

# **Insurgency**

**An Anarchist Journal of Total Destruction**

Various Authors

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## *~Introduction~*

The Left is dead. But rather than wrapping up the funeral the civil anarchists prefer to continue praying for a resurrection. They pray with formal organizations, identity politics and some even took up voting in the recent election! The newest trend in the US is to worship the holy scriptures of The Invisible Committee and Communization Theory. But some of us are conspiring against their heavens...

This journal highlights some thoughts behind wild savagery and sabotage. It is dedicated to the unmedicated animals who refuse to play dead waiting for “the masses”. We reject the Communes of those pretentious hipster academics who preach their “Instructions for Autonomy” (ha!). With mercury switches and promiscuity, knives and blasphemy we are the ugly, hedonistic harlots of individualist anarchy.

# Decomposing the Masses: Towards Armed Individuality

by Flower Bomb

*“Anarchists are opposed to authority both from below and from above. They do not demand power for the masses, but seek to destroy all power and to decompose these masses into individuals who are masters of their own lives. Therefore anarchists are the most decisive enemies of all types of communism and those who profess to be communists or socialist cannot possibly be anarchists.” -Enzo Martucci*

For me, individuality is a weapon. It is the weaponized praxis of nihilist anarchy and personal ungovernability. An individual becomes ungovernable by becoming and asserting their negation to socially constructed identities, formally organized groups, or the monolith of mass society. From this perspective, negation embodies a refusal to surrender one’s uniqueness to the confines of formal membership. This is where I draw a line between anarchy and leftism. Leftism encourages the rearrangement of constructed identities, rigid formations, and roles within a formalized social group to which individuals surrender for a “greater good” or purpose. On the other hand, anarchy as life is the decomposition of formal social groups allowing for the existential informality of individual emancipation, development, and limitless exploration.

Therefore, for me, anarchy is an individualistic refusal to surrender one’s self to an overarching power which positions itself above all.

Power structures, socially or institutionally, require the surrendering of individuality to mas- sify their domination. The State can not exist without the individuals who choose to put on the badge and uniform. Capitalism can not exist without the subservience of individuals who make up the mass social body that reinforce its psychological and social validity and domination. Capitalism and the State require individual participation, multiplied to construct mass industrial society. I will give the leftists credit in pointing out that a massive enough worker strike could stunt industrial progress, since it is the worker — the individual wage-slave — that contributes to the life of the mega-machine. But as history has shown, a mass worker strike is not only exhausting to coordinate, but impossible to sustain long enough to collapse capitalism. While many leftists, including myself at one point, will point out that many workers simply do not have access to inspirational radical information, I have also come to learn that many workers simply do not want to strike. For too many reasons to list here, many workers go into work whether rebellions or strikes are happening or not. A fact that is often overlooked is that people are individuals. And as individuals, some choose to rebel against their work place, and some do not.

## Collectives, Community Empowerment, and Organizing

Around 2013, I set off with the aim of building community power through collectivist projects that were intended to benefit people in my hood. Everything from a radical book lending library, a zine distro, really really free markets, food not bombs, and community film screenings. The collective I was part of was vibrant and full of energy. One year, we hosted a July 31 st Day of Action Against Racism and Fascism event which included film screening riot videos and clips of nazis gettin' beat down. We left our door open for people in the hallway to come join, and our tiny apartment was packed with folks who lived above and below us, cheering in excitement while watching the videos. At the end we handed out zines and flyers, and promoted a really really free market we were doin' the following two days. The next day, only three neighbors from the event showed up and chatted with us.

The day after that, they didn't come back. At the time, I tried understanding why despite the videos, the flyers and zines, and the conversations — our neighbors, who had talked about experiencing racism in their lives, were not interested in workin' on projects with us. A one-on-one conversation with two of them a few weeks later reality-checked me: "That's cool what y'all doin', but, you know, we just tryin' to do that money thing. We just tryin' to get paid." After a short debate about "gettin' rich", we departed with fist bumps and me feeling confused and defeated. "My" people in my own hood, in my own building, ain't down with that revolutionary shit.

After a couple more years of hood-based banner drops, graffiti messages, wheat-pasting, a zine written to document and glorify the history of anti-racist rebellion where I grew up, and more community events I realized a truth that no leftist wants to hear: there is no such thing as a homogenized community to radicalize. What is a "community" when your hood is composed of individuals who each have different and often opposing objectives in life? I soon realized that the word "community" was merely a political word that often flattens important differences between individuals and propagates false unity. It is a social construct merely representing a population of people who live in a single area. Sure, we had a couple individuals here and there who were down with what we were doin', got involved and stuck around for a little bit. But the hood was diverse. And it would be dishonest to say that they or we represented the interests of that hood. Everyone had their own individual opinions and life expectations.

I *have* seen some hood revolutionary projects that involved a large portion of a community materialize and flourish. Sometimes they last awhile and sometimes they lose membership and fizzle out. This is where my life experience started to define a difference between affinity groups and mass organizing. The individuals who were down with our shit came to us, with or without us having to propagate a program. They showed up because they saw other individuals that they could relate to. Other people just weren't interested, despite us all living in the hood together, facing gentrification and being mostly POC.

I see something similar happening with anarchism. The same methods and appeals to the community, to the masses, to "the people", are energetic and heartfelt, but yielding very little results. Potluck after potluck, radical social center or radical library, all end up bein' filled with pre-existing radicals and end up becoming social clubs rather than places filled with non-radical people living in the immediate community. Attempts to mobilize the masses through street demonstrations end up with spectators on the sidewalk and the same radicals chanting, singing or marching in the street. I watched this spike during different times. When Trump was running

for election, everyone and their momma was in the streets. Radicals were out, armed with flyers and zines and radical chants over megaphones. Shortly after the election, taskttaa things normalized and soon just the radicals were back in the streets doing their thing. I admit, I was there too. Marching, chanting, handing out zines and flyers to sidewalk spectators. I remember, years ago, there was an Occupy march where we took Michigan Street in Chicago. A mass of students saw us, joined in for 3 minutes, then ran back to the sidewalk with high fives and went about their day. We were still in the streets tryin' to invite them back with popular music. With the sudden drop in numbers, the police surrounded us and escorted us to the sidewalk. What is so wack about this is that this tactic is still being attempted today by radicals. As if the first dozen times it happened weren't embarrassing enough.

## **Capitalist Individuality vs Individualist Anarchy**

Individuality can be conditioned and subjugated by a socio-political environment that monopolizes a narrative of life. In the case of capitalism, we're all born into a pre-configured society that reinforces its values, roles, and ideology with the psychological force of formalized institutions. When we walk outside, we see a reality that has been quantified and institutionally constructed to propagate itself. Cars, airplanes, highways, skyscrapers, fast food, etc — all normalized to generate the comfort of order. Without order, without normalization, there is a chaos that breaks the silence of personal subjugation. Organization and order go hand in hand. Values, roles, and ideology are better reinforced when massified to create the illusion of normalcy. This process discourages individuality, uniqueness, and chaos, since all three pose a threat to monolithic formations. While capitalism claims to encourage genuine individualism, it is an individualism that is pre-configured to reproduce capitalism on an individual level. In other words, individuals who surrender themselves to the system of capitalism become members limited to making capitalism functional. Any individual who refuses capitalism, or systems all together, will seek an existence that contradicts the interests of capitalism. From this perspective, individualist anarchy is a refusal to surrendering one's self to the confines of a formalized system.

Chaos is the personalized strategy of negation to pre-configured order- an order that is pre-decided by those merely interested in gaining further membership. The strategy of creating a mass society or system of order is a strategy of discouraging individuality, chaos, and uniqueness. This strategy includes presenting a one-dimensional view of individualism that is defined by capitalism. But for individualism to be unique and chaotic, it can not be limited by the confines of formal organizations or socialized constructs.

Capitalism is a social construct that requires mass participation to create the illusion of normality to maintain social order. The mass participation composed of subservient individuals allows for capitalism to represent itself by materialized institutions- all physically built by the hands of individual workers. It is true, that the working class built this world, and therefore can unbuild it as well. But this assumes there are no subtle, peer pressuring forces at work that subdue the individual. This is why social war is not only necessary against massified existence, but also necessary with internally breaking the shackles of socially constructed identity and crushing the logic of submission.

## **The Right and the Left: Two Sides of a Coin Called “Identity”**

Identity politics illustrates how different identities are stratified to create hierarchical power dynamics between groups of people. Identity politics also illustrates how individuality and uniqueness are discouraged to the point of social isolation. When people act out of bounds with the socially assigned identity, they are treated as “Others”, not validated to represent an experience. Depending on the system, certain experiences are preferred and validated. For example, to right-winger A, a successful “black” businessman is celebrated and seen as the promotion of capitalism as equal and non-discriminatory. But to right-winger B, that same man is seen as a threat to the white supremacist order and therefore not celebrated. Under leftist A, that same individual will be mocked as an “uncle Tom” or a “sellout”. But to leftist B, the “black” businessman represents successful assimilation, progress and hope for other black people. Both leftism and capitalism each have divided sides. But they all, in one way or another, share the commonality of order, homogenized identities, and membership. Therefore, in one way or another, this individual can be used as propaganda to promote a system. So now lets take for example, a “black” “man” who refuses the identity and roles of “blackness”, patriarchy, and the membership as a worker. Instead, this individual refuses leftism and capitalism. What systems can use this individual as propaganda now? From a leftist or capitalist perspective, what positive aspects of this individual can be used for promotion? As far as promoting a system, there is none. The confinements of a system on a social level have been suspended. All that remains is the anarchy in becoming ungovernable through individual uniqueness.

Individuals who deviate from the normalized social order are not only bad for propaganda, but maintain the threat of inspiring other emancipations. Individuals who desire freedom beyond the limitations of political programs don’t require a package-deal of future utopia. Rather than workin’ now to play later, play and adventure accompany a present determination for wild exploration. Armed with a sense of urgency, life becomes a playground of individual flowering and negation to social constraint- a playground that allows free, open-ended social associations and interactions not coerced by a structural permanence.

Individuality armed with chaos finds itself as an insurgent against the social forces that attempt to subjugate it. As individuality becomes wild, it becomes immune and ungovernable to the carefully constructed programs advertised by the politicians of identity and revolution. Those self-proclaimed revolutionaries can only conceive of revolution as merely reforming the social conditions that constitute order. But some of us prefer insurrection over revolution; an insurrection that doesn’t end with a new system but a life without measure. I want to weaponize chaos as an individualized attack on all governance and social order. I envision anarchy as a wildfire that blackens the civilized, domesticated kingdom of institutional and social domination. Getting free is more than just attacking capital and the state. At least for me, it also means creating your self every single day beyond society’s attempts to define you as a static being.

My war is an individualist war against the right-wing and all its variations. I am at war with the materialized construction of patriarchal “whiteness”, its institutions, and its politically assumed supremacy that materializes the colonial domination of industrial capitalism. My war is also against the left, and all its attempts to manufacture a future world of systematized “freedom” through formal organization, the preservation of socially constructed identity and the subservience of individuality to social groupings. My liberation won’t be found in the holy book of “The Communist Manifesto”, “Forbes Magazine”, nor “The Coming Insurrection”. Freedom isn’t

a pre-configured future utopia; it is a lived experience by those who have the courage to reclaim their lives as their own here and now. In the face of those revolutionary elites who attempt to lay claim to the future with their poetic social seduction and academic expertise, I remain insubordinate.



# The Cryptoliberal creep/the left is dead: AnarchistIndividualist critique of the left in Ireland

by Renzo Connors

*“Freedom is not something that anybody can be given; Freedom is something that people take and people are as free as they want to be” — James Arthur Baldwin*

*“I think my basic viewpoint is that everything the left and right say about each other is true. And the reason it’s true is because they have so much in common.” — Bob Black*

The so called “radical left” has been a total failure, has done nothing and has not made any “radical change”. The “radical left” has only been successful in re-creating institutions of hierarchy and dominance via its parties, unions and front groups/campaigns. Many leftists building nice careers for themselves in the process.

The “radical left” of the 60’s, 70’s, 80’s and 90’s (most notably former members of the Workers Party) are now the very people that have been pushing and implementing neoliberalism in Ireland. The old “radical” leftists have swapped their radical language and false promises for Mercedes cars, designer suits and high waged state or union positions.

There is no doubt that many modern leftist will have the same faith as their counterparts. It’s not hard to imagine. The exact same problems that existed within the left today are the very ones that were always there. These problems can be broken down into factors such as: populism, opportunism, careerism, and reformism (to name but a few).

There is no order of importance, all these factors have equally damaging effects. These factors are not specific to any one current within the left but to the whole left. These factors contribute differently but equally to the left’s failure to create any “radical change” or transformation they proclaim to want.

