates a significant level of criminal activity ranging from graffiti, broken windows, and other acts of petty vandalism to pipe-bombings, largescale mink releases, destruction of research documentation, and arson.” Earth First! is no less dangerous: “According to ELF literature posted on the ALF Frontline News Service, the ELF movement is an “international underground organization consisting of autonomous groups of people who carry out direct action according to E.L.F. guidelines.” The avowed purposes of the organization are clearly outlined in its website: “These guidelines, posted on the ELF web site, are as follows: I. to inflict economic damage to those who profit from the destruction and exploitation of the natural environment; II. to reveal and educate the public on the atrocities committed against the environment and all the species which cohabitate in it; and III. to take all necessary precautions against harming any animal, human and non-human.” Effective action is possible only through a flexible and glocal offensive: “Given the increasing frequency and intensity in activity, law enforcement officials are increasingly faced with the challenge to respond to animal rights and ecoterrorism at the local, state, and national levels. Investigations of extremist acts perpetrated by the ALF and the ELF pose formidable challenges, given the focus of these movements on evidence destruction, secrecy, and operational security.”

*Source: www.fbi.gov

4. Walter Laqueur’s analysis of eco-terrorism

According to this author, the passage from environmentalism to eco-terrorism can be explained on the basis of a simple thesis, “once it is believed that the salvation of the planet depends on the destruction of civilization”. This theory is based on certain assumptions clearly stated by radical ecology: 1) nature has been raped by human beings; 2) Christianity, in particular, has helped justify the uninhibited supremacy of men over nature: 3) as a consequence, radical ecology is closely linked to pagan cultures; 4) lastly, according to radical ecology, industrialized agriculture and technology in general has helped devastate the environment. (The author dates the origin of modern radical ecology to the counter-culture of 1970s in which holistic medicine was widely used and Eastern wisdom was being rediscovered. Together with these aspects, the rediscovery of Karl Marx was important in establishing the basis of radical ecology). In addition, the author points out that unlike environmentalism, radical ecology aspires to a radical, and not a gradual, change of society’s structure. In any case, according to the author, American eco-terrorism began in 1980 with the Earth First! movement and especially with the writings of David Foreman. In England, it was started
around 1970s by another important eco-terrorist movement, ALF, whose representatives came mostly from the middle-class (the author announces with a hint of irony). The author’s remarks on the importance of the cultural backgrounds are particularly relevant: “The scientifically inclined among them, having read a little Jacques Ellul, a bit of Kirkpatrick Sale, and a few pages of Lewis Mumford, may turn to radical Luddism, reacting against the horrors of science and technology” (*The New Terrorism*, p. 218). In conclusion: the ideological context of radical ecology and eco-terrorism is similar; their differences emerge in their operative choices.

