Reflecting on our conversations about your thesis led me to the conclusion that you are ambivalent about your thesis topic. I think the reason is that you want your thesis to be focused on two not entirely related ideas, at least not in one thesis. First, and most important, you want your thesis to express your belief that human disconnect from the natural world is the main problem that humanity faces in creating “another world,” a more human one. And, secondly, you want your thesis to demonstrate the possibility of positive resistance by analyzing indigenous rights movements. But mainly you are interested in the second idea, positive resistance, because you hope to discover an ideological component of resistance that reinforces the first idea.

Two possible theses.

1. Central to current anti-globalization and anti-austerity measure protests and central to their ideological underpinning is that “another world is possible.” The argument of this thesis is that “another world is possible” only if a radical critique of western society’s world view is undertaken. Radical, in this sense, means a critique which goes to the “root.”

This thesis will argue that at the root of western society’s world view is a belief about human beings and the natural world. This belief underlies both affirmative and critical ideologies of western society.. This assumption, which Heidegger refers to as human beings as Lords of the Earth and nature as dead matters, or standing reserve, to be transformed into what the humans desire, needs to be critiqued before a radically other world is possible.

The critique of this assumption will involve analyzing the philosophical thought supporting the present capitalist social formation and also the philosophical assumptions of oppositional thought, specifically Marxist and neo-Marxist thought. Following this critique, the thesis will examine radically “other” ways of understanding human beings and their relationship to the natural world. The direction the thesis might go is to examine the ideologies of indigenous cultures, Easter religious world views and the Enlightenment, western thinkers influenced by the preceding, Aldo Leopold, environmental ethicists.

What you might need to do.

a. Background in affirmative and critical ideologies of western society.

b. Knowledge of other ways of thinking.

2. Neo-liberal globalization is having a negative impact on the world- wealth, income, hunger, poverty, disease, conflict, increasing debt, and displacement and destruction of indigenous cultures. Resistance to neo-liberalism is taking many forms and one of the forms is the resistance movements of indigenous people. This thesis is going to examine three indigenous social movements, movements of resistance. First, it will analyze neo-liberal globalization, next it will examine the effects of neo-liberalism on each indigenous group, third, it will examine the forms resistance is taking in each of the movements with an focus on understanding the world views which underlie resistance. In the conclusion, the thesis will suggest that the anti-globalization movement’s belief that “another world is possible” might have something to learn from indigenous groups.

What you might need to do.

a. Background on neo-liberalism and criticism.

b. Knowledge of indigenous groups.