Let’s break it down a little:

*“SOCIALISM: Discipline, discipline; obedience, obedience; slavery and ignorance, pregnant with authority. A bourgeois body grotesquely fattened by a vulgar christian creature. A medley of fetishism, sectarianism and cowardice.*

*ORGANIZATIONS, LEGISLATIVE BODIES AND UNIONS: Churches for the powerless. Pawnshops for the stingy and weak. Many join to live parasitically off the backs of their card-carrying simpleton colleagues. Some join to become spies. Others, the most sincere, join to end up in jail from where they can observe the mean-spiritedness of all the rest.”*  
— Renzo Novatore

**Opportunism:**

Whether as an individual activists or as a member of a party, union or some other type of organization, leftist take part and use struggles for a whole lot of reason. These struggles could be in a workplace, housing, abortion rights, even supporting struggles in other countries that are a popular, etc. In struggles leftists use political maneuvers in order to hijack, centralise, and harness the energy, power, and enthusiasm of angry people for their own political gain, aims and motivations. Leftists use campaigns and struggles as ways of gaining followers and support for their programmes, building their own power cliques and personal networks, climbing the political or union careerist ladders, or even at the least, for activist scene points.

**Careerism:**

Many leftists take part in struggles to use them as means to build careers. The career could be in politics, unions, academia, journalism, NGOs, etc. Some Leftists becoming “experts” or “specialists” on certain topics/struggles, using the gained knowledge to further their career.

**Populism:**

Populism is a curse in the fight for liberation. Populism is dangerous, populism risks losing or gaining “the party”, “the movement”, “the organization” or “the campaign” support, credibility or new members. Populism also creates a dynamic within left organisations that will determine what “the party” or “group” will support or what actions taken, projects, or campaigns they will get involved with. They will always go with the popular option, even if it is wrong. If activists in a campaign, party, or group swerve off the populist road, they are at risk of being punished and vilified by the majority. They could have their names tarnished, blackened, lies made up and spread about them. All attempts at discrediting and to remove people seen as opposition. Populism will make people tell lies to mislead others and tarnish opponents. Struggles have been destroyed and lost because of populism. These dirty tactics are used against any threats to their positions, to discredit and isolate people that are opposed to their strategies or views, to remove opposition in campaigns or projects to clear the field which will help with them hijacking, having more influence and control; making people look “bad”, “mad”, “crazy” or “troublemakers” so no one will listen to their opinion or ideas, to save or gain support.

**Reformism:**

A large majority of the left, whither they call themselves, socialists, marxists, leninists, trotskyists, and even some anarchists, are in fact crypto-liberals. These liberals disguise themselves with radical language and bullshit. They do not want to overthrow or destroy the state and capitalism, although they may say they do. They want to reform it away, make it more “nicer” for people bit by bit. They naively believe this can be done peacefully and with well thought out arguments, protest marches and lobbying. The “resistance” they proclaim is of pacifism, delegation, negotiation and compromise with the state and bosses.

Trade unions like all formal organizations based on growing in membership are prone to populism and the other factors I mentioned above. At worst union officials undermine and disempower struggles, compromising with bosses, negotiating deals on what would appear to be the best outcome for workers, but realistically contribute towards keeping this society intact. At best unions are reformist that help to make improvements to conditions of exploitation making the daily toil of work a little bit more bearable. Ultimately unions are a cog in the machine of capitalism, with the outcome of helping towards the creation of social peace between exploited and exploiters. There is no revolutionary potential from trade unions.

For the leftist politico their intentions are to run in elections which they hope to win so they can make “radical changes” to the state and therefore make life better for “the people” (as they view it anyway).

The politicians say if they do not have enough power in parliament to make “radical change” at the least they will be able to make “radical” challenges to the government.

The outcomes of such bullshit tactics are well known. If a leftist is elected into parliament they can make counter arguments to the government, this usually falls to nothing. We have seen this in the South of Ireland with socialist TD’s (elected representatives) making arguments against a variety of issues such as the use of Shannon airport by the US military, the Shell oil company plundering natural resources in Mayo, the struggle for housing, and the struggle against water privatization.

If a Leftist party wins enough seats to win power or share power with another party they end up watering down their “radical” views and implement the most right wing of policies, we have seen this in recent history with the Irish Labour party in the South of Ireland and we have seen it with Sinn Fein in the North of Ireland (not that either party had very radical views to start off with, but they gave lip service to socialism at some point), both parties completely selling out to every person that voted for them implementing neo liberalist policies.

Politicos running in elections and playing in the parliamentary circus water down their “radicalism” the more they take part in it, constantly being on the watch, making sure they don’t lose support and wanting to gain support. This inevitably makes them compromise and sell out little by little, till they finally stop preaching any type of “radicalism”.

During the struggle against water privatization we have seen the crypto-liberals use their vanguardist tactics blatantly. From when people from working class neighbourhoods defended their neighbourhoods against the installation of water meters in homes in many communities throughout Ireland. The resistance sparked off sporadically. People resisting from different neighborhoods linked up together to help each other. Politicos and union bureaucrats infiltrated different neighborhoods that were resistant, to hijack the struggle. The politicians (Parties such as Sinn Fein, Socialist Party, Socialist Workers Party, the Communist Party of Ireland, Eirigi; and unions such as Unite and Mandate) invented “Right2Water” a campaign group which plonked itself on top of the struggle attempting to claim to be the representative of the all the people resisting water privatization. The politicians used this campaign as means to bring the struggle down the road of parliamentary politics. In lots of areas the politicians were successful in their hijacking, in some neighbourhoods people were wise to them.

Every couple of months there would be a call for a “peaceful march” through the streets of Dublin with loads of bull shit boring speeches at the end, from politicians of course. Any people at the march that didn’t go by the “peaceful march” narrative were tarnished as the “bad protesters” and “trouble makers”. These so called “troublemakers” would block traffic or occupy buildings (usually banks) and blocking busy roads. These type of tactics didn’t suit the politicians because it was out of their control and did not suit their narrative. During a demonstration in a working class neighbourhood a youth threw a brick at a pig car. A Socialist Party politico (and member of parliament) that had infiltrated the water struggle, publicly condemned the youth calling for the pigs to arrest, charge and convict the youth. Others were denounced by politicians for burning vans that belonged to the company that was installing water metres.

The water struggle came to a head when the Right2Water politicians and union bureaucrats thirsty for any scrap of power, sat on “the Expert Water Commission” which was created by

the government, and accepted that a private company would own the water services (ie the privatization of water). Charges for domestic use of water have been put on hold (for now). The leftist politicians and bureaucrats try to claim this as a “great victory”. To this day the Irish Water company continue to put in water meters into homes, laying the ground for in the future when it wants to implement charges for using water in homes. The politicians and bureaucrats done this without any consent, and ultimately they disempowered the struggle in the process.

These tactics are used time and time again by the crypto-liberals. It was seen in popular struggles such as: struggle against water privatisation in the late 1990’s, the anti war movement in the early 2000’s, struggle against bin charges 2000’s, struggle against property tax in the 2010’s and recently in the struggle for housing, with the same sex marriage and abortion referendums – crypto liberals maneuvering themselves into position of mediator between the state or bosses and excluded and exploited individuals. Of course all these struggles were (and some still are) hot topics and were high up on agendas for electioneering.

# Why We Fight

*by Guar*

When you express your opposition to the established order, you are often flooded with questions, immediately called upon to justify your opposition on multiple grounds: Why do you see the state/capitalism/civilization as inherently oppressive? How would you feed/clothe/treat people without industrial technology? Wouldn't anarchy devolve into looting and violence? What about the children?

The questions are endless, and soon you might find yourself stuck in defending your positions from all sorts of absurd questions and accusations to the point that you lose track of your actual reasons and motivation for opposing this shitty society in first place. Not only are we expected to have a working model of an alternative society in our heads (a futile exercise), we also have to explain how such an alternative model would be a better for humanity or at least for society.

Leaving aside the pointlessness of planning imaginary societies that would supposedly replace the current one after a revolution which never arrives (and which wouldn't turn out like expected anyway), why should we be expected to define our critique of society in terms of what is best for society or for humanity? Why should I concern myself with society/humanity as a whole at all? And why should I be expected to justify my opposition on such grounds when I might have my own motives which might have absolutely nothing to do with such things?

Such concerns are a product of the humanism that emerged out of the enlightenment. Without god, humans were placed at the center of the world, and a myriad of voices emerged claiming for the progress of mankind, for a brotherhood of men and for other such nonsense.

The thing is: I don't give a damn about humanity, whether we are talking about the totality of all living humans or about an abstract and reified concept of humanity. Despite being quite good at abstract thought and wrecking ecosystems, humans are no more special than algae and jellyfish, and I see not reason to concern myself with the fate of humankind.

Neither do I care much about the fate of all of those that are stuck in this wretched society, which is only united as such (and mediated) through impersonal and artificial institutions and machines. How could I even pretend to truly care about people that I have absolutely no personal relationship with? Why do I need to explain how each and every group of people composing society would have their needs fulfilled without industrial society before acting against it?

And most importantly: why do I need to justify myself at all when industrial society is breaking, taming, robbing, caging, destroying, controlling and ruining everything and everyone I love?

As someone raised in the depths of the industrial best, I can feel the shackles that constrain me whenever I try to move. Everywhere I go, I am being watched, tracked and monitored (as I have been since the day of my birth). I am always being judged according to arbitrary rules that were created without my consent and are enforced through the threat and application of institutionalized violence.

I am constantly being exposed to industrial poisons that permeate the air, the water and the earth, not to mention the disorienting and mind-numbing assault on the senses that results from

the ugliness of the machines and the machineworld. As I try to fulfill my desires, I realize that almost all avenues for such fulfillment are mediated by money, which requires that I commodify myself so I can reach for other commodities. Other avenues are often illegal and put me at risk of injury and/or arrest.

Yet, even in this shitty world, there is much that I love. I love myself and my individuality in all its contradictions for a start. I love my thoughts, emotions and my flights of fancy, and I love sharing them with my affinities. I love my body and I love to walk, run, dance, sing, climb, fight and fuck.

I love my comrades and I love how they enrich my life, inspire me and strengthen my own individuality. I love particular places that have shaped and still shape me, even some places within the hellish cities that I have inhabited. I also love rivers, trees, birds, mountains, jaguars, snakes and funghi.

There is, however one issue: not only myself but everything I love is under siege. My friends are mutilated, tired, caged, depressed, anxious, and stuck between trying to survive industrial civilization and seeking for some semblance of meaning and dignity. Their pain hurts me too, and fills me with the desire to destroy its source.

Every wild place I know is being encroached by industrial civilization, and the places that have already been encroached are witnessing the destruction of every small vestige of wildness. Rivers I have bathed in as a child smell of sewage now, and it saddens me to watch the floating debris make its way downstream. Patches of forests, shrub-land and grasslands that have often provided me a haven in some of the industrial hellholes I have lived have vanished, making way for apartments, stores and parking lots. The singing of birds that lifts my spirits is slowly being replaced by the sound of machines.

Industrial civilization has no brakes. It moves forwards relentlessly on its suicidal path annihilating and/or absorbing everything that stands in its way. It will continue to do so unless it is stopped or collapses. Leftists “radicals” will say that this isn’t a feature of industrial civilization. Blame it all on capitalism! We only need a marxist/anarchist revolution to stop the destruction and turn the “forces of production” into forces of liberation. Or so they say...

Even if such ridiculous ideas had any credibility to them, I’m not waiting for their never-coming revolution/salvation while everything I love is being destroyed. Instead, I chose to fight right here and right now. And I’m not fighting for an abstract idea of revolution, a reified wildness or an artificial “brotherhood of men”. Such abstract ideas are poor sources of motivation and strength, and only encourages the sort of self-sacrifice that turns the struggle to reclaim our lives into another prison. Instead, I fight for myself and for real people, places and living and nonliving entities that are a part of me as much as I am a part of them. And for us, I am willing to fight to the end.

# From Identity to Individuality: A Nihilist's History in Leftism

*by Baba Yaga*

*Note: In this piece, I will be using 'leftism' and 'identity politics' more or less interchangeably, due to their often heavy overlap.*

I grew up in a liberal household to liberal parents, and I had always had a preoccupation (some might say an obsession) with justice. From a young age, I would rage against the injustices committed against the trees felled behind our house, the mice killed in the snap traps, the insects caught by the glue paper, the deer shot by the hunters. "It's not fair!" was a mantra oft screamed from my tiny mouth, and as I grew, it hardly changed.

In high school, I became acquainted with an ideology eager to exploit my enthusiasm for justice. I learned that the whole world was unfair – even more so than I had realized on my own. Same sex marriage, reproductive rights, and bodily autonomy became my first interests – predictably, since I discovered I was a queer bisexual and these things quickly became relevant to me in one way or another. Through these, though, I discovered more. The police shooting in Ferguson of Mike Brown introduced me to the idea that racism was alive and well, and learning this was an angry shock to my sheltered little white life. I couldn't scream my will into being anymore, and I wanted to know what to do.

'Listen', responded the Activists (capital A – they presented themselves as The Only Authority). 'Listen and do as we say.'