5. Eco-terrorism analyzed by Canadian Intelligence*

According to Smith, the first three relevant events in eco-terrorist context for Canadian Intelligence occurred in 1993 and were promoted by ARM: “Three days into 1992, media reports of poisoned candy bars in Edmonton and Calgary interrupted pleasant holiday thoughts and revived lingering headaches. A previously unknown group calling itself the Animal Rights Militia (ARM) claimed to have injected 87 Cold Buster bars with oven cleaner – an action taken because of alleged animal abuse in the development of the product. The bar’s designer, a physiologist at the University of Calgary, denied the allegations. One bar tested by police contained an alkaline substance ‘which could cause burning if eaten’. The distributor of the Cold Buster immediately recalled tens of thousands of the bars from some 250 outlets in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and the manufacturer halted production, forcing the temporary lay-off of 22 employees. Ten days later, a second letter from ARM arrived at the offices of The Edmonton Journal, confirming the contamination claim as a hoax. ‘The purpose behind (the) hoax was to cause economic damage to (the inventor), his co-financiers and those with a stake in the success of the Cold Buster Bar.’ The letter warned of further action by ARM, however, if animal exploitation continued, and threatened that ‘the next time action is taken, it will not be a hoax’.” Eco-terrorism traceable to ALF has intensified over the years: “During the past decade approximately 40 incidents of vandalism, arson and breaking-and-entering in Canada have been attributed to an organization known as the Animal Liberation Front (ALF). An off-shoot of a British-based group of the same name, the ALF emerged in Canada in 1981 and began to undertake activities similar to those of its United Kingdom counterpart. Largely targeting furriers by means of protest demonstrations, activists also painted graffiti on buildings, poured glue in door-locks and smashed windows. The same tactics were used against meat and fish shops, although eventually in a more violent manner”. The danger of eco-terrorist movement is easily seen in its history, as explained briefly but effectively by the author: “The original ALF was formed in England in 1976, a splinter group of the
Hunt Saboteurs Association (HSA) who regarded the HSA as not sufficiently militant. Since its inception, the ALF has gained a fearsome reputation in the United Kingdom – even to the extent of attempted murder: during 1990, two British scientists narrowly escaped death in the explosions of bombs attached to their cars. In the second attack, a 13-month-old baby in a nearby carriage was injured. The ALF’s reputation was established through a 10-year campaign of destruction. Raids on laboratories and kennels, involving damage to facilities and the release of animals, coupled with spray-paint attacks on vehicles and the interiors and exteriors of buildings, were typical of the attacks. Scientists and their families were subjected to abusive telephone calls, their cars were doused with paint stripper, and leaflets were distributed at schools attended by their children. In January 1981, the ALF estimated that the group had caused more than $2 million damage over the previous four years of its existence.” Despite the evident dangers, ALF counter-information capacity is such to reach broad consensus: “Animal welfare is a popular cause; few would appear so heartless, inhumane, or indifferent as to fail to espouse its general aims. For that reason there exists supportive consensus in many communities. Animal welfare has voter appeal, and currently a certain ‘chic’ atmosphere surrounds the movement, promising an exciting outlet for the trendy types bored with their tame lifestyle. In North America and the United Kingdom most militant members of the ALF are young and from middle-class backgrounds.” Only an accurate analysis of the links and the ideological foundation permits the comprehension of the anarchic-socialist structure of their program: “But the movement also provides an avenue for militant extremists whose agenda exceeds that of the innocent cause they have allegedly espoused. Clothed securely in the guise of a popular issue such as animal rights, they are able to pursue their radical ideals surreptitiously and with impunity. The ALF, for example, was founded by Ronnie Lee – a declared anarchist who is still active in the organization. Many of the supporters of the ALF in Canada are also known to have extreme left-wing or anarchist views.” As dangerous eco-terrorism might be, it is not in the position to change the political-economic organization of Canada, because it is not able to trigger a revolutionary conflict: “It would be nonsense to suppose that the animal rights movement could seriously jeopardize the political, social or economic fabric of Canada, the United Kingdom or the USA. But the issue has high emotive potential, raising fundamental concerns in relation to economic well-being and the livelihood of numerous individuals. Animal rights protests have contributed to a serious slump in the fur industry in North America and overseas. The end of seal hunting on the east coast of Canada is believed to have contributed to the marked reduction of cod stocks, with disastrous consequences for the fishing industry. It is now becoming evident that the militancy of the activists is beginning to initiate a backlash.” For this reason, the most effective
approach consists of a series of preemptive measures: “Caution will be needed to avoid overreaction, and vigilance will be necessary to prevent the law being taken into the hands of those not authorized to maintain it. A properly balanced response can be achieved, however, by ensuring that the public, all levels of government, and the security authorities are kept aware and well-informed. Acts of vandalism, of whatever nature, must be clearly shown for what they represent – an affront to democratic principles and the rule of law.”

*Source: www.csis.-scrs.gc.ca

6. Jacques Baud’s analysis of ecologic terrorism

The author places terrorist ecology in the field of one-cause-only terrorism (p. 681) in which a militant group forms on the basis of a specific idea that has, however, global consequences. It is anything but rare – explains the author – to find the same members in other groups and the use of operative procedures that include civil disobedience techniques, vandalism, arson, and bomb attacks. The undeniably “noble” reasons such as protecting humanity against the atrocities of capitalism lead them to act against human life, considered as expendable. Consider, for example, species-ism, according to which humans and animals share equal rights, and therefore the use of violence in defense of animal life appears justifiable. The writer identifies the following as terrorism ecology organizations: ALF, ARM, HRS, MFA, and PETA, and EARTH FIRST!, EARTH NIGHT, EMETEC, THE DAVID ORGANIZATION and THE EARTH LIBERATION ARMY as the movements related to radical ecology in North America.

