Entangled Bodies, Entangled Minds: Becoming With the Environment through Organic Farming

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Abstract

This thesis explores the concept of entanglement between humans and the environment. Using Donna Haraway's notion of *becoming with,* a process which requires respect and cooperation with non-human organisms, I will attempt to show how a group of organic farmers in Älmsta, Sweden interact with the environment around them and how this influences their subjectivities. By examining themes of "interaction, knowledge transmission and the *oikos* (household)" I argue that through these subjective processes of being and relating to the surrounding environment, one can become more environmentally aware discover a sense of interconnectedness to the environment. The goal of this thesis is to merely offer a new way to view both the human who resides within the environment and the environment itself.

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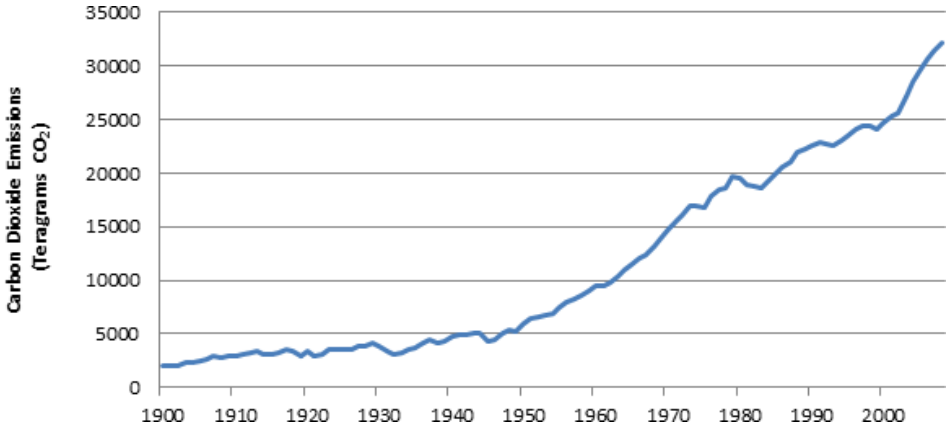
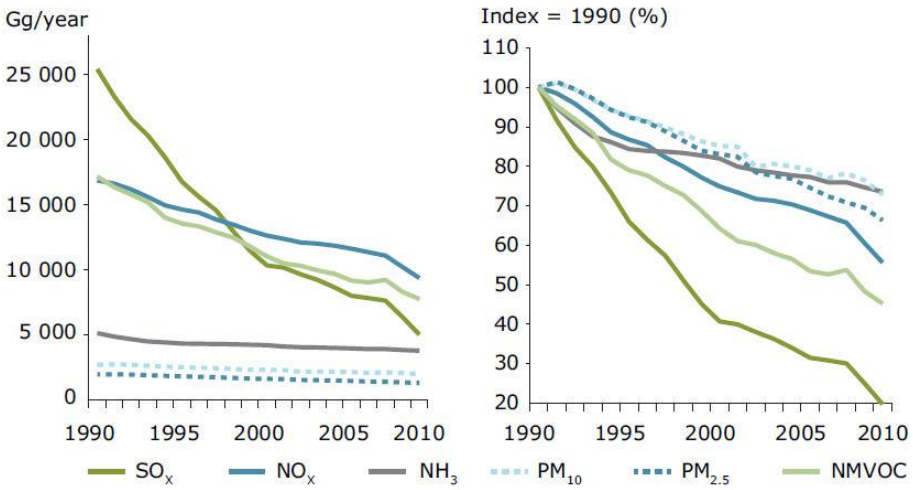


Figure 1



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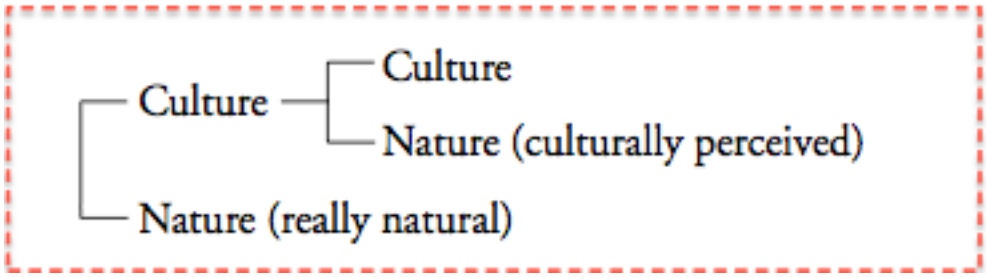

Figure 3

Introduction

> To be entangled is not simply to be intertwined with another, as in the joining of separate entities, but to lack an independent, self-contained existence. Existence is not an individual affair. Individuals do not preexist their interactions; rather, individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating.
> Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*

I am waiting at the local grocery store to be picked up by Dan, an organic farmer in Älmsta, Sweden. It is early in the afternoon and I have just traveled nine hours get here: seven by plane from Atlanta and two by bus via Stockholm. It is sunny and warm; early August. The year is 2009 and it is my first time in Europe. Dan arrives in his dark green Volvo and we meet in person for the first time. His large round glasses are completed with an unshaved face and work attire. He appears to be in his early fifties and I become immediately fond of him and his peaceful disposition. The drive to the farm is only about ten minutes, in a small village-like area known as Senneby. The short ride is accompanied by introductory types of conversation as we pass through a landscape composed of green fields and forests dotted with small red wooden houses and barns. When we arrive to the farm we are immediately greeted by Jesper, the family's sheep dog. The rest of the family is having fika, an afternoon tea break, on the picnic table outside. We join and I meet three of his daughters, his partner Brit and a fellow farmer Gesa. This would be my home for the next two months and my first experience with farming. My *becoming with.*

This thesis is about entanglement, dwelling, knowledge transmission and the shaping of subjectivity. It is about the ways in which we become intertwined with our surroundings. I will attempt to explore the practice of organic farming through the lens of

Donna Haraway's concept of *becoming with.* In her book *When Species Meet*, Haraway describes *becoming with* as an active process of cooperation (Haraway 2008). She uses the term to examine the relationship between human and non-human species in order to show how she believes these "knotted" relationships "co-shape one another in layers of reciprocating complexity" (2008:42).

Thus in this thesis I will be treating the "environment" as a "non-human species," which is not a singular-independent being but an encompassing realm: A place where living organisms both dwell within and compose its make up. When I address the "environment" I will be discussing the natural or organic surroundings that sustain life, usually referred to as the "natural environment." Thus the environment, though effected by humans, cannot be reduced to human perception alone, at least not in the sense that it is independent but only that it is not constructed[1]. In this thesis I will attempt to show how organic farming is a practice in which one can possibly *become with* the environment and to do this I will discuss the subjectivities of the farmers I interacted with.

Subjectivity, for this thesis, is heavily influenced by Haraway and *becoming with*. Following her definition of *becoming with* as an active process, I will also consider subjectivity as a process that requires interaction and engagement with others and the

[1] This definition of "environment" is a combination of texts written by Donna Haraway (2008), Tim Ingold (2000, 2010) and Timothy Morton (2007, 2008). From Haraway I use her notion of *becoming with* as an opportunity to come to know something through interaction, in this case, the surrounding environment. From Ingold I use his concept of construction in contrast with growing which will be discussed later in the thesis and from Morton I use his notion of entanglement and the realization of interconnectedness, another concept I will explore in further detail later on.

environment. I will discuss both *becoming with* and subjectivity in more detail in the introduction of chapter two and the various sections of my second chapter.

The first chapter of my thesis is a literature review that offers perspectives of various philosophers who write on environmental matters. Through discussing texts by Tim Ingold, Timothy Morton and William Cronon, I present some popular topics in the field of environmental philosophy. Each of these texts examine the common theme of "disconnectedness or detachment" (Cronon 1995, Ingold 2000, Morton 2008) between the human mind and the environment around us as a founding source of the current environmental crises. They argue that this separateness is problematic for it causes humans to believe they are independent from the environment. The purpose of this first chapter is to set the scene for the rest of the thesis. Here the reader will encounter the dystopic landscape that is all too familiar in the western world: pollution, environmental decay, global warming and so on. I feel this section is necessary in order to highlight the common dystopic trains of thought popular in environmental philosophy since of one of the goals of this thesis is to offer new ways to view and position one's self in the environment. In the conclusion of this chapter I introduce Donna Haraway's *becoming with* as leading towards a possible genesis for optimistic environmental thought. *Becoming with* will thus serve as both the bridge into the second chapter and the ethnography.

In the second chapter of the thesis I explore different aspects of subjectivity such as interactions, knowledge acquisition and the role of the household, which emerged during my farming experience. This chapter is composed of three different sections: "The Processes of Interaction," "Enskilment: The Subjective Process of Knowledge

Transmission," and "Oikos: (Eco) logical Entanglement." Through exploring these various themes I hope to show the ways in which subjectivity is formed and reformed in the context of organic farming and how this relates to *becoming with.* Throughout this chapter I interweave my ethnography to demonstrate various concepts of connectedness with both the subjectivity of the people I came in contact with on the farm of Senneby Trägård and myself as both were continually being (re) formed within the same context.

My conclusion to the thesis seeks to accomplish two things*:* One, to unify the themes presented in chapter two in order to address the thesis' implications regarding *becoming with,* subjectivity and organic farming; Secondly, to put forward questions and suggestions for future research that could further utilize and explore subjectivity and *becoming with*, specifically explorations of sensory experience in relation to organic farming.