I learned all the Correct Language and the Correct Actions, so I would not be Problematic. I cringed and sucked through my teeth at all the Problematic People in my tiny rural town, and (I'm sure) a lot of people got very sick of me. I learned to be pure in thought, word, and action, so that I would not risk the ire of the Activists. There are certain things that must never be said, certain questions that must never be asked. Never question the People of Color.

My exposure to the Activists was purely online, primarily through Facebook, but after my first altercation, (where I failed to recognize a latinx queer on sight and was roundly shouted down by the whole group) I became much quieter. I listened without speaking – as white people were supposed to do. I didn't realize until much later how much anxiety began to build in me whenever I entered these spaces, fearing that any misstep would result in my admonishment and potentially, my expulsion.

Still, I was unwilling to leave the Left behind. If this was justice, then I must submit myself, however uncomfortably, to the greater good.

Never mind my questions. Stuff them down deep. I wondered how it was that white people were simultaneously supposed to 'shut up and listen', 'make space for POC', 'don't speak for POC', but also 'put yourselves on the front lines', 'call out problematic speech in white people'.

I questioned how, exactly, I was supposed to avoid speaking over POC and always ‘stay in my lane’ when POC I knew personally were telling me that they thought the talking points I got from the Activists were bullshit.

I stressed over wearing ‘cultural’ jewelry and clothing that I had purchased from people of that culture, knowing the party line instructed us to support POC artisans, but also knowing that if I wore these items, I would be subject to the same scrutiny as someone who had purchased them from a trendy department store.

I self-flagellated over past transgressions such as having dreadlocks, without ever really understanding what I had done wrong besides doing something I was forbidden from doing.

But I never dared to ask anyone else – least not the Activists.

I would like to tell you that my divorce from the Left was self-driven. I would like to tell you that I recognized the oppressive dynamics all by myself. But until I met others who were questioning the Left as well, I assumed that the only counter-faction was the Right, and I had grown up surrounded by enough of the Right to know I wasn’t interested in their brand. I saw no justice there, no world improvement.

The first time I met a post-leftist, (or if we’re being honest, the third or fourth time – the conditioning runs deep) I finally felt free to ask the questions I had buried. I felt free to poke holes where I had carefully preserved the delicate framework before. But this was not enough to topple everything – oh no. I still held on to the skeleton of justice.

‘Surely they mean well,’ I reasoned. ‘Surely this is an overgrown over-extension of a fundamentally good and just framework.’

And as if called by fate, I began to meet people who had been ‘called out’; people who had made transgressions so egregious that they had been banished from the circles of the Left. These transgressions ranged from accusations of physical abuse to vague allegations of being manipulative (typically without any specific incidents cited, but with full expectation that The Community support the victim without question).

Although each unique, these cases had common threads that ran through them.

As is customary in the Left, most began with a mediation and an accountability process – where a third party would meet with the accused and the accuser and theoretically, help them to reach an agreement about how the accused would atone for their behavior and improve themselves so they would not repeat it. Many of the folks I met either met these goals or were on their way to meeting them. Usually, meeting these goals was the condition for avoiding a call-out.

However, the accusers who had seemingly felt powerless in their interactions with the accused, now found that they had all the power. They controlled what actions the accused must take. They controlled the accused’s place in the social hierarchy, and often, the accused’s physical safety in the world.

This scenario, which in theory was sterile and completely just, became a tool for revenge. Regardless of whether the conditions of the accountability process were met, the call-out came. And as the call-out spread, across the internet and across the ‘community’, it became social suicide to associate with the accused. Being an ‘apologist’ is nearly on par with being an abuser.

The accused became a pariah. No defense, apology, or self-improvement is good enough when you are marked for life.

I began to wonder where the restoration was in this ‘restorative justice’.

And if we’re honest, this is where the tower I had built for myself finally fell. I had labored so long under the belief that we were all working selflessly, tirelessly, towards justice for all. When



the veil was lifted, it became clear to me that the left was infested with wolves in sheep's clothing, manipulating the good will and efforts of earnest, well-meaning people.

Or, maybe we were all a little wolfish – although I had fancied myself a pure, earnest person, I could not deny my efforts to lord my 'woke' trivia over 'nonwoke' friends. I had not set the dogs on anyone myself by issuing any statements, but I had helped to share and publicize them. I had not written any Everyday Feminism articles on why all your language and actions are racist/sexist/oppressive, but I had read them, shared them, and actively policed the people around me.

I just wasn't interested in it anymore. I wasn't interested in helping to create a society of unquestionable rigid social mores. I wasn't interested in silently tallying each 'problematic' misstep of every individual around me – or quietly policing my own speech in constant fear that someone was doing the same to me. And I wasn't interested in perpetuating the socially assigned identities that fed the hierarchies I wanted so badly to tear down.

Unlearning the set of behaviors that make up identity politics was a lot less about deciding I didn't care about hurting people (as I suspect a lot of leftists might assume) and a lot more about listening to what individuals wanted for themselves. Identity politics had taught me that any given social interaction came with a list of rules – and any transgression or mistake could be potentially very serious. For me, these rules became very isolating. I avoided interactions with people for fear of harming them or offending them.

When I began shedding these behaviors, I became more open and comfortable with the people around me. Rather than adhering to these strict rules, we felt free to communicate our individual desires. I could tell my friends that they could touch me freely, without feeling obligated to ask me each time. I could assure them that if I didn't want to be touched at a particular time or in a particular way, I would communicate that to them.

My 'POC' friends could tell me what words and actions they were personally comfortable with, rather than feeling compelled to uphold some sort of community rules or morals.

My friends of all different socially constructed identities – by race, gender, sex, etc – could behave as they wished, without being concerned that they were fulfilling stereotypes or betraying their identities.

It's far from utopian, but as leftism continues to demonstrate, utopia is impossible without authoritarianism.

# What Savages We Must Be: Vegans Without Morality

by Flower Bomb

~ New morals, Same governance ~

*“Morality is common sense ideas that we can all agree on. We need to expand morality to include non-human animals.” -Logic commonly found in the vegan movement*

Most movements who attempt to make social change en masse rely on the “appeal to morality” tactic as a primary method of gaining support. For example, “Meat is Murder” is a common catch phrase within the animal rights movement. This catch phrase relies on the assumption that all people are against murder since, by the same logic, murder is morally reprehensible. But this assumes that there is a singular, universal morality that guides everyone’s decisions when, in reality, it may have different interpretations to some, and only guide those who embrace it to begin with. For example, some selfproclaimed moralists defend the violent manifestations of patriarchy; others advocate white supremacy and many moralists support violence towards nonhuman animals. “Common sense” is only common to those who make up the membership of a specific group, who feel the need to universalize its principles. But “common sense” does not apply to others outside that group who have selfinterests that run contrary to its assumed collective “good”. Often times, it is not a lack of morality that is problematic but the very existence of morality; the set of principles and values independent of the complexity of self-interest, which externally guide and justify one’s actions.

*“Anthropocentrism is the belief that human beings are the most important entity in the universe. Anthropocentrism interprets or regards the world in terms of human values and experiences. The term can be used interchangeably with humanocentrism, and some refer to the concept as human supremacy or human exceptionalism. -Wikipedia*

Anthropocentric morality provides the justification for a wide range of ecodestructive and domesticating disasters. Representing a worldview that constructs the human/animal dichotomy, anthropocentrism is reinforced by a capitalist-industrial society that requires the large-scale death and destruction of wildlife in order to exist. The “righteousness” of human domination provides the socio-political normalization required to pacify any potential for emotional outrage against this systematized violence. So between vegan morality and anthropocentric morality, which one is “right”?

*“Moral nihilism is the meta-ethical view that nothing is morally right or wrong. There are no moral features in this world; nothing is right or wrong. Therefore, no moral judgements are true; however, our sincere moral judgements try, but always fail, to describe*

*the moral features of things. Thus, we always lapse into error when thinking in moral terms. We are trying to state the truth when we make moral judgements. But since there is no moral truth, all of our moral claims are mistaken. -Wikipedia*

Morality is a social construct that does not represent a universal truth, nor the interests of all people. While also failing to account for the complex circumstances in which moral-based decisions are impractical, morality limits the scope of decision making and individual action. Therefore, in order to condition morality on a mass scale, rigid obedience is required which necessitates an equally rigid violent apparatus to enforce it.

Obeying morality of any type requires putting aside individual experience and personal motives of self-interest. This also means disregarding the pragmatic considerations concerning the practical consequences of one's morality-based decision. In society, morals are socially conditioned in order to maintain a standardized system of beliefs. This system discourages individualist thinking and questioning of not only that system, but of the foundations of authority in general. The primary method for this discouragement is to advertise a desired belief as a "common sense" or normality that "everyone" knows or follows. This immediately places the "group" above the "individual". With individual self-interest, one might refuse to obey without questioning, therefore groupthink is socially reinforced to discourage individual responsibility, creativity, and thinking for one's self. Examples of the deployed socialized hostility towards individualism include labelling those who assert their individuality as "selfish" or "egotistic" and therefore undesirable.

A movement that moralizes veganism means instituting another social system that would enforce new morality-based laws and norms. Not only would this require an (ironically) violent apparatus for reinforcement, but would still come without a guarantee of a more "peaceful", "compassionate" capitalism. As long as there are systems of governance, (including the contradictory "compassionate capitalism") there will be rebels. As long as there are laws, there is corruption within the apparatus itself that enforces them. As both a historical and contemporary social project attempting to create peace and compassion on a mass scale, moralism has failed.

~ **Beyond morality: no government can ever give us freedom** ~

*"Anarchy is the absence of government and absolute freedom of individuality.  
-Wikipedia*

The same apparatuses of coercion that reinforces morality (religion, the state, etc.) are the enemies of freedom. While one might say these institutions could reinforce the vegan morality that would liberate non-human animals, these same institutions require individualist subjugation to their collective "good". But their good wouldn't be a "good" of my own; it would be their thinking over mine, empowered by its assumed "universal truth". This is the same logic of control and domination that is used by those who dominate and consume non-human animals. Guided by the values of human supremacy, there is a sense of entitlement that positions them above question. The same apparatus that conditions morality holds that "beyond question" position. But as an individual, not only do I question it, I reject it all together.

My individualism is empowered by self-interest and informed decision-making. My refusal to surrender my mind to the "collective good" of consuming the flesh and secretions of non-human animals is a reflection of my own rebellion. Along with the inspiration from other individual

vegans I realized the power of thinking independently, selfishly, and egotistically – against the mass society whose normalized traditions and values conflict with my interests. As an individualist, being vegan is practical in extending individual autonomy to nonhuman animals. My refusal to socially reinforce their commodity status allows them the natural right to exist as their own autonomous individual selves, the same way I would expect to be respected by others. I refuse to individually participate in the mass normalization of their domination.

Anarchy, for me, means individual negation to laws, order, and systems. This anarchy not only opposes both vegan and anthropocentric morality but morality all together: morality being the abstract form of governance that attempts to subjugate my individuality. My veganism requires no external governance to enforce or guide it. It is an individualist choice that reflects the consistency and practicality of living my life against authority.

For veganism to be logically consistent with animal liberation, it must be antiauthoritarian. From this point forward, the totality of capitalist, industrial civilization must be called into question. Being vegan and pro-capitalist is a contradiction since the full functioning of capitalism requires large-scale exploitation of natural resources, subsequently destroying and wiping out entire eco-systems. Capitalism requires the expansion of technological industrialization to accommodate the demands of mass society. Mass society requires the ever-expanding displacement of wildlife to house the growing human population. Civilization is rooted by agriculture which is predicated on the basic formula of taking more from the land than putting back. This results in irreversible damage to all eco-systems that directly affect non-human animals.

To be vegan and pro-statist is a contradiction, since veganism aims for animal liberation, while the State is the antithesis of liberation – reinforcing laws that utilize physical force to coerce all beings into compliance. The common denominator with the State and vegan morality is the shared positions held as “universal truths” above the individual. Both coerce; one mentally and the other physically. Both compliment each other’s intentions on conditioning “the masses”, and both encourage the disregard for individual self-interest, creativity, and self-responsibility.

A well-used example of alienation was deployed to describe private property and the economic exploitation of capitalism, by which the worker is separated from what they produce: their ‘power to’ do whatever it might be is sold as If the basis of animal liberation is freedom, empowering a governing agency to enforce moral-based laws upon individuals is a contradiction. It reinforces speciesism through the division of human and animal; if humans are in fact animals, and the vegan aim is animal liberation, why wouldn’t “human” animals liberate themselves from the same shackles of both speciesism and governance as well? Speciesism is reinforced through human supremacy, and if human supremacy is to be dismantled socially, animal liberation applies to everyone. From this point of view, government is not needed for granting rights: the right to bodily autonomy and equality comes with the dismantling of governance – both the governance of morality and statism.

It is not a morality that governs my actions, but rather an individualist desire to wage war upon all systems, moral or not, that attempt to subjugate me and destroy the earth I require to survive. My decision to become vegan did not come from a vegan morality or a new law prohibiting me from consuming flesh and secretions. It came from ungoverned free thought which helped me view society in a critical way, discovering pragmatic ways of enacting my own project of liberation. My vegan anarchist praxis is a shared affinity with the nonhumans who fight against the constraints and torture devices of modern technology, slaughterhouses, and the human-made

hell of industrial society. There is no God, government, or morality to save us. Only our individual selves, the decisions we make and the actions we take.

