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The Floodgates

Anonymous

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To open the floodgates means “to unblock, remove the cap and let the liquid flow. In the figurative sense, it means to freely give vent to words, verses, insults...” This is the impression that one gets reading the many communiqués of condemnation and of taking a distance from the attacks that have taken place in the last several weeks against the people and structures of domination. That the floodgates have been opened. As if up to now the refusal to distinguish oneself in the eyes of repression, the contempt for those who want to make themselves pass for “good boys and girls,” maybe a bit unruly but over all pretty good, wasn’t at all a spontaneous and natural expression of one’s being, of one’s individuality, but merely an ideological imposition to one felt constrained to submit. A sort of abstract precept, a moral blackmail to bear, often with clenched teeth, with poorly concealed patience. And, as everyone knows, even patience has a limit.

This limit was surpassed with the wounding (by anarchists) of the administrative representative of Ansaldo Nuclear in Genoa, and with the molotov cocktail (anonymous) against the institutional loan sharks of Equitalia in Livorno. Enough already! – many are saying – we will no longer remain quiet,

but will speak up to clearly and strongly express that we have nothing to do with this! Especially if it all happens just outside our front door. So from a silence obviously suffered as if it were a conspiracy of silence, things have suddenly moved on to a din considered virtuous. Apparently the ethic – that ethic so praised by anarchists – was only a “cap” against which the shitty liquid, the rancorous eruption of dissociation was building up and pressing. Dissociation not from an organization in which one had never participated, of course, but from a certain practice of direct action: that which has no need to be legitimized by any popular approval.

If in Genoa it was the claimed violence against a man in flesh and blood that is (a pretext for) being scandalized, in Livorno it was the anonymous violence against things. This shows how it is the very idea of the possibility of attacking the state outside of an extended, collective, shared context that is considered an aberration to be crushed by any means. We aren't at all surprised by this. It's just a step in the descent taken by the movement. Besides, when you repeat over and over again that in struggles you must go out together, you must come back together, when you impose the dry alternative between sharing and the state, when you try in every way to wed rebellion and politics, it is inevitable that sooner or later you transform individual action into something counterproductive from which to distance yourself (or, for the most idiotic, something shady to denounce).

It is also very likely that those who have opened the floodgates haven't given much thought to what they were doing. Perhaps they only thought to ease the pressure, to give vent for a moment to their irritation with the aim of being able to contain it longer in consequence. That's not how it goes. Once the cap is loosened, it all gushes forth. A flood of shit and bile is spitting out impetuously, polluting the environment and contaminating minds. It's easy to imagine the satisfaction of those who threw out the hook, in seeing how many fish are biting.

In the face of all this one truly just wants to go back to their childhood. To go back to being those boys in school who, when the teacher demanded to know who was responsible for a prank, could only keep silent in class solidarity. And none of them would ever think of shouting “Not me, Ms. teacher, it wasn't me.” Before the hated teachers, all silent! Because then they could settle their accounts elsewhere in at another time.

But not today, today we are no longer children. We've grown up. We've become adults. The play that sought pleasure has been replaced by the work that demands practical results. We have lost the innocence that doesn't know calculation and strategy. In exchange we have gotten a reputation that – through sheer calculation and strategy – knows only how to proclaim itself innocent.