Methods

My ethnographic fieldwork was collected on three different occasions, spanning four years and two locations. In 2009, I had the opportunity to volunteer on a farm in Älmsta, Sweden through WWOOF (World Wide Opportunity on Organic Farms), which will be further discussed in the second chapter. In 2009, I spent August and September working at Senneby Tragard. During this time, I kept a detailed journal filled with notes on participant observation and unstructured interviews with my farming partners. Two years later, in the second half of 2011, I became an intern at a non-profit organic farm named Global Growers in Atlanta, Georgia. The objective of Global Growers, which I will also discuss in the second chapter, was to offer the practice of organic farming to

refugees in the metropolitan Atlanta area. The core group of workers, twelve Burundi women, met everyday except Sunday to tend the fields while I was there to help and learn. At this time I was enrolled in an Anthropology senior seminar class and used the research and interviews I conducted at Global Growers for my final university project. My most recent research took place over a nineteen-day period in April 2013 on the same Swedish farm I had worked at in 2009. I decided to go back to this previous site because of the relationships I had formed, which would allow more access to interviews and a spatial understanding of the farm's layout. I thought it would also be beneficial to be able to compare not only my experiences in Atlanta and Älmsta but also to compare my two visits to the same site, which took place during completely different seasons of the year.

Ever since I first became interested in the field of anthropology, I have always been drawn by the method of participant observation. I feel that participant observation is the best way a researcher can really understand her or his field. Specifically I believe that the fieldwork I have carried out has been more what H. Russell Bernard calls the "observing participant" (Bernard 1994:138), which puts even more of an emphasis on "participation". I was not merely observing in the fields, making notes while others planted or harvested, I was alongside them rooting and pulling, jotting down notes later in the evening when tasks were done. By doing this I believe my fellow workers saw me more as a farmer than just a researcher. Of course I still conducted interviews but these were always informal and conversational. As it happened, I found that most useful information arose came from casual conversations in the fields or while planting in the greenhouse.

Although both time and space separate these three research occasions, I believe they are equally valuable to both my current perspective on farming as they each contribute to the findings presented in this thesis. In the following collection of experiences, texts and references, I hope the reader is able to follow my line of reasoning to begin to understand the ways in which farming is a practice that incorporates many different aspects of subjectivity and interaction with the environment. The practice of organic farming and the subjectivities that engage with it in the context of Senneby Trägård are, I believe, a *becoming with.*

1. Locating *Nature* within the Environment

> Human exceptionalism shows itself to be the specter that damns the body to illusion, to reproduction of the same, to incest, and so makes re-membering impossible.
>
> -Donna Haraway *When Species Meet*

I will begin by painting an all-too-familiar landscape: waste filled waterways, thick clouds of black smog lingering between skyscrapers, fruits and vegetables coated with harmful toxins, climate change, global warming, and the destruction of the natural world. In 2013, we live in a world mostly powered by the use of non-renewable energy known as fossil fuels. Coal, natural gas and oil dominate both the world's energy economy and the environment's well being. In the past century, carbon dioxide emissions have "increased by over 16 times between 1900 and 2008 and by about 1.5 times between 1990 and 2008" (EPA 2013)[2]. This extreme increase in CO2 emissions is the source of global warming and eventually (currently) leads to non-natural climate change. Statistics on environmental pollution are abundant and easily available but what remains a question is the reason why humans continue to exploit such harmful and non-renewable methods for energy. Over the past couple of decades we have seen an increase in environmental awareness initiatives in the western world which might have contributed to Europe's air pollution rates have decreased since 1990[3]; yet just this May (2013), "carbon dioxide levels [have] hit [a] troubling milestone" (Vastag and Samenow 2013).

Throughout this chapter, I will explore the notion of environmental decay through literature written by theorists whose work often incorporates aspects of ecology in

[2] Reference Figure 1
[3] Reference Figure 2

relation to the social world. Through the examination of these texts, we will be provided with a possible explanation for the depletion of the natural world and its resources. It is not my intention to suggest that the explanations and discussion in these texts are the sole reason for pollution but I believe it is important to include these perspectives for they offer an interesting explanation that could be useful in the pursuit of ecological wellbeing. There are two main objectives for this chapter: one, to present the perspectives of theorists in the field of environmental philosophy who are committed to understanding the current state of the environment and to offer their possible solutions to the matter, and two, as a sort of framework in which to situate myself and attempt to move beyond it by discussing themes of "connectedness, entanglement and *becoming with"* in correlation with my own ethnographic field work in Älmsta, Sweden.

Specifically, I will focus on disconnectedness, which is a key theme that unites each of the following texts. Disconnectedness is synonymous with detachment and often leads to a sense of "otherness" and differentiation from oneself. This form of separation occurs on many different levels: mentally, physically, pragmatically and theoretically. And the effects of disconnectedness can be experienced in both the social and natural world. My separation of the "social and natural world" is a conscious faux pas meant to preface what will follow. For it is the goal of this chapter, through the lens of the following theorists, to attempt to show that these two realms are in fact only one. Thus, with the help of Tim Ingold, Timothy Morton and William Cronon, I will discuss theories that propose the cause of our current environmental predicament is predicated upon the false belief that humans and nature exist independently from one another.

Tim Ingold

We will begin with Tim Ingold and his concepts of *nature, culture, making and growing* in the western world. In the third chapter of his book *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill,* Tim Ingold uses Richard Shweder's concept of "intentional worlds" to discuss the misguided concept of *nature* in the West (Ingold 2000:40). For both Shweder and Ingold, nature works as a tool for organizing the objects around us in a way that suits us best. Ingold claims this idea is "deeply embedded within Western thought" (2000:41). However, this construction is not limited to nature, for he proposes that culture as well, when in contrast with nature, is also constructed[4]. Therefore, both nature and culture are perceptions in the human mind and in turn acted out socially. At first glance it may appear that Ingold is merely reinforcing the classic nature-culture binary but in fact, quite the opposite is true. For he is claiming that the binary not only exists in the mind but is actually a culturally constructed idea that is far from universal. He does this to compare the concept of *nature* cross-culturally. To accomplish this, he examines various ethnographies of "hunting and gathering" cultures from around the world and situates their perspective of nature beside the dominant western perspective. He employs this technique in numerous chapters throughout his book (2000:10, 77, 174) of which I will discuss in further detail later. Ingold's objective in this section is to explore what he calls a separation between "the mind and the environment" in the context of our current environmental situation (2000:42).

Ingold expands on this detachment in the fifth chapter of his book, "Making things, growing plants, raising animals and bringing up children." In this chapter Ingold

analyzes the terms "making, growing, production and collection" (2000:77). It is also in this chapter where Ingold discusses agriculture in a cross-cultural context. Ingold postulates that in modernity, farming has become a practice of "production or making", which he puts in contrast with "collection and growing". Ingold states, "The idea of production as making, I argue, is embedded in a grand narrative of the human transcendence of nature" (2000:77). Production ties in nicely with the previous section on *nature,* for production, or at least the perception of *production,* is a product of the perception of *nature* in the capitalist-minded commodity-obsessive context Ingold positions himself. Earlier I said, "for both Shweder and Ingold, nature works as a tool for organizing the objects around us in a way that suits us best." Now, with the use of *production,* it is possible to expand on this claim. Ingold feels it is the trend in Western society, to be under the impression that nature exists for culture as a resource for cultural growth (Ingold 2000:80) in that certain objects and areas of nature become a commodity for our consumption. This becomes highly visible in a capitalist society, in which Ingold claims that farming can be seen as one of these sectors of consumption. Farming, like other areas of capitalistic production, has become a practice of transforming nature for the benefit of humans (2000:80). It has not "become" so in actuality or in practice, but in the way we perceive it in our minds, a disclaimer Ingold continuously attempts to stress. For the purpose of Ingold's claim is once again, to address what he feels is a misconception in the way humans relate to the environment. He does not suggest farming has always had this motivation or even the term itself assumes an anthropocentric role; the significance is that it has become biased through a detached perspective regarding the

[4] Reference Figure 3

environment. Ingold believes this point of view is a result of our confusion between *making* and *growing* (2000:80-81). Here we are introduced to two different types of *production*. On the one hand, production can be seen as the transformation of some materials into something else, which could be termed *making*. But *production* could also be defined by its emphasis on *nurturing* and this could be seen as *growing.* The difference between *growing* and *making* are important for Ingold because of their intention. To *make* is one-sided, while to *grow* is mutual. Thus, according to Ingold, farming is a process of *growing* and not *making*, which is contrary to many narratives and practices of Western farming. It does not involve the transformation of *nature* but a nurturing with nature (2000:81). This confusion between *making* and *growing* stems from the separateness discussed in the section above. Ingold supports this claim by discussing four ethnographies of non-western cultures that embody this *growing* mentality. Ingold's concept of *growing*, along with the ethnographies he references, will be explored in more detail in the second chapter.

Both chapters of Ingold's book I have discussed deal with the notion of detachment. In chapter three Ingold introduces the concept of *nature* in a western context whereas chapter five merely expands on this concept to address the confusion between *making* and *growing.* Ingold's writing displays nicely the possible complications (environmental decay and all it entails) of placing the human as external to the environment and thus seeing oneself as independent from the surrounding world. Timothy Morton takes on a similar approach in discussing human's relationship with nature.