~ **Arming the will to survive with attack** ~

*“Savage (of an animal or force of nature) fierce, violent, and uncontrolled. -Wikipedia*

One common tenet of morality is the commitment to non-violence. As an individualist, I find violence to be useful in some circumstances, and impractical in others. But it is this open-ended utilization of violence that morality-based non-violence prohibits. When it comes to animal liberation (or from the statist perspective, animal rights), veganism is often advertised as a “cruelty-free”, “no harm done” or “non-violent” movement. This not only ignores the historical examples of successful animal liberations through violence, but it also promotes a limited range of strategic activity. The reinforcement of a non-violent morality discourages the use of violence against the institutions and individual agents of speciesist domination. Human supremacy utilizes every and all avenues of violence to maintain its control. To limit the arsenal of resistance to mere defence rather than incorporating attack is to strategically limit the range of possibility and potential in advancing animal liberation. When animal liberation is confined to the legal arena of statism, the agency of individual insurgency has been surrendered.

Within mass society, speciesism is not just confined to grocery stores; it is also embedded in the social and cultural traditions reinforced by individual participation. Therefore, individuals socially reproduce the normalization of non-human animal abuse, control, and domination. And while some of these individuals might emancipate themselves from the speciesist mindset of human centric entitlement, others might embrace and defend it. Therefore, violence becomes a necessary task carried out by those individuals who refuse to stand by and allow the social reproduction of anthropocentric morality and practice.

I find affinity with those of the wild that struggle against the machinery of industrial society and those who fight to defend the ecological habitats within which they survive. The need for intensified confrontation with speciesism is one that encompasses an anti-authoritarian strike against the ideology and institutions of capitalism, the state, and anthropocentric morality. Beyond mere legislative reform, animal liberation from this perspective necessitates the destruction of all cages and apparatuses that physically captivate non-human animals. Simultaneously, a war waged against the forces of “human” animal captivity and enslavement opens avenues of exploration beyond the superiority complex — the role and identity of “human” as distinct from animal and wildness.

Through spontaneous ruptures to the civilized order, vegan savagery asserts resistance through attacking the foundations that produce enslavement. From non-participation to feral insurgency, anarchy is the personification of any individual with the courage to become wild against domesticating subordination.

But vegan savagery is more than just violent veganism: it is the celebration of life against the laws of morality, civilization, control, and domination. It is the refusal to internalize the capitalist-industrial view of others as mere objects to exploit, consume, or enslave. This allows individuals to define themselves as their own autonomous beings, armed with the agency to attack those who attempt to subjugate them.

As a vegan anarchist, my fight for freedom is parallel with the struggles fought by the wild since the dawn of industrial society and civilized domestication. What savages we must be —

fighting for freedom with every breath, reclaiming our lives through every act of violence against the machines of social control and domination! While the movements of morality continue to ignore the vital reality of amoral violent necessity, some of us continue to wage war against speciesism with nothing more than a fire for freedom in our hearts. In solidarity with the wild, and in defence of the ecological terrain I call home, my fight is fierce and ungovernable. Toward veganism beyond morality, toward industrial collapse and total liberation!

# Subversive Anarchy Past and Present (A brief look at Illegalist, individualist and nihilist anarchy)

by Renzo Conners

*“Revolution is aimed at new arrangements; insurrection leads us no longer to let ourselves be arranged, but to arrange ourselves, and set no glittering hopes on “institutions.”*  
– Max Stirner

*Don't follow me... I'm not leading you... Don't walk ahead of me... I'll not follow you... Carve your own path... Become yourself...”* – Conspiracy Cells of Fire, Imprisoned Members Cell

*“I know that there will be an end to this fight between the formidable arsenal of the State and me. I know that I will be vanquished, I will be the weaker, but I hope I can make you pay dearly for the victory.”* – Octave Garnier

**On the this day over 100 years ago on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April, 1913, Illegalist and Individualist anarchist Raymond Callemin was executed by guillotine by order of the French state. On the anniversary of his execution I write this in memory of all those that have fallen or been jailed in the social war against society.**

The illegalist current is an offshoot of individualist anarchism. Refusing to be exploited, forced to work for some rich tyrant, instead the illegalist chooses to rob them. It's an anti-work ethic for individual autonomy to be realized in real life right away through Individual expropriation also known as individual reclamation.

Individual reclamation gained notoriety in France in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century and gave birth to what was to become known as illegalism. Proponents of individual reclamation were anarchists such as Clement Duval and Marius Jacob. Marius Jacob stole to fund himself as well as the anarchist movement and other causes. This is the main factor that separates illegalism from individual reclamation, the illegalists stole solely for themselves. Although some Individual illegalists did fund individualist anarchist newspapers from the proceeds of their expropriations and gave money to comrades that were in need.

The illegalists, many of whom, inspired by Max Stirner and Friedrich Nietzsche were of the persuasion of why should they have to wait on the passive herd of exploited and poor classes to rise up and expropriate the rich? The poor seemed quite content with the conditions they inhabited. Why should the illegalists have to wait on the exploited workers to become enlightened with a revolutionary consciousness? Why should they have to continue to live a life of being exploited and worked to death while they wait for the future social revolution that may not ever

happen? The illegalist anarchists had no faith in the workers struggle, so decided to fight back and rob the wealthy, it was a purely egoist endeavor.

Stirner would have called them “conscious egoists”, expropriating their lives back for themselves, not asking for permission to exist. They refused to be slaves to bosses and the state. The illegalists chose to steal through conscious revolt against society.

The illegalist anarchists robbed, shot, stabbed, counterfeited money and committed the odd bit of arson across Europe, but predominantly in France, Belgium, and Italy. There were gun battles and shootouts with cops. Long jail sentences and executions.

One such group of illegalist anarchists were to become immortalized as “The Bonnot Gang”.

Raymond Callemin was born in Belgium, a former socialist who then became an anarchist after becoming disillusioned with the reformism of the Belgian Socialist Party. Having become influenced by anarchism, Raymond left the Socialist Party with Victor Serge and Jean De Boe who were equally disillusioned with socialist electoral politics. Together they published an individualist anarchist newspaper “Le Revolte” which was totally hostile to unions and political parties, and was for “permanent insurrection against the bourgeoisie”.

Octave Garnier on the run from France, fled to Belgium to avoid being conscripted to the army. He had already committed several expropriations on the rich via burglaries and had spent time in jail. He first started out in syndicalism but didn’t take long before developing a disgust with the union leaders being akin to the bosses using and manipulating workers for their own ends. He then joined the ranks of the anarchists. Not being able to work in the profession of his choice, having to work menial jobs and forced into being a wage slave in jobs he did not even want in order to live, he became a committed illegalist.

The four anarchists were in their early 20’s, they found each other through the anarchist circles in Belgium and shared a mutual hatred for the rich and their system of exploitation. Raymond and Octave carried out many burglaries together and tried their hand at counterfeiting coins.

Victor Serge writing articles for Le Revolte brought a lot of attention on himself from the Belgium state. Since he was a refugee in Belgium from childhood it made it easier for the Belgian state to get rid him. He was expelled from Belgium as a dangerous subversive. He left for France and set up a libertarian commune with other anarchists. Not long after, Octave Garnier having warrants out for his arrest, followed Victor to France, with Raymond.

In France they met with Jules Bonnot who was on the run. Jules was in his early 30’s, an ex soldier and a committed illegalist anarchist. The police were looking for him for a murder, which was really an accidental shooting of a comrade. Jules having a lot of experience carrying out expropriation and being quite successful, offered Octave and Raymond a proposition to carry out a big job together. The pair were only happy to accept Jules’s offer, being fed up not making as much as they’d like to from the burglaries and counter fitting, risking a lot while not getting much back in return.

The three along with another anarchist, Eugène Dieudonné, came up with a plan to rob a bank messenger who would be delivering money. They started by robbing a high powered car from a rich neighborhood on the outskirts of Paris. Jules learned how to drive in the army so he’d be the getaway driver. Raymond, Octave, and Eugene would rob the bank messenger. And so on 21<sup>st</sup> of December 1911 in broad daylight they robbed the messenger. They held up the messenger’s security guard as the pair were leaving the bank. Octave demanded the messenger to hand over the briefcase. Raymond grabbed it and attempted to make his way for the getaway car. But the messenger wouldn’t let go of the case. Octave shot him twice in the chest (the messenger was



badly wounded but did not die). They made their getaway speeding through the streets of Paris in what was one of the best model cars of the time. It was the very first time a car was used in an armed robbery in France, because of that the media nicknamed them the “auto bandits”.

From the robbery they made 5,000 francs which they weren't happy with. They expected to have expropriated much more. A few days after the robbery of the bank messenger they broke into a gun shop stealing many guns including high powered rifles. Not long after, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January 1912, they broke into the home of a rich bourgeois, killing him and his maid in the process. They got away with 30,000 francs from this burglary. They soon fled to Belgium carrying out more robberies and shot 3 cop along their way. Then back to Paris to rob another bank, but this time they would hold up the bank. While doing the robbery they shot 3 bank clerks. After the robbery a bounty of 700,000 francs was put on the anarchists heads, the Société Générale bank they robbed put another 100,000 francs on their heads.

There is a deep nihilism, egoism, and anti-reformism within illegalist praxis with its continuity today with groups like the Conspiracy Cells of Fire, the Informal Anarchist Federation/International Revolutionary Front and individuals such as the Chilean Anarcho-nihilists Sebastian Oversluij who was shot dead while expropriating a bank, and Mauricio Morales who was killed when the bomb he was transporting in his backpack detonated prematurely.

**Modern day insurrectionary anarchy also has a direct lineage with this anarchist history. Many of the main components of ideas and praxis that comprise illegalism and individual reclamation (which includes propaganda of the deed, which is individual direct action against the bourgeois class, their property and their flunkies, ie pigs, screws and judges, in the hope the action will inspire others to follow suit; anti-organisational in the form of individual insurrection, affinity groups and informal organisation; and an extreme disliking of the left and its tactics of reformism) are also found in the different strands of insurrectionary anarchism today.**

What was branded the “Bonnot Gang” by the media and the pigs was an affinity group. Jules Bonnot was not a leader of the group, there were none. The individuals that comprised the different affinity groups that carried out the so called crimes that were branded with the name the “Bonnot Gang” were simply individuals with mutual aims that came together to carry out actions. The French state used the name to brand any anarchist they pleased with association to any of the so called crimes.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 1912 André Soudy (an anarchist who took part in some of the robberies of the group) was caught by police. A few days later, another anarchist involved with some of the robberies, Édouard Carouy was arrested. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of April, Raymond Callemine. By the end of April, 28 anarchists had been arrested in connection with the “Bonnot Gang”.

On April 28 police discovered the location where Jules Bonnot was hiding in Paris. 500 armed police surrounded the house. Jules refused to give himself up, a shoot out commenced. After hours of exchanging shots, the police detonate a bomb at the front of the house. When the police stormed the house they discovered Jules rolled up in a mattress, he was still firing shots at them. He was shot in the head and died later from his injuries in hospital.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of May police discovered the location of Octave Garnier and Rene Valet (another member of the group). 300 cops and 800 soldiers surrounded the building. Like Bonnot the pair also refused to be arrested. The siege lasted hours, the police eventually detonated a bomb and blew part of the house up killing Octave. Rene badly injured was still firing off shots, he died not long after.

A year later on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 1913 Raymond Callemin, as well as many other anarchists including Victor Serge were put on trial by the French state for their alleged parts in the “Bonnot Gang”. Although Raymond did carry out many robberies and shot dead a bank clerk, many others who were put on trial had no part whatsoever in any of the so-called crimes that were attributed to the “Bonnot Gang”. The French state was thirsty for revenge and so after it gunned them down and blew them up; the state executed, locked up and exiled many anarchists. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of April, 1913, Raymond Callemin, Étienne Monier and André Soudy were executed by guillotine . Many of their co-accused were sentenced to life and hard labour in French colonies.

This revenge practice by states is still carried out today with the Scripta Manent trials in Italy which are directly related to the kneecapping of the manager of a nuclear power company by individualist anarchists Alfredo Caspito and Nicola Gia, and other acts of resistance in Italy. And the repressive trials in Russia against anarchists, anti-fascists, and the FSB’s (Federal Security Service) fabricated “Network” organization case. In retaliation Anarcho-communist Mikhail Zhlobitsky last October detonated a bomb in the Russian Federal Security Service Regional Headquarters in Arkhangelsk, dying in the process. And so the FSB carried out another round of repression against anarchists after the bombing, arresting, interrogating and slapping false charges on many anarchists as payback for the attack. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, 2019 a cell from the Informal Anarchist Federation naming Itself FAI/FRI Revenge Faction – Mikhail Zholbitsky carried out a grenade attack against the Russian embassy in Athens, Greece as revenge for the repression carried out by the Russian state against anarchists.

