

Chapter 7

Colonialism Disguised as Protection

ABSTRACT

Chapter 7 investigates the popular concept of environmental protection. The authors of this book timidly challenge the notion that nature needs human protection, since nature mainly needs protection from the human species. It seems more apparent that existing power structures use any vulnerable group to argue for the need to protect them, when what those disregarded groups want most is self-worth and unconditional affection, not to be kept guarded under lock and key. Often, the vulnerable species or immature stage of development said to be in dire jeopardy is not a stage at all, but tragically viewed as a stage along a ladder of conceptual merit from dependent to sovereign, and inedible seed to valuable fruit. This seems in evidence by a colonial worldview that sees juvenility as a waste of resources, rather than that brief liberty called childhood inherent to every species.

INTRODUCTION

“Every man I meet wants to protect me. I can’t figure out what from” – Mae West

In this chapter, the authors will explain that the new popular demand to protect the environment is not motivated by a new, enlightened love of that environment. It would be terrific if it were, but there is too much evidence

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that it isn't. Rather, the current call to protect the environment is still about exploiting it. The current situation is mostly about demanding dominion over living beings that have no means to represent themselves (which is how men of sufficient means and ambition have exploited women, children, and animals in the past; Goodell et al., 1985). But whether dominion is in the form of outright conquest and exploitation, or a subtle hegemony using the idea of extinction as a means to practice hegemony, it is still about who gets to control those who have no visible means of control. These authors ask the reader, why do living things need to be legally protected and intelligently controlled? How did they survive before humans came on the scene? If this service were offered *gratis*, at the unrecoverable expense of those devoted to saving Nature, one might be inclined to believe the present concern was a genuine act of altruism. But mostly one sees appeals for more money to fight against others making money off of Nature—even if Nature does not need money anywhere near as much as it needs mercy. It was the promise of money that drove Mankind to treat Nature as an unguarded pantry, and now it is money that promises to preserve what is left.

The authors submit that the idea of protection is not really about concern for another group. It is much more about a means to seize power, maintain power, and to justify the exacting of regular tribute to fund its exceptional claims of intragroup and intergroup dominance (Paulhus & Williams, 2002)¹. The protector views itself as superior to the thing it protects, rather than humbling itself to what it says it cares about (Domination, 2019). This lack of simple reverence for what one boldly offers to protect has been called *paternalism* across history. Paternalism is defined as interfering with another's autonomy to benefit oneself—ostensibly to benefit the other at a cost of his or her autonomy (Goodell et al., 1985). One can also see a simulation of this demeaning relationship between a mind-like guardian and a body-like beast within each human individual, because the same mental phenomenon does the same thing to even one human being—wherein any ideas held dear by an individual may seek to influence, dominate, and exploit that individual in exchange for unrealistic promises of personal reward. This often surfaces as desperate obsessions and futile compulsions that an individual or a group of individuals are terrified of ignoring—lest the “chosen” entity lose its imagined favor, and incur the swift wrath of a jealous and outrageous misfortune (National Institute of Mental Health, 2013).

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