7. The AISI analysis of eco-terrorism*

The article published in the official AISI magazine, Gnosis, issue 3/2006 entitled “Il movimento e il no alla TAV, alla scoperta della lotta dal basso”, regarding no Tav antagonism is extremely important. It begins with a look at the operative procedures: “The No Tav Protest in the Susa Valley in the Piedmont region conducted through demonstrations, barricades, road and railway blocks, strikes, and finally fights against police forces sent to protect the building sites where geotechnical drillings were to be performed as a preliminary phase of the building of high speed rails claimed national headlines in the final months of last year.” No less important is the role of antagonism: “an important role in the Susa Valley protest, with its inhabitants strongly opposing the Tav project, has been carried out by antagonist extremism, as shown in the reports for the disorders caused, in a high percentage, by protesters belonging to Autonomy and anarchic-insurrectionalism movements”. The way that these groups instrumentalized local discontent must be considered: “Disappointed by the
negative evolution of the ‘revolutionary rupture’ strategy, of the most recent mass protest movements such as the anti-globalization movement, which after its first explosion was then absorbed by Social Forums, and the no war movement, which proved to be incapable of radicalizing anti-imperialist and anti-militarist campaigns, the anti-globalization and no-war movements identified in a solid mobilization of a people determined to defend its own territory from the enemy, a population learning to developing a conflict that could switch from a local to a general dimension, and could shift from resistance to attack”. Despite observing the impossibility of taking such a specific struggle outside the territory, the author underlines the risk that “the influence of such movements can lead to a progressive legitimization of the radical conflict in the hearts of the people.” Apart from the specific case of Susa Valley eco-terrorism, the role of the anarchic movements in Toscana is also important, as shown in the article published in AISI magazine, Gnosis, Issue 3/2006 entitled “Il magma anarchico in Toscana”. Revolutionary Action, an important anarchic group was operative as early as the 1970s. The militants in the more extremist anarchic-libertarian area, recognizing the strengths of the Movement and considering the cultural developments of International Situationalism and the RAF (Rote Armee Fraktion) are responsible for the birth of this type of organization. Its leaders are Gianfranco Faina and Salvatore Cirnieri. “Affinity groups” first theorized by Bonanno came into existence “where traditional ties are substituted by deeply sympathetic relations, with a high level of intimacy, acquaintance and mutual trust among its members”. These affinity groups are similar to closed “Communes” and their modus vivendi can be compared to certain Mafia organizations – such as Sicilian families and the Calabrese “’ndrine” in which the level of self-control is taken to the highest peak. Another organization is the Anarchic-Insurrectionalist Revolutionary Organization, whose genesis is explained by the Ros Police as follows: “the start is simple: the ‘affinity groups’ overcome in both structure and purpose the limits of the common association and organize themselves thanks to international ties as well. Once again, the name of Alfred Maria Bonanno comes up: he lived until 1995 in Bagno a Ripoli in a house that was the base of the anarchic journal ‘Cane Nero’, a primarily local publication that was above all an organ of discussion.” At the time, ‘Bu-Bu-Settete’ social center (a humorous nickname that conceals important anarchists) was active in Florence. Florence returned to the spotlight in May 1997, in the police report that reads as follows: “In Ciompi and San Mark squares, stands were set up to distribute flyers against the so-called ‘Marini Investigation’ signed by ‘Anarchici a Firenze’ (Florence anarchists) and protest against the arrests made by the Carabineer Corps between May 19-20, 1997 at the social center ‘La Baracca’ in Scandicci”, near Florence. The birth of Revolutionary Offensive Cells made the subversive context even more
complex: “the first demands by the Revolutionary Offensive Cells date back to July 2003. The operative continuity of the Revolutionary Offensive Cells in Pisa, characterized by threatening subversive features and the publication of a clarifying document sent to certain newspapers last July strengthened the hypothesis of a certain course of action that develops gradually and illustrates the originality of a new plan for armed struggle and the conquest of the acknowledgement of independent space. The subversive impulse attempts to link different revolutionary groups in order to seize the opportunities offered by favorable conditions of conflict”. As emphasized by the author, the origins of eco-terrorism can be found in the demands made in the name of Camenisch: “it is no coincidence that in 2004 on January 21st, Camenish’s birthday, the cable car in Abetone was set on fire and the following message was written on the walls: “Burn the destroyers, free Marco”. On the same day in Fossola (near Massa Carrara) an Abacom booster was blown up, even if the act seems to be happened the day before. On January 21st, however, a Wind telecommunications antenna in Pietrasanta was attacked and a similar message (“Free Camenisch”) appeared. Another message was found at the local train station: “For Edo and Sole for Marco and Nicolo, burn the jails”. Another attack was made on January 21st in Castiglioncello where two mobile phone antennas were damaged. Everything leads back to Camenisch and other relevant figures”. The eco-anarchic group “Il Silvestre” also appears to be extremely important. In June 2004, Pisan public prosecutor Antonio di Bugno, who conducts the investigations of the Carabineer Corps, authorized various searches of the premises of the anarchic members of “Il Silvestre”: Francesco Gioa, Alessio Perondi and William Frediani. The investigations continued and Costantino Ragusa, Giuseppe Bonamici, Leonardo Landi, Benedetta Galante, Alice Motta, Gioacchino Somma, Federico Bonamici and Francesco Finocchi were investigated. Since July 2003, according to the Carabineer investigations, they intended to “perform acts of violence to subvert the democratic order, a program carried out by committing crimes, private damage and violence, letters containing bullet shells, illegally manufacturing and possessing explosives (tins of inflammable liquids, wicks and matches), and illegally possessing bullets for common weapons. All of these actions were to be directed against trade union offices and leaders (Cgl, Cisl, Uil,) and political parties like Alleanza Nazionale, Forza Italia, La Margherita, and L’Italia dei Valori, Carabinieri stations, journalists, temporary employment agencies, private companies and professionals”. Costantino Ragusa, one of the group’s leaders, is an important representative: “he is responsible for distributing more or less illegal magazines and manuals of subversion throughout Italy”. Ragusa’s political iter is clearly identifiable: born on 5th November, 1976, in Bergamo, according to the profile made by the detectives, Costantino Ragusa emerged as a member of the anarchic group “Macchia Nera”, before
preferring political commitment more closely linked to ecologic and animal defense theories. Ragusa, as a former activist of Bergamo’s “Comitato di Liberazione Animale”, is considered to be the leader of the anarchic-environmentalist group “Il Silvestre” in Pisa, and as explained by the detectives, takes part in various eco-environmental and anarchic-insurrectionalist initiatives, such as sit-ins and protests, often unannounced to support detained militants like Marco Camenisch.