Whichever current of anarchism an individual lives, it doesn’t matter, once it is subversive and in conflict with whatever authority that attempts to infringe on an individual’s autonomy. The ongoing war against industrial capitalist society has been raging for over 200 years, which has claimed many lives of anarchists with even more being jailed. The same insurrectional spirit of no mediation and no compromise with authority continues to flow in subversive anarchy today. In solidarity with all anarchists imprisoned and at war with industrial capitalist society.

# On Savage Attack and the Moralization of Violence

*by Guar*

Anarchists have always been one of the most radical and uncompromising enemies of the system. As such, we have always been among those most willing to use militant tactics such as the use of violence. That being said, the debate around violence within anarchist circles is a complex and divisive debate, and one often mired in civilized (and particularly leftist) morality.

From the inception of the movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the vast majority of anarchists have agreed on the necessity of violence as a tool for fighting the system. In practice, however, the actual use of violence by anarchists has cleaved deep divisions between anarchists.

Such divisions are evident in the debates surrounding the idea of “propaganda by the deed” that generated so much controversy in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. While the inspiring revolts of anarchists such as Ravachol, the Bonnot Gang and Severinno Di Giovanni were acknowledged and praised by many anarchists, the majority of anarchists at the time sought to distance themselves from such acts. Many went as far as claiming that the perpetrators were nothing more than antisocial terrorists who have nothing to do with “The Movement”

In 1901, an anarchist immigrant named Leon Czolgosz shot Henry McKinley, the U.S president at the time, in the stomach. McKinley died a few days later. Despite the fact that the only person to be targeted by the action was a tyrant presiding over an empire, the assassination of McKinley generated a huge outrage among anarchists at the time, who condemned the action not only on tactical grounds but also on moral grounds. With a few other exceptions, the only anarchists who stood for Czolgosz and his actions at the time were Emma Goldman (who was imprisoned by the state as retaliation for the shooting) and some Italian anarchists.

To be fair, it makes sense to criticize the shooting in terms of its consequences. The state used it as an excuse to fuel anti-anarchist and anti-immigrant sentiment, ushering a wave of repression. That being said, criticisms went far beyond that, with many anarchists attempting to completely deny any connections between the act of a “lone madman” and anarchism. Such anarchists seem to believe that any anarchists who are willing to act for themselves without regards to what the priests of “The Movement” or the masses think are no true anarchists at all, and should be shunned from “The Movement”. Yet, how can one claim to stand for anarchy while attempting to control the actions of those that choose to act without asking for permission? The contradiction is appalling.

Another debate that highlights the civilized morality predominant in the movement is the current debate around the use of militant tactics and violence.

Anarchism is often associated with violence, which isn’t surprising when you consider it’s history (and the fact that most anarchists advocate for a violent revolution). Yet, most of those who call themselves anarchists (even those who take part in militant actions) will go to great

lengths to deny that “The Movement” is violent at all. They will say that property destruction isn’t violent, that all violence practiced by “True Anarchists” is defensive violence or that the state is the one that is really violent.

There are also those who argue that appreciation for militant tactics among anarchists is simply a reflection of “macho” dynamics. While such dynamics do exist and influence anarchist projects, should we accept such an essentialist gendering of violence and relegate violence to the realm of the “masculine”? What about the violence of radical “women” and queer folks that chose to bash back? Are they being “macho” too?

With the exception of the association of violence with macho attitudes, all of these arguments play into the moralization of violence, which is seen as an “unnecessary evil”. I have even seen anarchists saying that one should never have fun (!!!) while taking part in militant actions. Should those that choose to fight deny their feelings and become mere fighting machines?

While the fetishization of violence can be problematic (especially when it comes from those who have never experienced it firsthand), so is its demonization. In a society based in the monopolization of violence in the hands of the state and in the pacification and declawing of those under its rule, we shouldn’t shy away from admitting ourselves to be violent and from celebrating violent acts perpetrated against those who are immiserating our lives and waging a war against all that is wild.

Now, I am not saying we should uncritically support any violent acts committed by anarchists (there is nothing we should uncritically support). But neither should we interpret these actions through a moralist framework that attempts to distance “moral” anarchists from “antisocial criminals”, accepting violence only when it serves the goals of “The Movement” (what movement?). Instead, we should understand that violence is inseparable from the anarchist struggle, as it is from life itself. There will always be unruly elements that feel moved to strike back at society whether or not they are supported by “the masses” or whether the conditions are ripe for such actions. It is only by embracing these elements and rejecting the moralization of violence that we can become a force that strikes fear in the hearts of those that uphold the civilized order.

# The Nature of the Left

by *The Green Anarchy Collective*

Marx considered industry the “open book of human essential forces.” Nowhere on the Left is this formulation refuted. Its origins, logic, destination are taken for granted. We find here, in fact, a core assumption that unites leftists: that the means of production/technology should be progressively developed, its reach always extended. This notion is very close to the heart of the modern conception of progress. All of life must yield to its imperative.

Domination of nature and domestication are in no way problematic for the Left. Leftists fail to notice that this accounts, in a fundamental way, for the Left’s sorry record in practice concerning both the natural world and the individual.

Like other defenders of civilization and modernity, leftists uphold the “neutrality” of technology. They cling to this credo even as the horrors of genetic engineering, human cloning, the cyborg future for the self, etc. unfold for all to see. Soon, apparently, a wholly mediated and artificial reality will arrive, with the virtual/digital erasure of direct experience itself. Modern industrial “medicine”, for example, is on course to dispense with human contact altogether.

But no matter, this development is “neutral”; it all depends on how it is used or who is in power. As if these innovations weren’t hugely estranging and destructive processes in themselves.

Technology embodies the dominant values of the social order where it resides. It is inseparable from those values and is their physical expression. Technology becomes a system, as its society becomes a system. At a fairly early stage of the development of division of labor (specialization), tools become technology. Where once there were autonomous, equal individuals and tools accessible to all, the effective power of experts gradually takes over, promoting social hierarchy. Division of labor is a fundamental motor of complex, stratified, alienated society, today as from the beginning.

The Left doesn’t question this basic institution that drives all the rest, and so must repeat the dominant lie about the neutrality of technology. In this way the Left works continually for the preservation of the values and the society that produce ever more powerful and oppressive technology.

Globalization is not only the cutting edge of the world system of domination; it also represents division of labor at the global level. The Left, of course, takes even this for granted, opposing only the excesses of certain policies, not globalization itself. Thus “Against Globophobia,” (*The Nation*, December 1, 2003) rails against those of us who do oppose it, e.g. “This might be a good time to junk local self-reliance as an ideal and embrace a deeply global perspective.” The current bible of the Left, Hardt and Negri’s *Empire* (2000), is at least as committed to contemporary society’s mainstays of productionism, technology, and the basic world system. This system is stamping out all difference, including indigenous lifeways, in favor of standardization and global homogeneity.

In his *Mirror of Production* (1972), Jean Baudrillard showed that marxism (and all of the modern Left) is just the mirror image of capital’s techno-economic essentials. Even earlier, Walter Benjamin understood that “mass production is the production of masses.”

The Left is not radical and really never was. Its adherents challenge none of the underlying givens of this rotten, massified anti-life world. On the contrary, the Left — including the anarchist Left — defends them all. What leftists do oppose is a qualitatively different vision, in the direction of decentralized, face-to-face, small-scale community where individual responsibility makes division of labor and domination obsolete, and human anarchy is part of nature.

# Decolonize Earth

*by Ria Del Montana*

I was born belonging to a field and a forest edge until civilization stole my being and ‘developed’ my home. Years later I was still a teenager when I stole back some summertime alone in noncivilization, a juniper knoll over a lake. Each dawn a mourning dove perched on the branch above greeted morning cooOOwoo-woo-woooo. For years after, work-consume city culture swallowed my life. One day I opened my city door shocked to find a lame mourning dove on the deck. My mind wondered on which human construct caused the collision. My inner self, original self, truest self, arose from artificial hibernation. My animal being compassionately watched over this other animal being through days and nights as her body healed. When she found strength to fly away, I mused mystical meaning of this visit from my past converting this deck artifice into wild refuge. Too quickly I distracted back into illusory life.

I moved to another urban area, this one with sloped landslide-prone ‘parks’ astonishingly let be as withered wildlife habitat. They were dumped, fragmented and encroached into by domesticated humans and their invading tag-along plants and animals. These wild lands civilization rejected for ‘development’, however degraded, became my authentic life. In forests dominated by conifers, much taller and widespread than junipers, in swaths along saline shores, my animal being reawakened. This time I heard nature’s cries and responded wholly, learning ways of tending the wild. Indigenous plants are the locus of thriving wild, so I observed their characters, their pleasures and aversions, movements and constraints, givings and takings, shape-shifting communities and ranges, and what assists them in their struggles with invading colonizers.

My assists aligned with the science of restoring ecology, but my emphasis on caring observations of everything wild awakened a connection deeper than anything science. I didn’t see my change coming, or plan it, though I was ready for it and accepted it fully. Despite reports as increasing in population, the only time I saw a mourning dove since moving to the land of towering conifers was on a walk through a human altered environment. Crows harangued with raptorwarning caws from electric lines above her lifeless body on roadside lawn. Blood dripped from her beak as a hawk held her still with a talon to rip open her breast. My mind wondered if humans’ ‘development’ vastness created space too open, stealing cover that serves hawk the advantage. After years of lying dormant inside me, mourning dove’s call intuitively sounded, not entering through my ears but emanating through my voice. cooOO-woo-woo-woooo

Mourning doves are so uncommon in the forests that I began using the call to communicate with habitat restoration friends working within sound range, drawing selective attention of others familiar with expected bird calls of the place. I varied the emotionality of the call to signal meaning, from “I’m here now” to “Come check this out!” Now that my project focuses on inviting return of extirpated indigenous plants, each time I cast seeds, bury rhizomes or stake stems into a habitat in which the species once thrived, I sound the mourning dove’s call selectively to all others who live in this home to announce the plant’s presence. Then I leave the wild alone to reacquaint.

During a recent training on how nonNatives can ally with Native Americans I learned a lesson not taught: restoring wild ecology is the deepest way colonized humans can decolonize. Returning a place toward its pre-colonized state is rewilding both the place and the rewilder's self. This training however centered on identity politics, which I see as correlational to and part of the birth of human colonization: civilization. Humans' domestication and domesticating is civilization's core, which is wild life's core problem. As this training revealed, civilized humans wage futile fights paradoxically against civilization's hierarchies. Further, they see the heinous power they hold over nonhuman animals as worth the price of civilizations' 'progress', from world takeovers much farther back than humans' most recent post-stone age globalization.

Post-stone age colonization removes us from wild ways of knowing, for example, replacing childhoods in connection with nature to childhoods enclosed behind walls studying ways of controlling nature. Humans' stone age colonization enculturated humans away from primal ways of living by unnaturally positioned themselves as Earth's top predator as they expanded. This most noticeably manifests in the shifting human foodway from biological herbivores to advantageous omnivores. From foraging to dominating by organized hunting.

Past shifting human lifeways of a place creates a curious predicament in restoration ecology. The restoration reference point of a place resembles the most recent phase diversity of life was thriving there. In most cases that phase was a settled period after the habitat was markedly altered by human colonizing actions impacting the environment. If nature restorers' reference point for a place was shaped by actions such as old growth forest burns set by some to open gaps for hunting opportunities, how do they account for these missing human interactions that shaped the ecology?

For thousands of years humans have decided how all life live, further which life and entire species live and which die. Imagine a pre-human colonization wildlife map. Imagine wildlife timelines fluctuating at points of first human contacts, how interconnections transitioned from wild dynamics to hierarchies under human control. Species deemed appealing to human usefulness or preference moved to the top, while any species unwanted was marginalized and risked extermination. Imagine nonhuman animals hosting a training for humans on the history of their oppression and exploitation, complete with stories of their slaughters and species extinctions, as well as their resistance stories and strategies, with an invitation for you to support them.

An invitation to ally with nature, to liberate Earth from human colonization, would center on rekindling primal relations with others we now oppress. A training to ally with wild life would confront humans' colonizing propaganda, stereotypes and defenses with countering truths. Not all past humans hunted, many remained foragers, just as many humans today as young as toddlers instinctively choose to refrain from animal exploitation. Humans' reign over others is not natural, nor is humans' consuming animals part of the 'circle of life', no matter how much 'thanks' is expressed. The heart of wild interactions and relations is not using others as resources, but thriving community wild life. Other animals do not mystically 'offer' themselves for consumption, whether or not 'every part' of their body is used. They are not 'food' animals brought into existence for us to live, but wild animals often bred into unnatural form by imprisoning civilized hands.