Timothy Morton

Morton, like Ingold, focuses on the idea of nature as a culturally constructed object that is exploited, both physically and mentally, in order to fit our needs. But Morton attacks this notion from a different perspective, the imagination. In his article, "Ecologocentrism: Unworking Animals*,"* he states, "One of the things that modernity has damaged in its appropriation of the Earth has been thinking" (Morton 2008:73). Throughout this article, Morton attempts to understand the possible reasons for our unbalanced imagination towards the environment in order to transcend our current way of thinking. Once again, we see *nature* defined by its otherness, detached from the human mind. Morton asks, "How do we transition from seeing what we call "Nature" as an object "over yonder"?" (2008:73). Attempting to answer this question, Morton borrows Jacques Derrida's theory of *logocentrism*[5] and renames it *ecologocentrism* in order to fit his ecological needs (2008:75).

> Derrida argues that logocentrism underlies Western philosophy's attempt to ground meaning in an essential form. This essay holds that *ecologocentrism* underpins most environmentalist philosophy, preventing access to the full scope of interconnectedness. Thinking, even environmentalist thinking, sets up "Nature" as a reified thing in the distance, "over yonder," under the sidewalk, on the other side where the grass is always greener, preferably in the mountains, in the wild.
> (2008:75)

Thus, *nature* is confined by our definitions of what it can and cannot do for us. Following logocentrism, *Ecologocentrism* signifies both hierarchy and detachment. Morton believes, the way we discuss the environment confines it only in relation to what it can do

[5] Logocentrism is an idea used by Jacques Derrida in his book *Of Grammatology* in correlation with his theory of deconstruction. Logocentrism speaks to the relationship between writing and speaking and the way in which writing has become subordinate to speaking because it is seen as a signifier of a signifier. He uses this term to discuss this

for humans, so there is a degree of separation between the environment and ourselves. As he states above, "even environmentalist thinking" suffers this same fate. Once the consciousness of *nature* exists, the problem arises. Morton states, "Nobody likes it when you mention the unconscious…because when you mention it, it becomes *conscious*. In the same way, when you mention the environment, you bring it into the foreground" (2007:3). It is as if once it is spoken into existence, it becomes external and "stops being That Thing Over There that surrounds and sustains us" (2007:3). Morton believes this mental detachment is the reason for our current environmental dilemma. Yet Morton goes even further to discuss how our "admiration" for nature is also a potential danger.

Unlike Ingold, whose research is more anthropologically rooted, Morton relies more on philosophy and art in relation to ecology. Thus, Morton speaks more on the way aesthetics affects one's perspective. More specifically, Morton analyzes how aesthetics affect the way we perceive the environment (2007, 2008, 2010). When we gaze at a landscape, a mountain range or ocean, we often praise nature for its beauty and magnificence. This is exactly what Morton is claiming to be problematic; it is not the admiration in itself that is troublesome, but the failure to recognize our dependence on what we are admiring. Morton states, "Putting something called Nature on a pedestal and admiring it from afar does for the environment what patriarchy does for the figure of Woman" calling the paradox an "act of sadistic admiration" (Morton 2007:5).His purpose here is to address the idea that our admiration is not enough to save the environment and there comes a point where nature is not so "sublime." He claims:

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subordination; the same way Morton uses *ecologocentrism* to discuss the subordination of nature.

> Sentimentality is not working. Nor is the wild energy of the sublime. For nature to be sublime, we have to be at least a little distant from it. A toxic leak is not sublime by the time it has entered the lungs. Global warming is not sublime: it is far more disorientating, and painful, than that.
>
> (2008:73)

Morton believes we must, "de-Bambify nature: it cannot be just cute any more" (2008:73) and to accomplish this, we must first become aware and then act upon that awareness. Morton believes the former part of this objective, awareness, is already in effect as result of science and statistics (2008:72). But perhaps the real reason we have become aware is due to the amount of *natural* disasters and environmental decay that have been caused by humans. Morton calls this "negative awareness" and though it is still human-centric, he feels it could be a starting point for change (2008:93). He then looks to the society for a solution claiming, "we should be using culture not only to create a framework in which global warming science becomes recognizable and legible…we should be slowing down, reflecting, and using this moment as an opportunity to change and develop" (2008:92). Morton concludes his article with the similar concerned tone he began with and believes if we are to change the current environmental situation, "We must come to terms with the fact not that we are destroying *nature*, but that there was no *nature*" (2008:94).

Morton's philosophical and phenomenological approach is similar in content with Ingold's ethnographic positioning, for they both believe detachment is the main cause of concern. The concept of admiration is also echoed in William Cronon's article "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." However, Cronon examines this issue with a more historical lens by exploring the concepts of the "sublime and frontier" in relation to the *wilderness*.

William Cronon

Cronon begins his article with a statement: "The time has come to rethink wilderness" (Cronon 1995:69). The article discusses two main objectives regarding *wilderness:* one, to trace its history and the transition from a site of fear to place of the sublime; and two, to attempt to explain how this admiration is problematic. He begins by explaining what *wilderness* used to be, before the 19th century. At this time, "its connotations were anything but positive, and the emotion one was most likely to feel in its presence was "bewilderment" or terror… [The wilderness] was a place to which one came only against one's will, and always in fear and trembling" (1995:70). He references different literatures and stories from the Bible to defend this claim. However, he notes, this negative image of wilderness changed by the end of the 19th century and became what it is known as today, a site of the beauty and immanence (1995:71). Cronon states the obsession with the *wilderness* in western culture, specifically American history and society, "can be gathered under two broad headings: the sublime and the frontier" (1995:71). He defines sublime as a result of Romanticism and the longing for a place that is "sacred" and idealized (1995:72). He offers texts by William Wordsworth and shows how his writing, "took the physical mountain on which he stood and transmuted it into an icon of the sublime" (1995:74). It was at this time that the *wilderness* became "tamed- not just by those who were building settlements in its midst but also by those who most celebrated its inhuman beauty" (1995:74). This was around the same time in American history when national parks began to be established. Large immanent landscapes became "protected" while other not-so-sublime landscapes were still left

unnoticed, like the swamps and great-plains (1995:73). The other reason for our obsession with the *wilderness,* Cronon claims, was the "national myth of the frontier" (1995:75).

By the end of the 19th century, the American frontier was coming to an end and Cronon believes this is a major reason why certain sublime, untouched landscapes became a new symbol for the frontier. The new frontier was thus sectioned off and transformed into *wilderness.* This created space was also a site of imperialism, for the landscapes the American government deemed "worthy" and "unihabitable" were in reality already inhabited by various Native American groups. Thus we are "remind[ed] just how invented, just how constructed, the American wilderness really is" (1995:78). This is where we really feel Cronon's message; the *wilderness* is not really *wild* at all, but a culturally conceived idea. Once again, the theme of detachment is evident. Cronon believes the issue of proximity is an issue here. People travel and seek the *wilderness* when really the wilderness is all around us (1995:84). Cronon claims our "fetish" with the sublime has caused us to "adopt too high a standard for what counts as "natural"" (1995:85). He feels this stems from our lack of realization to the fact that we are "inextricably tied to the ecological systems that sustain [our] lives" (1995:85). Cronon suggests a way to possibly combat this misconception is to transfer the way we view and praise the *wilderness* to other aspects of not only the environment but also life. He believes it is not the way we see the *wilderness* that is the problem, the problem is that we do not recognize that all realms and aspects of the environment are completely a part of us, not independent (1995:86).

Ingold, Morton and Cronon's methods and writing style vary with their respective fields of study but what they share is the intention to explore various ecological matters, especially in regards to environmental decay. As we have seen through these texts, the workings of detachment play a large role in the way we perceive the environment and its endangered state.

It was important to present these arguments because I feel they serve as a nice preface to my own research. Once again, I do not intend to suggest the theories mentioned above are universal in anyway, for I believe each culture and individual experiences the environment differently. I do, however, believe these texts were necessary to include in order to provide the reader and myself with a starting point for attempting to address certain issues regarding the environment. I will not remain fixated on detachment, for it is not something I can speak on with certainty. Instead, in the following chapter, I will explore Donna Haraway's concept of *becoming with* in relation to organic farming in an attempt to regard the subjectivities of the farmers in Älmsta and myself as a practice of ecological *entanglement* (Ingold 2010, Morton 2008).

2. Interacting within the Environment
An Introduction

To be one is always to *become with* many.
-Donna Haraway *When Species Meet*

It is my first time back since 2009. Once again I am waiting at the ICA supermarket in Älmsta for Dan to pick me up. Memories are triggered by the "Välkommen till Väddö" (Welcome to Väddö) sign standing tall in the parking lot though white snow now blankets the rooftops and fields. It is April now, 2013; the weather has changed the way the landscape looks but I still recognize everything around me. It is not Dan but Brit, his partner, who shows up to pick me up. I get in the car, the same green Volvo as before, hug Brit and we drive up to Senneby, this time discussing what has changed in the past four years. All the children have moved away, two of which now have children of their own. Jesper, the sheep dog and Findus, the farm cat, have both passed away from old age but, "things on the farm, are about the same," Brit said. She asks me what type of research I will be doing this time around and I explain "really, I will be doing the same thing as last time, just documenting a lot more." As we pull into the driveway I look around and notice everything, which, other than the snow, appears to be in the same place, she responds, "I guess you remember this place? Like I said, not much has changed but we do not mind it." Back to where my research began.