*Source: www.sisde.it

8. Eco-terrorism according to Vittorfranco Pisano

As we have already examined in detail in the volume Problemi e prospettive dei movimenti antagonisti del Novecento, according to Pisano non-conventional conflict with terroristic operative procedures is characterized by: 1. physical or psychic criminal violence; 2. political, religious or social-political motives; 3. adopting dynamic or illegal structures, 4. actions carried out by non-state or without state-support. According to the author, eco-terrorism is a degeneration of the environmentalist movement. His identification of the reasons behind the choice of terrorism is particularly illuminating and the second aspect underlined by the author on page 67 appears to be highly significant “determining and identifying one or more radical and revolutionary subculture carriers of subversive and terroristic projects”. These subcultures are, in fact, inspired by ideologies of different schools of thought (right-wing, left-wing or anarchic). Moreover, the author explains how, in order to prevent terroristic actions, subversive agitation must be monitored “through the analysis of propaganda of radical publications together with protests against institutions”.

As regards eco-terrorism in particular, the author notes two main trends: the environmentalist trend and the animalistic trend; the former was born as a consequence of the degeneration of the movement for animal protection, the latter from the nature preservation movement. Animalism has its roots in bio-centric theories, whereas environmentalism is founded in eco-centric theories. It is nevertheless difficult to completely describe eco-terrorism due to its various affinities with the anti-militarist and anti-nuclear movements. At any rate, eco-terrorism strikes both people and infrastructures, and intimidates and influences public opinion through the media. In addition, it is structured in the same way as illegal cells and/or independent horizontal structures and its actions are carried out through sabotage, arson, bomb attacks and threats.
The eco-terrorism of Marco Camenisch

It is difficult to deny that the remarks of the most authoritative representative of Italian eco-terrorism are merely an operative interpretation of primitivism. The author’s antagonism, in fact, follows a path similar to primitivism. First of all, the writer emphatically refuses capitalism and the justice of the bourgeoisie; secondly, he shares an ecocentric and animalistic vision and considers the destruction of hydroelectric power stations, nuclear plants, and all university and scientific facilities that promote breeding and vivisection necessary. Thirdly, the author condemns American and European colonialism and refuses patriarchy and monogamy; lastly, in addition to seconding the ideas of native peoples regarding lifestyle and conception of reality (those of nomadic people with little hierarchy), the author refuses parliamentary democracy, and national and international political and economic oligarchies, and defends liberation struggles in Nicaragua, Cuba and Vietnam. Naturally enough, he also refutes European and American anti-terroristic laws, and the laws that demonstrate the repressive and eco-fascist intentions of all modern states. It comes as no surprise that Camenisch supports ALF and Earth First!, movements that in his opinion offer real hope in definitively dismantling current society. Apart from the numerous terrorist attacks carried out by Camenisch himself, the magazine “Terre Selvagge” – promoted by the “Il Silvestre” group – represents a good example of incitement and promotion of terrorism. The editors, in fact, share the ideas of primitivism and explicitly defend the operative procedures and theories of Camenisch. Above and beyond the specific battles waged by the magazine (against animal testing, GMOs, the nuclear industry and others), the editors have a deep knowledge of and sympathy for the English ALF, whose they defend. Equally explicit is their praise for the activities of certain Italian anarchic groups – for instance “Crocenera Anarchica” – and their defense of the remarks of Bonanno and Porcu (well-known exponents of anarchic-insurrectionalism). In summary, the magazine defends antagonist operative procedures that resemble direct interventionism and therefore the use of sabotage and bomb attacks in vivisection facilities.

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