Truth is, humans are an incredibly adaptive species with great abilities to change toward sustainable lifeways, if they would take steps in overcoming their speciesism. In a training to ally with nature, they would get a checklist to test their speciesism, akin to Dr. Raible's checklist for antiracist white allies. *\*I demonstrate knowledge and awareness of the issues of speciesism. \*I*



*continually educate myself about speciesism. \*I raise issues about speciesism over and over, both in public and in private. \*I identify speciesism as it is happening. \*I take risks in...* Like civilization, speciesism is so rampant, so ingrained in all of everywhere, the chasm feels unbridgeable. But going hand in hand with civilization, not facing the daunting task of bringing down speciesism means humans' own demise.

Like all oppressions, the dominant group benefits leave tracks of misery seeming so unnecessary in retrospect. Bringing down the old ways gives space for the new. Humans can identify and breach the cracks in the cycle of systematic oppression of nature at each step. The generated misinformation and propaganda. The justification for further mistreatment. The institutions perpetuating and enforcing speciesism birthed in civilization. The internalized dominance and feelings of superiority. The internalized oppression via subscribing to the narrative. The cultural acceptance, approval, legitimization, exploitation, that we cannot empathise with parallel lives that become mere normalization. The systemic mistreatment of nature. Whether targets are specific or broad, planting seeds in the hearts and minds or immediately effective actions, opportunities abound.

While the path of the new way does not and cannot have an overarching plan, some potential actions of the new way can be envisioned. Collectively reduce human population. Give back land for indigenous rewilding. Restore habitat toward times of last thriving ecosystems, that is pre-European colonization. Invite the return of extirpated species. Where possible, reintroduce humanremoved indigenous top predators. Sanctuaries for liberated animals bred into domesticated forms who cannot go feral or co-adapt into habitat community. Shrink animal agriculture first, plant agriculture second. If possible, skip over architecting food forests & permaculture with humans at the center and return straight to foraging. Draw from sciences without bias barriers to wildlife's innate right to live on their own terms.

Humans will either soon drive themselves to extinction with many others, or they will decolonize themselves by mutualizing their alliance with Earth's living communities. Hope lies in releasing mass delusion, in bringing down speciesism and civilization that dragged it in, in assisting Earth's transition into a rewilded state that includes the compassionate feral folio-frugivore human living in symbiosis with others. Not utopia, but liberating Earth from human domestication. The transition has already begun, and all humans are invited to join. CooOO-woo-woo-woooo.

# Alienation

*by Return Fire*

Alienation – the result of individuals and, through them, societies ‘becoming alien’ (i.e distant, disengaged, even uncomprehending) to the results of their own activity, the environment in which that activity occurs, from the people who share that environment and activity, and from themselves. Alienation is marked in those of us living out systems of social relationships which thus redirect our energy from living on our own terms in a manner we ourselves can choose and assert, and into **simply reproducing and reinforcing that social system in order to attain the means for survival**. Individuals with the means (intellectual, ecological, social) to create lives they freely desire are difficult to base top-down authoritarian systems upon without the draining use of constant force. Alienation makes it possible to relatively smoothly maintain the centralisation of wealth, knowledge and power, separated from us yet raised by ourselves and many like us.

labour power, transforming it into an owner’s ‘power over’ them and thereby alienating human beings from their capacity to create. However it would be a mistake to simply stop there, as Marxists mostly do for instance. (In the 20<sup>th</sup> century what became known as ‘the Fordist compromise’ began to allow producers a limited amount of access to the commodities they produce; without however changing the course of alienation, now even more marked in the ‘postindustrial’ consumer classes.)

**We believe that the problem runs much deeper and older than wage relations, in both the ‘external’ world of habitual interactions and their ramifications and in the psyche.** While alienation can be and is implemented through many institutions (religion, for one) with a far longer history, a more holistic example of how alienation begins to sink its deeper roots would be the dispiriting result on untold numbers of land-based cultures from assimilation into conquering empires, and the industrial revolution that forced a mechanical division between individuals and their livelihoods, their tools, their communities, their lands; the separation between production and knowledge itself. Let’s take a step back to a more fundamental appraisal of what it might mean to be a potentially-free being on a living planet.

**What do you know about the trees outside the window? What keeps them healthy? What about the other animals that live close to you; do you recognise their calls or tracks? What they do, what they prefer?** What do you know about the lives of human animals that go on over the other side of the wall next-door, or the masses you pass on the street? What do they know about you? How does that make you feel?

What do you really know about where the food you eat comes from? Or about what has to happen for our homes to be lit, heated, or built? **How many of your survival necessities or subsistence skills are truly in your own hands or those of your relations?**

What proportion of your conversations still enjoy the depth of face to face interaction? How much of your daily environment can you navigate on foot, walking, climbing, swimming, being helped by a companion, or how much of it is it necessary to depend on regulated means of trans-

portation through? How much of your immediate surrounding area are you physically, socially or legally barred from exploring? Why?

How much of your daily activity is to suit your own needs? Aside from within the symbolic order of the wage economy, that is. How much of it do you even really see or understand the repercussions of? Would we live in this manner if we could directly see and touch the impacts that are hidden from most, in ghettos, toxic dumps, slaughter-houses, hospitals, cemeteries, refugee camps, battlefields and felled rainforest in distant lands, youth jails, oceanic garbage-gyres? Or have we become so distanced from other lives by the allotment of everything into categories of utility, so justifying their and our resources for our own, as rulers living off us cannot empathise with ours?

Does the concept of diversity have much relation to your life beyond the array of brands at the supermarket, or inter-relatedness have a meaning beyond message boards? We are tricked and trick ourselves into believing that the damming of a river or disappearance of wildlife doesn't really affect us, burying ourselves in air-conditioned coffins as a society to separate ourselves from the world we were born in.

Do you even remember how to enact and express your joy as you may have in your early years? What actually gives you deep satisfaction; or fails to, even though it may be what advertising and marketing, your parents, school, politicians or your peers tell you should do? How in touch are you with your own desires, multi-sensuousness, thoughts and feelings? Might they be directed by social constructions of gender roles, 'human nature', class positions, urban desensitisation...? Might any tendencies which don't fit those constructions be smothered daily, in this world we endure? **Do you ever feel like something is missing?**

What about your own body; are you familiar with its cycles and drives, or are they an abstraction in a textbook or something that simply comes upon us from the blue? Is health just something obscure that a technical industry exists for and which we're objects to? Isn't the direction of our culture one directly away from the immediacy of human sensations, evidenced by inflating reliance on machine-readings of our 'vital statistics' and symptom-numbing drugs, shifting value from group play or physical activity in general into the spectacle of online games and, at best, exercising isolated with the iPod, or the generational proportion of Japanese society with a disinterest or even phobia of partner sex?

Do you find that you float from one hobby, job, friendship group or city to another, but never seem to be able to feel at home in yourself? **Have you ever felt, like a comrade wrote, that the only revolutionary thing about your life is its relentless circularity?** What systematically seems to push people into these directions, and aren't reflected in all histories and cultures, which suffer less of the loss of personality, loss of place, loss of purpose? What does it mean to be brought up and inherit not an intimate wealth of folklore to help us navigate a living landscape with reverence, but to be left grasping for a handle on an impersonal life that always gets away from us; as it did our immediate predecessors for multiple generations in the West, with little understanding or influence, our ancestral capabilities, skills and memories expropriated or sterilised? What does it tell us about the trajectory of this system when depression is a main cause of death in the 'developed' world?

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**It's this 'developed' world that we imagine most of our readers will be accustomed to: with the alienations of wage-labour, claustrophobic built-up areas, an endless routine repeated day after day to attain the means to go on surviving in the way we're used to, navigating the artefacts, mass media representations and bureaucracies of this civilisation, however irrelevant to our own thoughts and wishes.** A while ago, Michele Vignodelli characterised the deeply meaningful interactions with a living Earth, as the cornerstone of existence, as having been replaced by "over-stimulation by artificial, coarse, mechanical inputs, through fashions, revivals, disco music, roaring toys, cult actors, events... a whole flamboyant, uproarious and desperately hollow world. A rising wave of fleeting inputs, a multitude of fake interests and fake needs where our emotional energies are swept away, drowning us in nothingness[...] This sumptuous parade seems to consist substantially in the stream of toxic, hidden grudges that flows beneath the surface of politeness, in the corridors of industrial hives; it consists in the snarling defence of one's own niche, to protect 'freedoms' and 'rights' that are sanctioned by law, in a deep loneliness which is increasingly hidden in mass rituals, in a universal inauthenticity of relationships and experiences."

We're awash with communication technologies, and yet more often living alone, with fewer off-screen friends and little real-world social solidarity. In replacement we are given the imagined community of the market, the nation, or the virtual. What was once lived directly, becomes mere representation.

Alienation results in sensations including (but not limited to) powerlessness, shame, despair, delusions, hostility, social withdrawal, feeling constantly threatened or self-destructive, which are all pandemic within industrial civilisation. Its outward manifestations are on the rise everywhere that industry and 'development' have become the social norm, not just in the capitalist 'Old World' but now China, India, Africa. Alienation is needed for how our bodies are currently regulated in ways both great and small by being enmeshed within norms and expectations that "determine what kinds of lives are deemed livable or useful and by shutting down the space of possibility and imaginative transformation where peoples' lives begin to exceed and escape [the system's] use for them" (Susan Stryker). It forms a society of individuals largely isolated and dissociated from each other and themselves, despite the crowded cities, depressed, apathetic or filled with violent and directionless anger; and we identify it in how the dominant social mode pushes us further into this estrangement. It's the anguish of the living subjected to a deathly regime, and a condition that must be struggled against to overturn the whole social order – which we are demanded to adapt ourselves to fit. To adapt ourselves to evermore limited and virtually superfluous roles, at any time liable to be replaced like a faulty cog. Beneath the surface of modern life, we live in what can only be described as a state of captivity, and the neurotic way we internalise this reality to cope with it seeps out and permeates our every interaction. **The loss of perspective that the overwhelming totality of the current system engenders, casting a shadow over all past ways of life, makes it easier to be fooled when we're told that it is**

**us who are maladjusted, malfunctioning, and when the system's guardians tell us they have just the cure for the mysterious undermining of life.**

Yet in spite of generations of 'naturalisation', psychological immiseration tells us we are not at home in the world of social media, council estates, gated communities, artificial parks, billboards, office blocks, traffic jams, cash machines, asylums, factory farms, call centres and other prisons, stuck in a flaccid cycle of work, nuclear families and programmed entertainment. **This is the environment our pre-determined interactions, which we all go through every day, has created; yet it is created against us and our own selfdetermination.** Our health (inseparable from that of our landbase), solidarity, spontaneity, and indeed in the era of vast climate changes even our continued existence itself is jeopardised by our own alienated activity. The blackmail of the market keeps our habits and relationships, more often than not, not just delaying but actually antagonistic to the fullness of autonomous creativity. **Mass social organisation is the separate power that stands apart from us as individuals, regulating and imposing on us, as the truly human-scale in life is dwarfed by an unending cycle of representations, bureaucracy, requirements, regurgitating what is; and what cannot fail to oppress us.** The conditions of life forced upon us by the economy, the State and technological society have become powers that rule over and direct us, not tools to use as we see fit. The segregation from a multitude of lifeforms displaced by the city not just unfamiliarises us with our planet, but makes it much easier to participate in the industrial structure devouring everything.

**Ignore these facts we may, they continue to come back to haunt us in the unarticulated precarity of our helpless dependence, the interpersonal violence, the deadly sadness.** Self-medication doesn't cut it. Reality TV can't mask it. The chatter of the crowd won't drown it out. We are under mental and physical occupation by the capitalist-industrial system, leaving the firm but false impression of there being no outside, no choice, no escape. Is this really what we could call living?

# Anti-Left Anarchy: Hunting Leftism with Intent to Kill

*by anonymous*

*By presupposing the axiom of the economic, the Marxist critique perhaps deciphers the functioning of the system of political economy; but at the same time it reproduces it as a model. There is neither a mode of production nor production in primitive societies. There is no dialectic and no unconscious in primitive societies. Marxism is the projection of the class struggle and the mode of production onto all previous history; it is the vision of a future “freedom” based on the conscious domination of nature. These are extrapolations of the economic. To the degree that it is not radical, Marxist critique is led despite itself to reproduce the roots of the system of political economy. —The Mirror of Production*

Leftism isn't merely deadly in its dullness, it's homicidally deadly in practice and implementation. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Soviet Union massacred an estimated twenty to forty million people in the establishment of their communist empire (some estimates exceed upward of fifty million, but are difficult to verify for as people were sent to camps, the Soviets often deleted all records of that persons existence); Mao TseTung's "Great Leap Forward" in China (widely recognized as the greatest disaster in an attempt to construct a centralized economy) is believed to have left about forty million dead; and Cambodia's Khmer Rouge massacred two million (one fourth of the population of Cambodia) in killing fields—all in the name of an "equal form of communism". The communist regimes of the last century all ran a madman's course and their scientifically designed Utopias all came in the form of death camps. In essence, communism is just another (particularly violent) administrative branch of civilization—like feudalism—and is committed to a production based industrial social model with even more religious fervor than capitalism.