The purpose of this chapter and its subsections is to attempt, by using Haraway's concept of *becoming with,* to explore the subjectivity of both the farmers in Älmsta and my own within the landscape of Senneby Trägård. Before progressing however, it is necessary to explain three key elements of my ethnography: why farming, specifically

organic farming, is the main site of study for this research; how I define subjectivity in this specific context; and an introductory explanation of Haraway's *becoming with.* For these three components will become entangled to the point where they cannot be separated (Ingold 2010, Morton 2008).

Farming is a hands-on practice. It is a continuous process that involves planning, seeding, planting and harvesting. Once seasons end, new seasons begin and the tasks are never ending. To be a farmer is to be composed of a very specific subjectivity. This is not to suggest that all farmers have the same subjectivity but what I mean to stress is the fact that being a farmer is a specific type of lifestyle rooted in the knotted tasks of home and work. The farm is the home and vice-versa. This consistency interested me for there are few professions that require one's attention almost every waking hour of every day. What kind of subjectivity would be formed by such processes? What is most interesting about farming, however, in relation to my research, is the opportunity of interaction, especially in relation to organic farming where no types of man-made chemicals or compounds are used to protect the plants. As I mentioned, farming is a hands-on practice; it requires you to physically seed, plant and harvest different plants and vegetables. By doing so, you are interacting with non-human organisms, whether you are conscious of it or not. This direct interaction with the environment is the reason for my focus on farming and through this practice; I became immersed into a new way of life and felt as though this process allowed me to become more environmentally aware. By this I mean it was the first time I had experienced a constant, hands-on cooperation with the environment. Especially in regards to organic farming since it is seen as a more "natural" process where the human and plants must cooperate and be patient in order to grow. With organic farming, there is

more room for a equal relationship between plant and farmer because the farmer does not set out to dominate the plant by chemicals, it is a more "quality over quantity" mindset. By becoming an organic farmer, my own subjectivity was consistently being formed and reformed.

In order to define subjectivity I must first introduce *becoming with*. In Donna Haraway's book "When Species Meet", she introduces the concept of *becoming with* as a process that engages the human and non-human. This engagement is meant to be a cooperative one in order to recognize the benefits of cross-species relationships and to work towards a "more just and peaceful other-globalization" (Haraway 2008:3). Haraway uses this concept mostly in relation to dogs and domesticated animals but I believe her philosophy is also applicable to other sectors of non-human life, like the environment. This also reinforces the importance of farming in my research. So whenever I discuss subjectivity it is always with Haraway in mind in that I will be exploring this concept of human- non-human interaction and the way in shapes subjectivity. Throughout this chapter I will attempt to display ways in which a farmer's subjectivity can be seen as a process of *becoming with.*

Thus, subjectivity, like *becoming with*, is a process. It is a process where people are constantly formed and reformed, influenced by the interactions they experience, both social and natural such as perspectives, opinions, beliefs, and desires. It is a process that is both individual and communal. The process of interaction is key. Here we begin to see how farming, *becoming with* and subjectivity weave in and out of one another throughout this research. Each is dependent on one another. The following ethnography I will be presenting is only one among many which could be presented since I, with my own

subjectivity and past experiences, am only capable of analyzing what I perceive and witness in interviews with the help of the theorists used in this ethnography. Therefore I will state again, these subjectivities are in no way universal for organic farmers and are completely a result of the specific context to which I am discussing.

This chapter is divided into three sections, each dealing with some aspect of subjectivity. In the first section "The Processes of Interaction" I will discuss the importance of interaction in both a social and natural context. For the social context I will use research I gathered through interviews and observation of the various farmers and how they interact with each other and the community. For the natural context, I will discuss more closely how myself and the farmers interacted with the different plants and vegetables whilst intertwining Ingold's theory on mutual growing (Ingold 2000). The second section "Enskilment: The Subjective Process of Knowledge Transmission" will use Tim Ingold's theory on *enskilment* and knowledge transmission to discuss the subjective way of learning in relation to organic farming at Senneby Trägård. In this section I will look at how subjectivity effects the way tasks are performed, taught and learned and how this can possibly vary depending on the site. Also for this chapter I will briefly be comparing my previous field work on an organic farm in Atlanta, Georgia in order to show variations of *enskilment*. In the final section "Oikos: (Eco) logical Entanglement" I will discuss the prefix *eco-*, which comes from the Greek word oikos, meaning "household". Here I will explore the lifestyle of the farmer, whose work is just outside the door and surrounds the home. I will also attempt to show in this section how subjectivity is always already *becoming with* the environment.

The Processes of Interaction

…It always comes back to the community you surround yourself with.
-Dan *Senneby Trägård*

Senneby Trägård (garden) is an organic farm located on the Väddö Island of Älmsta, Sweden, about 100 kilometers northeast of Stockholm. The farm itself is situated in the small village of Senneby, which consists of mainly farmers, all of whom are in close contact with one another. The contents of the farms vary, some grow specific vegetables, others grow only grains, while some are strictly dairy or animal farms. Dan and Brit-Inger, partners, owners of the farm, and two of my main informants, moved to Senneby in 1980 with no intention of starting a farm although Dan himself grew up on a farm just 30 kilometers away. The land had belonged to a family member that could no longer take care of it so Dan and Brit, in their 30s at the time, decided to move in. It was their communal surroundings that led them to the decision to start a farm, and Bjorn, a farmer in the village since the early 1960s, was a large influence to become organic. Within the next 18 months, Senneby Trägård was founded on 65 hectares of land and though it was not certified organic until 1987 they were practicing organically since its beginning. In fact, every farm in Senneby is certified organic by the Swedish government and close to 90% of the farms on the Väddö Island are certified organic. However, this was not always the case. In the early 1960s, Bjorn, mentioned above, was one of the first organic farmers in the entire region. It was not until the mid 1990s and early 2000s that organic farming became so popular around Väddö. Dan said this was because the community that formed in these years was dedicated to spreading the practice of organic farming.

In this section I will discuss two different types of interaction – social and natural – and how they relate to Harawayan subjectivity. In the introduction of this chapter, I defined subjectivity as being influenced by both the social and natural world, a process of interaction. I do not mean to suggest they are two distinct realms that never overlap with each other, in fact I believe quite the opposite and it is one of my objectives of this section to show this. I only look at them separately in order to delineate different situations that form one's subjectivity. Still, both the social and natural will be rooted in the processes of interaction that influence, shape, and construct one's subjectivity.

"Social" interaction in this context refers to the interaction between those within the community whether they are farmers, family, friends or buyers. When I ventured back to Sweden in April 2013, I was interested to pay closer attention to the role of the community in everyday tasks and the decision to become organic. Having previously lived there for two months, I had met many of the neighbors and seen the ways they contributed to each other. Dan's parent's farm was not organic but he said that was probably because at that time, in the 1950s and 1960s, organic farming was not popular in Sweden[6]. Dan said most people had not even heard of it yet. When they moved to Senneby Trägård they met Bjorn who lived just three houses away. Bjorn introduced them to organic goods and they began growing a small amount of vegetables on the land around the house. This was the genesis of Senneby Trägård. Whenever we would sit

[6] The Second World War saw the rise of non-organic styles of farming. The introduction of petroleum based pesticides allowed for farmers to produce much more crops without worrying about different insects and diseases. Organic farming became popular in the 1960s and 70s after Rachel Carson's book "Silent Spring" which questioned the use of pesticides for its harmful affects on both animals and humans, was published in 1962. Only in the past couple of decades has organic farming begun to gather momentum. (Certified Organic Associations of BC 2013)

down to fika and discuss organic farming the importance of the community would always be a conversation focal point.

The Local Organic Community

During the summer months, from June until the end of September, Dan and Brit set up a vegetable stand outside their house for the community to buy freshly picked local produce. During my first visit to Senneby, in August and September of 2009, I had the opportunity to observe and participate in this small market as well as experience the community that formed around it. Each day, dozens of people from around the island and Älmsta would come buy vegetables. Most of these people had been coming for years and had become friends with Dan, Brit and each other. Dan would often point out how many of his "customers", whom most he knew by name, would constantly call in the months before the market asking when the vegetables would be ready. This is the community Dan and I would discuss: the local organic community. For Dan felt that the local community was a central theme in organic farming; it was as if organic farming would not be the same without it.

Dan's focus on community became clear one night in particular when we were discussing extensively about large-scale global farming and small-scale local farming. Dan said, "These large farms are only interested in producing as much as they can as fast as they can do it. Then they ship their produce all around the country and Europe. Where is the community in that?" Most conversations would follow a similar path that would end up with us discussing the local community. Community in this sense is a type of group in which the people involved share similar aspects of subjectivity. The subjectivity

they embody is formed and re-formed through interaction with other members of the community. The community is constantly influencing: teaching, learning and sharing[7]. Dan believed a smaller, more local community was perhaps one of the most important aspects of organic farming. It was the chance to get to know the people around you and provide them with healthier food grown right there. While we were talking, Dan received a phone call from a friend in Stockholm. Dan said:

> Each spring he comes out to his summer home on the coast because he enjoys fishing and has the luxury to take time off. For about five years now he will call every April to see when our tomato plants will be done and when he comes here we give him three and in return we get fresh fish almost everyday.