Now one would think that anarchists, of all people, would be hostile to the inherently totalistic and collectivizing nature of leftist ideologies—like communism and socialism—yet to this day, a large number of so called anarchists continue to express sympathy with communist goals, communist epistemology, and Marxist class analysis—and allow their brains to be bamboozled and mislead by euphemisms like “anti-state communist”, “autonomist Marxist”, or the current favorite of the urban hipster: “communization”. Anarchists who drool over this bullshit are worshipping at the altar of a stagnant pool and remain tethered to a political tradition of authoritarianism and mass graves—regardless of the updated terminology (the thin rhetoric of “communization” has reached new summits of tedium with the trendy writings of mealymouthed shysters like Tiquun and the imbecilic gurglings of Applied Nonexistence: both duplicitous commie front groups that specialize in speaking postmodern gibberish, in substituting elitist, masturbatory language for real speech, and in choking unfortunate readers with a foul, dreamless air—much like that emanating from uncovered garbage cans).

We have long grown tired of this dialogue and sought to allocate new anarchic color combinations to the political rubbish that engulfs our lives. The deceptive verbiage of the Left has placed a stranglenote on our imaginative field for far too long, freezing our energy and obscuring the essence of the struggle for Anarchy, its basic and intrinsic qualities, with artificial and pretentious ideologies that stifle the action of thought and dream in tedious, one dimensional holding patterns. All ideologies are straight jackets to the Free Spirit, but ideologies that don't reflect the chaos, nonsensical whimsy, and maniacal laughter of life—like Leftism—are particularly boring impediments to the unrestrained expression of autonomous and uncivilized rebellion. Green Anarchy—or the critique of civilization—is class analysis that doesn't go halfway, that doesn't remain trapped in capitalist logic (as communism does), and that attacks alienation, domestication, and division of labor at their roots...their civilized roots. The Left is solidly embedded in the civilized order and as we struggle against this poisoned, horrible darkness that is dragging us towards universal collapse, it would behoove us to struggle with open eyes.

# The Fetishization of the Working Class

*by Guar*

The left is mired in identity politics. While leftists often express their opposition to systems of domination based on class, gender, sexuality and race, they tend to oppose such systems by accepting and reinforcing the very identities created and imposed by such systems of domination. While all such identities are problematic, I believe that none of them is as harmful as the left's idealized and fetishized identity of "the worker".

The working class as an identity differs from identities such as identities based on gender and race in the sense that a worker is an actual thing that exists apart from how we define it (as opposed to a "black" person or a "woman"). That being said, the worker only exists as long as he reproduces social relationships that define him as a worker. The moment he stops working he ceases being a worker. But why do I consider embracing the working class identity to be so harmful?

Before we get into that, let's look back at the creation of the working class and the working class identity. We can trace the birth of the working class back to the dawn of the industrial revolution in England, which needed a disciplined workforce to run the factories that were emerging like mushrooms after the rain. There was, however, one major problem for the owners of these factories: nobody wanted to work in them.

Peasants preferred to work their plots of land, and autonomous artisans wouldn't dream of submitting themselves to the nightmarish factories. Both saw wage labor for what it is: paid slavery. Unfortunately, the state and the bourgeoisie were determined to turn both peasants and artisans into workers, and they had the tools and the power to accomplish that. Land enclosures robbed peasants of their lands, creating a mass of landless vagrants. Anti-vagrancy laws forced these ex-peasants to choose between being criminalized or reduced to mere cogs in an assembly line. Mass-produced goods out-competed artisans, and the creation of the modern police made sure that the population was proletarianized whether they wanted it or not.

This process sparked a wave of resistance. The most emblematic revolt against the new conditions being imposed was the Luddite uprising, when textile workers and weavers rose in revolt against industrialization and proceeded to destroy as many machines as they could. Eventually, the uprisings were put down and people were forced into becoming workers.

The shared experience of being forced into becoming workers and of working together under grueling conditions (16 hours work journeys, miserable wages, poor workplace safety, etc) forged a solidarity among the first wave of proletarians, which created the conditions for the birth of the labor movement.

Accepting their new role, workers began to organize and fight for better conditions. Struggles for better wages, working-hours and for the legalization of unions took place, and the tactics of the infant movement began to develop. Working class solidarity grew, and the identity of the worker slowly took hold upon the new class as new ideologies were developed around it. These are the ideologies that eventually gave rise to the modern left.



It is in this context that socialism appeared. As a critique of capitalism emerged from worker struggles and from the thoughts of socialist thinkers, the bourgeoisie was identified as an enemy of the working class. From this perspective, visions of struggle and “liberation” began to emerge. The most well known of these perspectives is that of Karl Marx, which originated marxism. Marx recognized the antagonist nature of the relationship between classes, and sought to create a vision that could lead to a stateless and classless society (which he termed communism). His revolutionary subject was the working class, which Marx believed to be the only inherently revolutionary class under capitalist society. The non-workers who were excluded from the system were seen by him as crude “lumpens” with no revolutionary potential.

According to Marx, workers should seize the state through a violent revolution and create a “proletarian” (and socialist) state. With the state in their hands, workers would dismantle capitalism and speed the development of the “productive forces”, which Marx believed are being held back by capitalism. As the socialist society ran its course, the state would supposedly become increasingly unnecessary and wither away (although no marxist ever made clear how this process would actually happen).

Bakunin and other anarchists living at that time (correctly) predicted that the takeover of the state would simply create a class of state bureaucrats that would become a new self-serving elite. This critique was essential to the development of anarchist theory and praxis, which views the state as an inherently oppressive institution that cannot be used for liberating purposes.

That being said, both Marx and Bakunin (as well as socialists/anarchists at the time with very few notable exceptions) believed that the productive forces should not only be maintained but also developed. Not only they failed to identify the inherently oppressive nature of industrial technology, they also failed to see that workers can never be liberated as long as they remain workers.

Much time has passed since then, but the left still glorifies and fetishizes industrial society and the working class that keeps it running. Even the vision of the most “radical” elements of the left (contemporary revolutionary socialists and left anarchists) refuses to go further than the idea of a society where the means of production are administered by the working class. But what good is it to get rid of the bourgeoisie if we are still enslaved by work, civilization and industrial technology? Should I be exhilarated at the possibility of managing my own misery instead of seeking to abolish it?

And why should I look upon the working class as “The Revolutionary Class” when the vast majority of the working class would defend industrial society with teeth and nails even though it is the source of their misery? Now, don’t get me wrong. In the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the working class I will always side with the working class. That being said, I cannot envision more than a small fraction of the working class rallied behind a true liberating vision, not when most workers cannot even imagine (and wouldn’t want) a world free from the shackles of industrial civilization.

And how can the “radical left” claim to fight for the liberation of the working class when most workers don’t want to be liberated? If forced to choose between the radical left and their capitalist overlords, most workers will side with the latter (not to mention the increasing number of working class folks who are willing to turn to fascism in response to an increasingly crisis-ridden world). You can always claim that this is simply a matter of educating workers so they can see their own oppression, but it doesn’t change the fact that you cannot speak for those who would never wish to be represented by you. Also, Seeing workers as mere pawns of capitalist

propaganda is a patronizing and elitist attitude which denies people their agency as individuals. Yet, such attitude is prevalent among the left.

This is not to deny the social dynamics that are at play shaping people. What we can accomplish as individuals is always limited by our social environment. Yet, if we are nothing more than products of our environment with no individual agency, there isn't even a point in trying to oppose society.

Either way, it is clear that the left's ideas about the working class and its revolutionary potential are as irrelevant as their ideas about revolution and "liberation". The working class can only be liberated to the extent that it is destroyed and transcended. As for me, I will side with members of the working class that are willing to rise up when it suits me, but I won't let off the hook those that get in my way. As for those who refuse to be molded into workers and are willing to steal back their lives, they can always count on my strength and solidarity.

# Arming Negativity: Towards The Queerest Attack (*A Response to Beyond Negativity: What Comes After Gender Nihilism?*)

by Flower Bomb

*“We are radicals who have had enough with attempts to salvage gender. We do not believe we can make it work for us. We look at the transmisogyny we have faced in our own lives, the gendered violence that our comrades, both trans and cis have faced, and we realize that the apparatus itself makes such violence inevitable. We have had enough.”*

*“Rather, what comes after Gender Nihilism must be a materialist struggle against patriarchy, white supremacy, and capitalism which understands and is attentive to the complex interrelations between these structures and which refuses to reduce any one of them to any other.” We are not looking to create a better system, for we are not interested in positive politics at all. All we demand in the present is a relentless attack on gender and the modes of social meaning and intelligibility it creates.”*

The essay *Gender Nihilism: An Anti-Manifesto* was an explosive reflection of my own experience with both “gender” and “nihilism”. As a queer who possessed no desire for queer recognition and societal assimilation, the quote above summarized a position of pure negation which I found exciting affinity with.

I wanted to write this essay, not as a critique of *Gender Nihilism* but as praise, and as a personal response to some of the questions posed in *Beyond Negativity: What Comes After Gender Nihilism?* In this essay I outline a few quotes from that piece and respond with my own gender nihilist perspective.

*“As such we are left with the need for the abolition of gender, the need to push back against reformist projects that simply seek to make an expanded notion of gender. What remains to be created is the establishment of a path forward.”*

I think it is important to acknowledge that many individuals craft their own paths of queer negation towards society and its projects of assimilatory reform. For me personally, a path forward means a queer nihilism armed, wild and ferocious against the social standardization of gender and industrial control. This includes but is not limited to an individualized path of destruction which targets the internalized governance and roles that define an assigned gendered identity. The personalization of this governance, which dictates the roles and behaviors of the assigned identity, surrenders the shapeless wildness of individuality to the solitary confinement

of politics. Towards the abolition of gender and against reformist projects, my anarchist war does not limit itself to the confines of politics. Instead, it includes a queer nihilist life-experience of becoming ungoverned by gender and any other social constructs intended to subjugate and discourage individual uniqueness. Beyond the limitations of theory, this also includes clandestine attack on the manifestations of society, negating the domestication of law and order.

*“Only real, concrete, and organized struggle can move us forward. Mere negation, senseless violence, or embrace of unintelligibility cannot be enough. In short we must move beyond negativity. The project at hand is to adequately account for the violence of gender, the necessity of its abolition, and the strategies for achieving that abolition in material terms. Only then will we have the ability to not only achieve abolition, but to change the world.”*

I believe real, concrete, and organized struggle is most powerful when orchestrated at the individual level. Since in daily life, it is the individual who experiences the struggle of survival in this gendered nightmare, no one other than that individual is most qualified to materialize that revolt. Gendered violence is unique to each individual who accumulates a history of struggle against it. Electing identity-based movements or organizations to represent individualized experience often flattens differences found between individuals, erecting a false sense of unity. This often leads to one’s association with an identity determining the legitimacy of one’s experience, rather than the experience being legitimized as individually unique. This point was eloquently summarized by Lena Kafka in *Destroy Gender*:

*“My personal experiences with gendered violence are only taken seriously in light of revealing myself as a trans woman. Our theories should start from the ways we have experienced gender violence in our daily lives, not identity. Our relationships to each other should be based upon our affinities and similarities with each other, rather than based upon the lowest-commondenominator politics. Daily life is far too complicated to be reduced into two categories.”*

From my own individualist perspective, nihilism is so much more than just pessimism, negation and violence; it is the personification of anarchy, the reclaiming of individuality and the embracing of ungovernable uniqueness. Queer negativity is hostility towards socially constructed expectations, those who enforce them, and is subsequently the emancipation of one’s undefinable “self” from gender conformity. This includes the expropriation of violence and the total abandonment of victimhood. Queer nihilism materializes itself as a declaration of war on society. For every possibility of sexual assault there is a blade being sharpened for self-defense. Dangerous spaces are personified, replacing the positive politics of safety. Armed queers don’t just make waves; they are tsunamis against the logic of submission.

*“This means recognizing that these things can only be overcome by a communist politics oriented towards the future. Abandon nihilism, abandon hopelessness, demand and build a better world.”*

My queerness is an experimentation that never ends. It is the totality of a life lived against the law, insubordinate and wild. It is not a communist politics but a nihilist negation to all systems

that attempt to subordinate individuality. It is not the leftist politics of demanding and building a better world but an anarchist insurgency of reclaiming life day to day, and setting fire to its captors. Since gender is embedded in every fabric of this industrial, civilized society, I find no hope in salvaging any part of it- only joy in every second of its calculated demise.

*“I think its telling that I am presented as the voice of the gender nihilism, when two of the other largest contributors are indigenous trans women. Their voices matter in this debate more than mine, yet people have completely and consistently centered my voice and perspective. This is harmful.”*

Society and those who wish to preserve it require identity politics to categorize people based on socially assigned constructs. Identity politics is where individual experimentation goes to die. Like studying the bricks in a wall rather than venturing beyond the wall itself, identity politics, like all politics promotes the death of imaginative exploration. Politics represent the fixed ideological prescriptions of living, assigned to “the masses” who are treated as if they are incapable of thinking and acting as individuals.