Though not all relationships were this close, many displayed similar qualities of mutual assistance and *intimacy.* Dan would often say, "It is about intimacy" and this could be seen through the close-knit relationships he would form. Also many of the farmers within the village of Senneby would share and trade fields over various years. "Some crops," Dan explained, "cannot be planted in the same field everyday so every other year or so I'll switch with Bjorn or someone else and we farm each other's plots." Land thus is not preoccupied with ownership but how it can be of most use for the local community. I believe this interest in intimacy was also a factor in Dan and Brit's decision for joining WWOOF (World Wide Opportunity on Organic Farms).

[7] My definition of "community" here stems from both Clifford Geertz and Tim Ingold. In Ingold's book "The Perception of the Environment" (2000:159-160) he uses Geertz's "The Interpretation of Cultures" (1973) in order to define community as a group formed by social interactions and each community is unique and dependent on specific social situations. Thus my emphasis lays on the influence of the community in this social context.

Intimacy and WWOOF

WWOOF is an organization that offers anyone the opportunity to work on organic farms around the world. Started in the 1970s in England, the movement is now present in over 50 countries worldwide. The purpose of WWOOF is to allow people to learn and live on organic farms in a familial setting. Volunteers are expected to work in return for free room and board (WWOOF 2013). At Senneby, I was treated as part of the family and every meal throughout the day, even on off days, we shared together. I became friends with their five children, spent time with their elderly parents and on my last day they baked a homemade cake solely in honor of me. Dan said they have been part of the WWOOF community since the mid 1990s. When we were discussing WWOOF, Brit said the reason they chose to participate was to meet and learn from people around the world. Over the past 15 years, they have hosted people of all ages and from all corners of the globe. About intimacy, Dan said:

> When we began WWOOF there was not a website for the organization so people would mail to us asking if they could come. It was nice, it seemed more intimate. Obviously now email is faster and easier but we still try to keep it intimate for the volunteers that come. It's about teaching and learning, from both sides. I think I've learned as much as I've taught to be honest.

With WWOOF, Senneby Trägård's community has grown. Knowledge and experiences of Senneby are now carried within and transmitted through people around the world. There is a part in Atlanta and in Lyon, a group in Barcelona and Hong Kong. With each volunteer, influencing occurs, interactions ensue and subjectivities are reshaped.

I would like to further this discussion on intimacy because of its importance to Dan and its use in *becoming with*. In the introduction chapter of Haraway's book, *When Species Meet*, she discusses a lecture given by Derrida in which he was seen naked by his

cat and felt ashamed by his nude, vulnerable body (Haraway 2008:10). She uses this story as a way to state the importance of intimacy in relation to *becoming with*. For she feels Derrida missed an opportunity by not exchanging the gaze with his feline, "he missed a possible invitation, a possible introduction to other-worlding" (2008:20). By looking back at the cat, Haraway feels he could have achieved an intimate type of engagement necessary for *becoming with* a non-human species. This type of engagement she explains through the term of *respecere*[8]:

> To hold in regard, to respond, to look back reciprocally, to notice, to pay attention, to have courteous regard for, to esteem: all of that is tied to polite greeting, to constituting, the polis, where and when species meet. To knot companion and species together in encounter, in regard and respect, is to enter the world of becoming with, where *who and what are* is precisely what is at stake.
>
> Haraway 2008:19

Thus, to have *respecere* for is to be intimate with. The community surrounding Senneby Trägård is shaped by intimate interactions between its various members. Because of this, subjectivities are consistently being formed and reformed whilst *becoming with* is occurring with the whole. This *whole* encompasses all. By "whole" I am referring to the community and its members. Each interaction that is occurring in this community is both influenced and influencing other interactions. It is about a *respecere* for each other and regard for the work that is done. The *natural* interactions that occur between the farmers and the plants are also comprised in this wholeness, for this is another aspect of (re)formation. In order to explore *natural* interaction, I will use Tim Ingold's concept of *growing*.

[8] Haraway uses the term *respecere* as the act of respect (2008:19). By doing this, she focuses on the action of "regard" through the physical motion of "looking back." This ties in with her belief that *becoming with* requires action and is a process of this action.

In chapter one I discussed Ingold's text on the distinction between *growing* and *making.* At that time I was focusing primarily on the concept of *making* in relation to western capitalist society. *Growing* is what he puts in contrast with *making* and it is focuses much more on the realization of interconnectedness between the environment and the human. Now we will look more closely at *growing* and the ways in which it could be seen as a practice of *becoming with*.

Mutual Growing

My first visit to Senneby Trägård was filled with days of harvesting and preparing vegetables for the shop. Each day Gesa, another WWOOF volunteer from Germany, and I would collect boxes of various vegetables depending on the demand. Most hours of every day we would spend in the fields picking carrots, onions, tomatoes, cucumbers, beans, potatoes, beets, melons, broccoli, etc. It was intriguing to see full fields of crops that had grown over the past three months had only started as a small seed, though at that time I had not realized the extent to this transition. It was not until my most recent trip to Sweden that this transformation from a miniscule seed to a flourishing vegetable had such an effect on me. March, April and May are seeding and planting months, a side of farming I had never seen before. We spent our time placing tiny seeds into four by four centimeter soiled cups which would be placed in the greenhouse and later transferred to the field. Even in the two weeks I was there, seeds were already sprouting and vegetables growing. These tiny seeds would eventually be the vegetables that occupied entire rows and fields. Growing is a central theme in farming: without growing there would not be any vegetables and without vegetables there is no produce or seeds for the following year. When Ingold discusses *growing* he does so in order to show the interconnectedness

between all organisms (Ingold 2000:81). He attempts to show how dependent each living being is on each other's actions and the environment. I believe our, the farmers and myself, interaction with the vegetables on Senneby Trägård could be seen as an example of this interconnection.

As I mentioned above, farming relies on the cooperation between the farmer and the plant. Without the plant the farmer would not have food or produce for income. This dependency, in the context of Senneby Trägård, was one of nurture and respect. I would often speak with Brit about the concept of seeding and planting while seeding onions and salads in the greenhouse. She told me, "when something this small, becomes the means of your survival, you can't help but respect the plant and raise it with care…you are nurturing what you will eventually eat and sell." Dan would at times jokingly call the plants "children" though I feel there was a certain sense of seriousness in his tone.

Ingold also speaks to the parallel between children rearing and plant growing. In his chapter, "Making things, growing plants, raising animals and bringing up children," he offers four ethnographies from around the world, which believe raising children and growing plants are similar tasks (2000:81-84). The word itself, "growing", was not differentiated between plants and children. At Senneby I experienced and perceived similar notions of growing. Through interactions and conversations with both Dan and Brit I became aware to the fact that they both had a deep regard for the plants they grew, for they were aware of their dependence on those plants. Whenever we would perform tasks together they would always mention the importance of nurture and by the end of my stay, I too was experiencing *respecere* in regards to the planted organisms. This idea of transmission will be expanded in the section on *enskilment* but what I mean to put

forward now is that *respecere* is built upon the dependence discovered through the intimacy of *growing.*

Here I root natural interaction in the process of growing, which is both physical and mental. I believe, based on my personal experiences and observation, that mutual growing relies on the realization of dependency for the farmer. I also believe that this dependency arises in the intimacy of *respecere.* The practice of which *respecere* is organic farming and I believe through this practice one can be intimate with the environment. Interactions that enable growing involve the necessity for respect and regard between the people or organisms interacting. Whether it is the transformation from seed to plant or the change in subjectivity, simultaneous social and natural processes or interactions depend on the willingness to intimacy and *respecere* for each other.

In the next section I will focus more directly on the process of *enskilment*, a term borrowed from Tim Ingold, which discusses knowledge transmission (Ingold 2008). I will shift slightly from this aspect of intimacy to a related one that deals with the relationship between a master and an apprentice. Here I will attempt to show how *enskilment*, which is a subjective knowledge acquisition process, shapes one's subjectivity.

Enskilment: The Subjective Process of Knowledge Transmission

…Predecessors leave footprints for their successors to follow.
Tim Ingold & Jo Lee Vergunst *Ways of Walking*

August 3rd, 2009. It is my first time ever working on a farm. Gesa and I get in the old white Chevrolet van and drive down the dirt road to one of the fields. It is here I first see rows of vegetables sprouting up from the ground, their green tops still indistinguishable in my unaccustomed eyes. The objective for the morning is to collect two boxes of carrots and two boxes of garlic. Thus, we must collect four boxes of vegetables that I cannot recognize and have no idea how to pick. We begin with the carrots. I make the assumption that to harvest you simply grab the stem and pull up, but each attempt ended with me only collecting the greens while the vegetable remained buried in the ground. It was not until Gesa came with a pitchfork and drove the forks into the ground surrounding the carrots that they were possible to pull up entirely. This was because the soil's stiffness and the time of year make certain vegetables impossible to pull up without the help of a prying device. I had acquired a new type of knowledge, an understanding of which I had previously been oblivious

Enskilment

This is just one example of a specific technique I learned during my stay in Sweden. In this section I will discuss the ways in which knowledge was transmitted throughout my stay at Senneby Trägård. To do so, I will be using Tim Ingold's concept of *enskilment*, which can be defined as "learning comparable to what goes on in situations of apprenticeship, in which the artisan learns the skills of a trade by hands-on experience, under the tutelage of an accomplished master" (Ingold 2008:114). Thus this

process of *enskilment* is both social and subjective. Enskilment is social because of the master-apprentice relationship required for knowledge transmission and subjective because knowledge, ways of doing things, and learning can vary depending on the individual. In the following pages, I will explore the subjective variation through exploring the differences in my own personal experiences at Senneby Trägård and on a farm in Atlanta, Georgia in which the process of enskilment operated differently in some circumstances. I hope that by the end of this section, the reader will understand how *enskilment* plays a role in the formation of subjectivity and also how it functions within *becoming with.*

The process of *enskilment* is both an active and creative process. Enskilment requires improvisation over imitation and realizes that knowledge production and transmission occurs in different and dynamic ways (2008:114). Dan said that when he started organic farming he did not know what he knows today: "growing up on a non-organic farm was a lot different from starting your own organic farm. There are a lot of things you have to learn from people who know the tricks and over time you'll develop your own." Bjorn aided Dan and Brit to help them begin their farm of whom they said if it were not for Bjorn, Senneby Trägård would most likely not exist.

> In the early years, he [Bjorn] was always the one to show us how to do everything. Growing up I was kid and didn't pay too much attention so I was lucky to have someone like him show me the best ways to raise organic crops. Most of what I still do began with him.

During the early years of Senneby, Dan and Brit were just novices and Bjorn was their teacher. For example, they learned that geese are useful to keep in the greenhouses in the winter because they eat the remains of the plants and fertilize the soil whilst staying safe and warm. They learned how to construct their greenhouses and how to begin the

process of becoming certified organic. Bjorn's knowledge was transferred to Dan and Brit and eventually they became masters in their trade, which subsequently shaped their subjectivities and eventually my own.

When I arrived at Senneby I was the novice who knew nothing about farming. Each task I was asked to perform would first have to be explained and demonstrated by either Dan or Gesa, who became another instructor of mine. Task by task, I was actively learning how to perform them subjectively. Whatever the task was, I was always shown *their* way to do it through which I negotiated how to perform these new learned tasks. Their particular way became the way in which I perceived these tasks to be completed. I was actively being *enskilled.* My knowledge was cultivated by repetition and continuous teaching. Eventually, I was sent to do tasks on my own without supervision and by the end of my stay in 2009, I myself had become a sort of master. Whenever there were new visitors on the farm, it was my duty to transfer my knowledge. Ingold claims people "grow into knowledge, it is not simply 'passed down'" (2008:115). Likewise, I grew into my farming knowledge the same way Dan and Brit grew into theirs through an interactive relationship and active practice. As I have mentioned, *enskilment* acts as subjective process varying on the setting, culture, individual and so on: in this ethnography, the two differing settings for enskilment take place in Senneby and Atlanta.

Global Growers: A New Perspective

A year after I first visited Sweden, I began to volunteer on an organic farm in Atlanta, Georgia called "Global Growers." Global Growers is a non-profit organization started by two young women, Sarah and Robin, and operated with the help of women Burundi refugees. Thus, Sarah and Robin were responsible for applying for grants,

monetary assistance, and land purchasing while the Burundi women were responsible for decision making on what crops would be planted, selling prices for the local vegetable market and also received all money made at the market. I was intrigued by this opportunity for the possibility to farm in both an American and Burundi context. Each of the approximately 12 Burundi members had a background in farming. It was the duty of women and children, in Burundi, to take care of agricultural tasks and the knowledge they possessed was passed down by their mothers and female lineage while still in Burundi. This group of women had come to the United States with their various families between four and eight years ago due to political conflicts in their country. None of the women knew each other in Burundi before but formed a community in Atlanta due to the refugee program to which they belonged. This matrilineal knowledge that would be transferred to their children is the same knowledge that was transferred to Sarah, Robin and myself. This knowledge, however, was formed in an entirely different context than the type of knowledge transmission I experienced in Sweden. Like subjectivity, *enskilment* depends on many different factors. For example, politics, religion, climate, location, ethnicity and gender all play a role in how one acquires and transmits knowledge to others. I would like to explore some different cultural explanations for differently performed tasks in Senneby and Global Growers.

After you plant something in soil you cover up the top of its roots with the new soil in order to provide nutrients and help the process of the roots' expansion. I was told to do this in both Sweden and Atlanta, however the explanation behind the process varied widely between the two locations. For Senneby, this was to allow the nutrients, nitrogen, and organic matter in the soil to nourish the plant. While in Atlanta, I was working side

by side with Basmat, who has been living in Atlanta since 2008, and has since then become a central figure in Global Growers. When we were planting, she told me to cover the roots in order to keep the plant warm so it does not get cold, sick and die, which was followed by a smile and the clarification, "just like a blanket." Each of these two interpretations strives for the same objective: to cover the plant in order for it to stay healthy and grow, while varying in its way of perceiving how and why plants grow, which I argue is a result of *enskilled* knowledge. Other tasks varied as well such as the ways to harvest, where to spread mulch, when to cover plants, tricks for keeping away insects and different diseases and so on. *Enskilment* thus varies and largely depends on the individual who is teaching, which also depends on how they were taught, though this is not meant to suggest the student does not have agency or influence as well.

These processes of knowledge transmission and acquisition shape subjectivity for these are both processes which require interaction and differ due to the context in which they are occurring. It is the source of subjectivity in that it forms the way Dan, Brit and the Burundi women experience farming and how they transfer their ways of practice to myself and others. Though it is important to understand that *enskilment* is also a continuous process that can change over time, the same subjectivity can change depending on the circumstances. Thus knowledge and subjectivity are never static but are in constant formation and transmission. This is why Ingold constantly notes that *enskilment* is also a creative process, in which once knowledge is obtained, it will always be slightly different because of the way the subjective individual negotiates received knowledge (2008). Ingold states:

> In this process [of enskilment], what each generation contributes to the next is not a body of representations or instructions- that is "information" in the strict sense-

> but rather the specific contexts of development in which novices, through practice and training, can acquire and fine- tune their own capacities of action and perception.
>
> (Ingold 2008:117)

This creativity arises in the individual's subjectivity because the act of *enskilment* is dependent on both the student and instructor, each are influenced by this process. This is where we see a parallel with Haraway's *becoming with* in the ways that the interaction effects both subjectivities.

Mutual Learning and Cooperation

In the sixth chapter of *When Species Meet*, "Able Bodies and Companion Species" Haraway explores the ways in which her relationship with her dog Cayenne is co-shaping and constitutive and the ways this mutuality is rooted in practice and action (2008:175). She does this by discussing the dog sport of "agility" which is a type of obstacle course where judges base their scores off accuracy and time:

> Playing that sport with Cayenne, now at the Masters level, after thousands of hours of joint work and play, I recognize the looping ontics and antics, the partnerships-in-the-making that transform the bodies of the players in the doing itself. Agility is a team sport; both players make each other up in the flesh.
>
> (Haraway 2008:175)

Like Haraway's sporting experiences with Cayenne, the relationships involved in *enskilment* share a mutual *becoming*. Thus, when Dan taught me how to drive the tractor down the rows in order to harvest potatoes, both his and my subjectivity came in contact and were shaped by each other. I depended on Dan to teach me and Dan depended on me to perform and carry out tasks. Just like Haraway depended on Cayenne and vice-versa, it is a mutual relationship. This also relates well to the previous section on interaction for we see the ways in which contact, through cooperative learning, goes beyond mere knowledge transmission and forms a bond that is beneficial for both parties involved.

Like Ingold's quote in the epigraph, knowledge transmission follows preset paths and instructions, which are then negotiated by the learner. Once again we see the interconnectedness between different people, subjectivities and organisms.

My entire experience at Senneby was one long period of *enskilment.* Like I have mentioned, it was my first experience ever farming thus every task, even simple tasks like harvesting corn and peas, was taught to me. Brit told me, since she grew up in Norrtälje, which is the closest city to Älmsta, whenever they would go into the countryside they would always go mushroom picking. She said, "Picking mushrooms requires you to know which mushrooms can be eaten. There are a lot of poisonous ones that look similar to edible ones so you must acquire the knowledge to know which is which." She acquired this knowledge through her parents, who she said received it from their parents and so on. This process of *enskilment* shaped the way I both experienced and perceive organic farming the same way it did for Dan and Brit. We rely on each other's subjectivities to cooperate and perform tasks. Thus *enskilment* is a cooperative process of knowledge transmission that both involves and influences the master and apprentice's subjectivities.

The following section will both conclude this second chapter and explore the theme of *entanglement* within the context of Senneby's organic farming subjectivity (Ingold 2000, 2010). This exploration will examine the Greek word "oikos," meaning household, in order to further examine the *entanglement* between the home and the environment. I will attempt to show the ways in which the household, plants, vegetables and subjectivity becomes inseparable within Senneby's context.

Oikos: (Eco) Logical Entanglement

> We have been living and working in the same place for over twenty years now. The farm is just an extension of our home the same way our home is an extension of our farm. It is one place.
> Dan *Senneby Trägård*

Dan said it had been about three years since they had last cleaned out the barn. Shelves were packed with old equipment, miscellaneous boxes and random tools. The narrow walkway, passable only by careful attention and precision, was lined with similar surplus. The duty for this afternoon was to tidy up and throw out whatever was deemed worthy. In the farthest corner of the barn were relics saved from Dan and Brit's offspring's childhood: a rocking horse, kites, various sporting equipment, and bikes. Also, a small sailboat was tucked in the corner, covered in dust and registration numbers from the mid 90s. The vessel had obviously not seen water in years, sixteen years in fact. I asked Brit when was the last time they had a chance to use it and she smiled saying, "I would have to find pictures to remember…we have not been on a vacation in years, it is just not possible with the farm and sheep." The unused boat can symbolize the busy lifestyle Dan and Brit live. Living at Senneby, I realized that to be a farmer is no easy task and requires constant attention and presence.

Eco and the Oikos

Merriam-Webster[9] defines "ecology" as "the totality or pattern of relations between organisms and their environment." This is in a sense what my thesis is attempting to explore: the relations between farmers and the environment surrounding

them. In this section I will expand on this relationship through examining the ways in which the home becomes the farm and vice versa. Work, play, commerce, relaxation and residency become entangled and completely dependent upon each other. To do this I will be using Tim Ingold and Timothy Morton's concept of *entanglement* (Ingold 2000, Morton 2008), Donna Haraway's explanation of *companion* in regards to *becoming with* (Haraway 2008) and Ingold's concept of *dwelling* (Ingold 1996, 2000) whilst always attempting to interweave the subjectivities observed and embodied at Senneby Trägård.

The prefix "eco-" comes from the Greek word "oikos" which means "household" (Merriam-Webster 2013). This is visible in "ecology" because the concept of household remains present within ecology, specifically in that the household is considered as concomitant with the environment that contains it. Thus, in the context of Senneby and my ethnographic fieldwork, it is useful to understand that when I discuss the eco (environment) I am simultaneously exploring the oikos (the household), as the eco and oikos remain closely intertwined. I do not mean to separate the two words as an act of severance but I only wish to use the words separately in order to show the connectedness between Senneby Trägård (the household) and the surrounding environment; the two, in reality, cannot be separated. For the words themselves – eco (logy) and oikos – have a similar meaning, just only the realm to which they address has been expanded.

Brit's story about the lack of vacation time is not supposed to be a depressing one. Probably for many middle and upper class Americans and Europeans unfamiliar with farm life this lack of vacation would be depressing since the concept of work has come to

[9] Merriam-Webster also defines "ecology" as "the branch of science concerned with the interrelationship of organisms and their environment" but for the sake of this section I will only be using the definition that is cited.

rely on a separation of location, labor tasks, and time spent between work and home. This separation, however, does not exist in the case of Senneby Trägård. There I experienced a completely new atmosphere and attitude towards work and livelihood. Since my first visit to Senneby was during the harvest season, there were always an abundance of freshly picked vegetables from the fields and tomatoes from the greenhouse. There were times Dan or Brit would ask me to gather some extra onions, carrots or potatoes for our meals. Each lunch, fika and dinner would always consist of various vegetables, homemade jams or organic cheese made by neighbors. These vegetables were also the main source of income. Obviously, a farmer without their crops cannot survive. Thus *eco* is twofold, both *eco*logical and *eco*nomic, a source of monetary stability and nutritious sustenance.

Earlier I mentioned a story about cleaning the barn in which I noticed old childhood toys situated next to tools and farming equipment. This symbolizes home and work, home and livelihood, side by side, under the same roof, occupying the same space. Both the farm and household were simultaneously sites for work and play. At one time Dan said:

> To be a farmer is to really *be* a farmer. You have to be dedicated and realize that your farm is your home and your job. I walk outside my front door and I am on the site. But it is nice to be surrounded by both [home and work] all day. I feel like I can really see the benefits of my time and effort.

For Dan, the farm is a space that encompasses all aspects of livelihood and offers many possibilities. As I have mentioned, Dan and Brit were not always farmers. Before they moved to Senneby Trägård both were primary school teachers, a topic that would often come up during conversation. Often when we would discuss what it was like to be a farmer they would usually begin to also speak about their previous jobs as teachers. One

night in particular after a home cooked meal prepared by Brit we began to discuss what it was like to be a farmer compared to a primary school teacher. While preparing coffee, Brit said, "They are similar in the way that they take a lot of work and both have to do with caring for things, but with the farm there is not that separation, we *live* on the farm, we would *go* to be teachers." Both Dan and Brit share this idea of connectedness between the farm, home and their subjectivities. Similarly, both Timothy Morton and Tim Ingold talk about connectedness using the term *entanglement*, respectively.

Entanglement

In the first chapter, I presented various literatures that speak to the idea of detachment between humans and the environment. The purpose of this was to show examples, both mental and physical, of this detachment address by popular ecological discourse while also to place my own research into this dystopia in attempts to move beyond it by offering different perspectives on connectedness. This is where Morton and Ingold's writings on *entanglement* become useful to explore in relation to the oikos.

Morton's text "Ecologocentrism: Unworking Animals" attempts to show the problematic ways we think about the environment or what he calls *nature*. Towards the end of this text he begins to speak of the "negative awareness" discussed in the first chapter that says we have only become aware of the destruction because of large scale environmental decay. Yet, along with this he speaks to the idea of *entanglement* and interconnectedness. Morton's essay tends to leave a sour taste in one's mouth because it both challenges the way we think about something we feel is absolute while also blaming humans without offering a concrete plan to fix it. However, even if it is discussed in pessimistic passing, *entanglement* is a useful concept in that it is something which

attempts to work towards a more constructive and positive awareness. *Entanglement* can easily be defined as interconnection or entwinement by some sort of similar attribute. For Morton and Ingold, this attribute is a mutual influence, dependence and livelihood; like the entanglement between the *oikos* and *eco.*

In Ingold's article, "Bringing Things to Life: Creative Entanglements in a World of Materials," he writes, "We live in a "thingy world" where things grow and have life" (Ingold 2010:6). These "threads of life" are in constant intersection and entangling in which there is no beginning or end but only continuous growth (2010:18-20). Here Ingold discusses the natural environment and all the organisms living and growing within it quite literally but also symbolically in order to stress the point of *entanglement* and interdependence of the world. This conception of the world as connected, growing and living is why I believe *entanglement* is a useful concept to use in relation to the oikos.

Earlier in this section I discussed the ways in which the farm and the home are seen as a coterminous place. Through conversations and experiences with Dan and Brit, I have seen the ways in which these two sectors of farm and home have become entangled. I say two sectors here because this was my perspective when I first came to Senneby. I saw the red wooden structure where the family slept and the home and the fields, barn, tractors and greenhouses as the worksite. It was not until after weeks of living there did I realize the two cannot be seen as separate for they compose one another in their entanglement of tasks, harvests and revenue. Without one there could not be the other. This *entanglement* is the site for interaction and *enskilment*, which allow the space for new subjectivities to form. Once I experienced this, the way I viewed farming, especially organic farming in this context reformed the way I view plants and vegetables. I could no

longer see them as merely food to consume but I acquired a better understanding for the amount of work and cooperation it takes to grow these various organisms. It was not until I lived side-by-side and experienced organic farming firsthand, co-habitating both the *eco* and *oikos*, that I could feel this way.

Donna Haraway speaks to this idea of co-habitation when she defines the term *companion* in her introduction to "When Species Meet," which she traces back to its Latin roots *cum panis* meaning "with bread." She uses this Latin origin to explore the metaphor of "messmates" (Haraway 2008:17) in which she places herself and the companion species, in her case her dog Cayenne, next to each other at the dinner table. Here, "with bread", they share a meal not consisting of food but company and entanglement. By placing herself and her *companion* at the same table she attempts to show the importance of co-habitation and equality in the sense where it would not seem out of place or unnatural to sit side-by-side with whatever your *companion* may be. I am merely expanding this metaphor in the same way the *eco* expands beyond the *oikos* so as to encompass not only the table I shared with Dan and Brit but also the landscape that entangles the home and workplace, subjectivity and environment. This was evident at each meal at Senneby. The table was food collected from the environment but resided within the household and the messmates were the farmers who helped grow the food and harvest it. The household was composed of what was grown.

One final concept that is useful for this section is Tim Ingold's *dwelling*, which is a concept that he puts in contrast with *construction*, a term rooted in the mental detachment of human and nature. He defines *dwelling* as "an engagement…not of making a view *of* the world but of taking up a view *in* it" (Ingold 1996:117). Thus, Ingold

believes we must adopt a mindset that is rooted in connectedness, not control, and also from an intimate space of *becoming with* and not from a space of transcendental observation. Ingold's *dwelling* serves as a double meaning. On the one hand he discusses this term as an analogy for our mindset, for he believes adopting this view will enable us to see ourselves as interconnected with the environment to the point where we do not distinguish ourselves from it at all. On the other hand, he uses *dwelling* quite literally to mean we should root ourselves within the environment and allow our senses to explore. The latter meaning works quite well with the oikos and farming.

Senneby is rooted within the environment, surrounded by sites of engagement that are inseparable from the household. As I have attempted to show, Senneby is the site of both the farm and the household. By living and interacting with the various fields, different plants and vegetables daily, Dan and Brit "took up a view *in"* the environment. By *dwelling*, residing, taking up a view within the environment around them, I believe they have also embodied a *dwelling*-type of subjectivity, aware of the environment's agency and becoming mere members within it without coercive or damaging separation, but mutual connectedness and dependence.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to show the ways in which subjectivity is formed through aspects of interaction and entanglement. In each section, I attempted to show different characteristics of subjectivity in the context of organic farming in Älmsta, Sweden. In the first section, "The Processes of Interaction", I focused on two different sectors of interaction: the social and natural. For the social, I discussed the importance of the local organic community and its role in the formation of subjectivity for the members within it.

While for natural interaction, I explored the ways in which the farmers and myself interacted with the plants through intimacy and mutual growing. Here I focused on this concept of *growing* and the way it evokes a sense of *respecere* and understanding between the human and plant.

In the second section, "Enskilment: The Subjective Process of Knowledge Transmission", I used Tim Ingold's concept of *enskilment* to examine the ways in which knowledge, in my case how certain farming techniques and tasks are performed, is transmitted from one person to the next. Interaction once again plays a role in this section but what is to be focused on is the ways in which knowledge is subjective and can change depending on the master and apprentice. To accomplish this, I discussed the ways in which Dan, Brit and myself were *enskilled* by both each other and neighboring farmers. In the end, the goal was to show that *enskilment* is a both a mutual practice and an influence to subjectivity for it affects the way you see yourself and the environment around you.

In the final section of chapter two, "Oikos: (Eco) logical Entanglement" I explored the Greek household (oikos) in relation to Senneby to show the ways in which the home, environment and workplace all occupy the same place. I attempted to show how organic farming is a lifestyle that does not allow for time off or away from the site of "work" and it is therefore entangled with the home. I explored this concept of *entanglement* by citing situations at Senneby where Dan and Brit did not distinguish their home from the environment because they saw it as merely an extension, made up of it through the vegetables they grew.

The purpose of this chapter was to address the first chapter's literature on detachment as a new way of possibly perceiving the environment. I feel as though organic farming offers humans the opportunity to *become with* the environment because it is a hands on practice that does not involve any type of chemicals or harmful processes. It was therefore the goal of this chapter to show a context, Senneby, where interaction with the environment is constantly shaping one's subjectivity.

Conclusion: A New Lens

> This forest is basically a part of me, isn't it? This thought takes hold at a certain point. The journey I'm taking is *inside me.* Just like blood travels down veins, what I'm seeing is my inner self, and what seems threatening is just the echo of the fear in my own heart. The spiderweb stretched taut there is the spiderweb inside me …There is nothing left to fear. Not a thing. And I head off into the heart of the forest.
> Haruki Murakami, *Kafka on the Shore*

As Kafka enters the forest he is simultaneously entering his own mind. His realization of connectedness is met with a comfort, which he embraces. This thesis has attempted to show a similar type of relationship formed between the human and non-human through interaction both social and natural; dwelling as opposed to constructing, and the oikos as a merging of the home and natural world. In these concluding remarks I will revisit themes from previous sections and then offer suggestions and implications for future research in the context of subjectivity, organic farming and *becoming with.*

My three extended experiences with farming have each been influential to the contents of this thesis. The two sites, on which I farmed, Senneby and Atlanta, have shaped and reshaped the ways in which I interact with others and the environment. I believe the people I have worked with have also experienced this reformation of subjectivity. In the first chapter, I presented literature that offers possible reasons for the current precarious state of the environment. In the United States, and most parts of Europe I have experienced, there is an awareness of this environmental predicament with an inundation of statistics on pollution and its effect on the environment and ourselves. Deep Ecology and other "green" movements have attempted to speak to these issues and

organic farming and recyclable goods continue to gain popularity. Still, despite these efforts and movements, the environment continues to be exploited. The first chapter discusses these ways of exploitation and attempts to place my thesis within the framework of its current state while offering a new way of viewing and relating to the environment. I chose to do this for two reasons: one, because this concept of the environment is the context I have experienced as a white middle class American male and two, to attempt to move beyond this perspective and offer a new lens in which to *respecere* or regard the environment.

In the second chapter, I attempted to explore this regard in the form of Donna Haraway's *becoming with* and the subjectivities of farmers I have interacted with. The second chapter was divided into three sections each dealing with a different yet entangled aspect of subjectivity. First, I addressed the importance of interaction for the formation of subjectivity in both a social and natural context. There I examined the role of community and its influence on subjectivity in conjunction with Haraway's concept of intimacy and *respecere* to connect the community and humans to interactions with the environment in order to explore how this could be seen as a type of mutual growing, a *becoming with*. In the second section, I discussed the subjective process of knowledge transmission described by Morton and Ingold as *enskilment.* This process is also achieved through interaction and cooperation between both an instructor (master) and a student (apprentice). Thus knowledge is both passed on and the subjectivities of everyone involved are influenced. Over time, the student becomes the master and passes on their own knowledge and subjective way of accomplishing specific tasks. Once again, mutuality becomes a theme since both the master and apprentice rely on one another in a

similar way that Donna Haraway discusses her relationship with her dog Cayenne in relation to sport: each plays a role and depends on the other involved. In the final section of chapter two, I explored the oikos, a Greek word meaning "household" which is the root of the prefix "eco" meaning "habitat or environment." Here I attempted to show how in the context of Senneby Trägård, the oikos and eco are entangled so that the home and environment (the workplace, fields, and so on) become one place. It is in this section that the term *entanglement* reaches its full meaning through the realization of mutual dependence; the basis of respect. At this point, both the mind and body, both physical and mental *becomes with* the surrounding environment.

Interaction, enskilment and oikos each serve as a process and a source for the subjectivity of Dan, Brit and myself. I have attempted to show how place, Senneby, with all its natural and social interactions, shape the way one views themselves and the environment around them. Their decision to become organic was shaped by a reflexivity that was planted by a fellow farmer, neighbor and friend. This reflexive decision was the first step to *becoming with*; it was curiosity, an interest in natural non-artificial interaction. Once this seed was planted, the only thing left to do was to nourish it and let it grow and that is exactly what has happened over the past 30 years at Senneby.

Though this is not where the story ends. I'd like now to end with some forward looking implications and suggestions for further research that my thesis could help lead towards. I feel it is necessary to address these interests and perhaps propose the ways in which they could be useful in future research in the context of organic farming, subjectivity and *becoming with.*

Sensory Ethnography, Taste and Habitus

In Pierre Bourdieu's book *Distinction* he examines the social structures of society and the way they are reinforced overtime through the often-unconscious embodiment of class and habitus (Bourdieu 1984). In this text, he uses the word *taste* in order to examine the interests of various classes: art, literature, foods, style and so on. Bourdieu believes people are predisposed to these interests (*tastes)* because of the class they belong to, which is constantly reinforced and perpetuated. Thus one's unconscious socially determined status, *habitus*, forms their taste.

Taste also plays an interesting role in regards to organic farming and the desire for organic foods. Many people I have talked to, both when I was in Sweden and in Atlanta, have stated that taste played a large role in their decision to buy organic foods. Of course this is not the only reason they continued to buy organic but it served as a first impression for them and a lasting one at that. This is interesting because *taste* becomes taste again. What I mean by this is that Bourdieu's concept of *taste*, loaded with all its social dynamics and inequality, is stripped down to its sensory core. However, this is not to say *taste* and taste are different because each serves a role in shaping one's subjectivity. My interest here lies in the way in which taste plays a role in organic lifestyles. For Bourdieu, *taste* is determined by social class, however in my experience with organic goods taste can shape one's subjective desire to becoming an organic consumer. My workmate Gesa discovered organic farming in this way.

When I first met Gesa she was a twenty-nine year old master's student in agricultural science doing her field practicum at Senneby. We lived together for the two months I was there and she told me once that just five years before she had never had organic foods before. Her first experience was a trip to a market in Berlin with friends

where they bought organic fruits for the trip. She said, “Each fruit I ate just tasted unreal. So sweet and distinct. I can still remember the way they tasted.” Afterwards she read more into organic farming and eventually studied it at university. Her plan then, once she was done, was to have a small organic farm for her own. This sensory experience of taste sparked curiosity, which led to a reshaping of her subjectivity. *Becoming with.*

Taste, however, is not the only sensory experience enacted during the process of farming. It is an important one and often cited for a reason to buy organic foods, but for the farmer experiences many different senses when they interact with the environment. It would be interesting to explore these various sensory experiences. As I have mentioned, I have gathered some information through talking with people who have eaten organic foods, on the sense of taste but other senses remain, in a large part, a mystery. Though, I believe through more extensive interviews and a longer period of participant observation, different areas of sensory experience could be addressed. I feel the information and experiences gathered through this research would work well with *becoming with* as a more phenomenological approach.

Bodies in the Making

> The corpse is not the body. Rather, the body is always in-the-making; it is always a vital entanglement of heterogeneous scales, times, and kinds of beings webbed into fleshly presence, always a becoming, always constituted in relating.
> Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet*

I will conclude this thesis the same way it began, with Haraway in mind. The research I have presented here will never be finished, for it is like our subjectivity, it is

always *in the making*. What I have attempted to present is a new way to perceive, a fresh lens with which to gaze upon the environment through a process that requires interaction and *respecere.* The practice I examined in this thesis was organic farming but interaction with the environment is limitless and can take place in a multitude of forms. What is important is the way in which you perceive your surroundings and how you see yourself within this context. At Senneby, Dan, Brit and I were entangled. Each of our subjectivities *became with* the environment that we were *dwelling* within.

Spring becomes Summer and Summer leads to Autumn and Winter, each season having its own characteristics yet influence on the next. The seed that is planted is grown and harvested and the cycle repeats itself. Our subjectivities are like the seeds influenced by seasons of interactions, never fully blooming but always changing, a ceaseless process of *becoming with.*

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