In the realm of academic recognition, identity politics predetermines the popular narrative by reversing the hierarchy; those belonging to the marginalized category become the dominating group who then are given a pass to trivialize the experiences of those they view as opposite. But this hierarchical reversal doesn’t challenge hierarchy itself – it only reforms it in an attempt to create a power masquerading as equality. This power, composed of social capital, is then used as the power to ridicule, coerce and dominate others with impunity.

Anyone who presents a single individual as the voice of something as wide spread as gender nihilism is someone who interprets the world in terms of textbook definitions rather than the organic fluidity of free thought and social interaction. Quite simply, it erases all those individuals who had already discovered and lived gender nihilism but didn’t have the academic language or status to be credited and recognized in the mainstream. Alyson’s experiences with gender are not trivial to mine simply because I am a person of color. Their experiences are unique from mine, and far more complex than the oversimplifying measurement of social constructs and any theoretical analysis of identity and privilege. And it is this uniqueness of individual experience that gets lost in the homogenizing formations of identity politics. In my opinion, the harm here is the assertion that voices belonging to certain individuals matter more than others. Ironically, there is inequality in pursuit of “equality” and the common denominator is always a social construct in one form or another.

*“Rather, what comes after Gender Nihilism must be a materialist struggle against patriarchy, white supremacy, and capitalism which understands and is attentive to the complex interrelations between these structures and which refuses to reduce any one of them to any other.”*

Patriarchy, white supremacy, and capitalism have identity politics of their own. They each essentialize a role and behavior which reinforces their power socially. In addition to physically attacking these institutions, for me it is important to reclaim my self and emancipate from their mental captivity. This means refusing their language to define others, allowing others to define themselves beyond identity-based assumptions. It also means any positive projects that attempt

to occupy space in the courtyard of capitalism compromises the integrity of their rebellion. The transforming of “queer” into another rigid, social identity by capitalism and liberalism is one of many examples. The positive politics of queer identity legitimizes the state and glorifies a civilized standard of submission. With the help of internalized and often celebrated victimhood, “queer” soon becomes another identity pacified and manufactured by capitalism.

This is why my queerness is not a positive project. It’s meaning runs contrary to the collectivized subordination in both capitalism and the left. Queer nihilism means arming negativity against the pacifying effects of positive politics, exploring the intimacy of criminal affinity with others, and arming individuality with the queerest savagery against domestication. The fire in my heart burns every gendered prison assigned to me. Queer is confrontation: my desire for freedom has intercourse with my hatred for civilization. What blooms is a lifelong dance that materializes the queerest attack on capital and social control. I find myself immersed in the chaos of bloodied weapons, broken glass and shrieking alarms. My body is a dangerous space of love and rage un-governed by the morality of non-violence. With love, and in solidarity with the wild, and with all those who embrace queer anarchy with hysterical laughs of joy- towards the queerest attack upon the civilized order!

# Liberation lies in action, not liberalism: For a subversive anarchism

by Renzo Connors

*“For anarchists our ideas come from action. Our ideas are action and action, revolutionary anarchist action, is theory.” — Jean Weir*

*“Liberty belongs to him who takes it” — Max Stirner*

*“It is not by organizing into parties and syndicates that one struggles for anarchy, nor by mass action which, as has been shown, overthrows one barracks only to create another. It is by the revolt of individuals alone or in small groups, who oppose society, impede its functioning and cause its disintegration” — Enzo Martucci*

While the crypto-liberals favor reform and stick to civil tactics the subversive anarchist creates the life she wants and fights domination through direct action.

Direct action is a force to create change in a person’s life. It is empowering, it gives individuals an opportunity to fight back at their exploiter and oppressor, or can give the means to create a new life and new ways of living. Direct action can be carried out by all sorts of means and for different reasons.

When used to carry out a conflictual action, direct action carried out to its fullest creates points of conflict (where the individual or individuals carrying out the direct action meet the subject they are against head on). It is individuals taking action for themselves, not waiting or wanting someone else to do it for them, it is total empowerment. Direct action is the opposite of voting and delegation, it is taking power into one’s own hands, it is the power to create change. It is creating and living the life you want here and now. There is no room for mediators, every person taking part is fighting their own struggle. They are not seeking help from politicians or union bureaucrats to represent them.

Direct action can take many forms, it can be big or small. Direct action doesn’t necessarily have to be (but can be) firebombing a bank or throwing a molotov at cops. It can be graffiti, a banner drop, occupations, blockades, guerrilla gardening, sabotage, etc. Direct actions can be carried out for all sorts of needs, for example squatting a house, shoplifting for food or cloths; can be an attack against exploitation for example a wildcat strike in the workplace. Direct action can be an act of sabotage to resist injustice or oppression, or a direct action can be a sit down protest to block traffic on busy roads or lock ons useful for stopping work, boycott actions, etc, etc. The list and possibilities are endless — all one needs is a little imagination. Direct action is defining your own goals, aims, and achieving them through your own efforts.

As much as the leftists love to fetishize “mass organisations” there is no need for such large scale formal organization with set structures and roles. Direct action can be carried out by a single

individual or small groups of 2, 3, 4 or more individuals, using minimalized informal organisation. This method is usually carried out by small numbers of people who have prior knowledge of one another and have a shared interest in carrying out a specific action or task. As soon as the action is complete the informal organization dissolves. If individuals involved in the informal organization or group want to carry out more actions, nothing is stopping them to reorganize again with the same or with different people.

Leftist anarchists fear informal organising seeing informal hierarchies emerging as a direct result of being “unorganised”. They believe the only way to counter informal hierarchies forming is by having formal organisations with formal structures and positions. Hierarchies can form within formal organisations just as easily as within informal, the only cure for combating informal hierarchies is by challenging them and try keep them in check when they appear. With formal organisations and groups hierarchies usually get set as part of the structures and are easier to be hijacked and open to manipulation by opportunists.

In struggles against the state and capital when trying to push points of conflict to their fullest, crypto-liberals can be a very dangerous enemy. They will undermine pushing points of conflict with the state because ultimately they are not against the state; for the anarcho-leftists their excuse can be afraid to “alienate the people” from their theories and programmes. Some liberals even go as far as viewing pigs and screws as “workers in uniforms”. In most part liberals are against the use of direct action although at times (when popular) they do opt for very controlled and milled actions, they will usually liaise with the police, the courts, or any other body of the state they need to. These actions (if they can even be called such) are more so political stunts not carried out for empowerment but more so to publicize themselves.

Crypto-liberals favor more passive tactics such as petitions, pickets, protest marches or lobbying. At these pickets and protests they will always have negotiators on standby to go into talks with the state; and ask for permission to hold protests. The crypto-liberals work within the parameters set by the state, never stepping outside of the terrain which the state allows them. These useless tactics go nowhere and achieve nothing; liberals pacify struggles and actions. Their reformism is a failure, it has done nothing but kept this society intact.

Act for yourself, build, take, steal the life you want, fight for your liberation, on your own terms, no one will do it for you. One things for sore the liberal lefties aren't going to do it for you.

The struggle for liberation is always an individual struggle. This rotten society with its institutions and systems of domination will only be destroyed by a revolt of conscious individuals in the fires of social insurrection

This may never happen... on till then...my struggle and revolt will go on...



# Pure Negation & Jouissance

(Excerpted from *Blessed is the Flame: An Introduction to Concentration Camp Resistance and Anarcho-Nihilism* )

*“The passion for destruction is a creative passion, too!” -Mikhail Bakunin*

*“It is ridiculous to even contemplate co-existing with this fascist apparatus. It all has to be destroyed to start afresh. We will taste the fruits from the trees we’ve grown ourselves in the ashes of their empire.” -Anonymous, Incitement to Burn*

The call from Bakunin to embrace the destructive urge forms the backbone of both anarchist and anarcho-nihilist thought. The latter takes this axiom and runs with it, arguing that in the face of global systems of domination our sole aim should be to destroy all that constitutes those systems. This stands in direct contrast to other anarchist tendencies that place at least some emphasis on “positive programs” — aspirations to construct something ideal in the present world or to craft plans in preparation for the downfall of the current system. Anarcho-nihilism understands the positive program as “one that confuses desire with reality and extends that confusion into the future” by either making promises about what a revolutionary future might hold, or attempting to bring those conditions about from within the existing order.<sup>1</sup> Such positive aspirations offer nothing more than a dangling carrot for us to pursue in a situation in which the stick, string, and prize all need to be destroyed. The example of those living under Nazi rule illustrates a situation in which, for those deemed *Ballastexistenzen*, positive visions were un-fathomable: establishing long-term projects or alternative infrastructure would be ludicrous, except to the extent that they facilitated the destruction of the existing order. So long as Hitler reigned, no Jewish commune would be tolerated, no anarchist child-care collective could ever hope to thrive. To be immersed in a social order as violent and controlling as Nazi Germany warranted a reaction of absolute hostility, attacks aimed at every level of society — pure negation. So too does anarchonihilism understand the existing order of today as without potential for a positive agenda. Whatever we build within its bounds will be co-opted, destroyed, or turned against us: “We understand that only when all that remains of the dominant techno-industrial-capitalist system is smouldering ruins, is it feasible to ask what next?”<sup>2</sup> According to this line of thought, our situation today is similar to the Lagers to the extent that positive projects, attempts to create a new world in the shell of the old, are simply out of place. Aragorn! writes: “Nihilism states that it is not useful to talk about the society you ‘hold in your stomach’, the things you would do ‘if only you got power’...What is useful is the negation of the existing world.”<sup>3</sup> Similarly, imprisoned members of the CCF write:

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<sup>1</sup> Anarchy and Nihilism: Consequences 13

<sup>2</sup> 325: An Insurgent Zine off Social War and Anarchy 20

<sup>3</sup> Nihilism, Anarchy and the 11<sup>st</sup> Century 18

*“We anarcho-nihilists ...don’t talk about ‘transformation of social relations’ towards a more liberated view, we promulgate their total destruction and absolute annihilation. Only through total destruction of the current world of power... will it be possible to build something new. The deeper we destroy, the more freely will we be able to build.”<sup>4</sup>*

The visions that rebels tend to entertain about what life will be like After The Revolution are not only unproductive, they are dangerous because they presume that a unified vision of life is desirable. Such forward-looking conversations attempt to herd an infinite spectrum of possibilities onto an ideal anarchist path. The CCF write:

*“Very often, even in anarchist circles, the future organization of ‘anarchist’ society is discussed along with the role of work, selfmanagement of the means of production, direct democracy, etc. According to us, this kind of debate and proposal looks like the construction of a dam that tries to control the impetus of the abundant stream of Anarchy.”<sup>5</sup>*

Even resisters in the concentration camps sometimes concerned themselves with this kind of political fantasizing: In Buchenwald, for instance, three underground political organizations banded together in 1944 to plan out the future governance of Germany, at a time when other organizations in the camp were focused on saving lives and staging coordinated resistance.<sup>6</sup> Nihilism urges us to consider the fact that such forward planning is simply unnecessary and that it obfuscates our more urgent goal of negation: “There’s no need to know what’s happening tomorrow to destroy a today that makes you bleed.”<sup>7</sup>

From the foundation of this critique, nihilism identifies a common trap experienced by anarchists: the magnetic compulsion to identify ourselves positively within society even though we strive for its destruction. In my local context, this often looks like anarchists responding to critics of property destruction with reminders of all that we contribute to society (when we are not rioting, we are community organizers, Food Not Bombs chefs, musicians, etc.).

Negation, however, is justified by the existence of a ruling order, not by our credentials as activists. Our riots are justified not because we contribute, but because we exist under the heel of a monstrous society. Positive projects are the means of surviving within that order; negation is the project of destroying it completely. As Alejandro de Acosta reminds us, we must not be tempted to “frame destructive action as having any particular goal beyond destruction of the existent.”<sup>8</sup> Bæden too rails against this tendency, insisting that we have nothing to gain from hiding our true intentions:

*“We understand destruction to be necessary and we desire it in abundance. We have nothing to gain through shame or lack of confidence in these desires. This world... must be annihilated in every instance, all at once. To shy away from this task, to assure our enemies of our good intentions, is the most crass dishonesty.”<sup>9</sup>*

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<sup>4</sup> A Conversation Between Anarchists 23

<sup>5</sup> A Conversation Between Anarchists 22

<sup>6</sup> Wasowicz 1 19

<sup>7</sup> In Cold Blood 10

<sup>8</sup> De Acosta 9–10

<sup>9</sup> Bæden Vol. I 12–13

When we call ourselves anarchists, or even “anti-capitalists,” we are implying a commitment to the destruction of systems of domination — why do we so often shy away from this? Nihilism unabashedly embraces negation as being at the core of such positions.

### **Jouissance**

Despite its gloomy connotations, the commitment to pure negation finds its most interesting manifestations as a joyful, creative, and limitless project. Most notably, Bæden utilizes the French word *jouissance*,<sup>10</sup> which directly translates to “enjoyment,” but takes on a variety of connotations related to “uncivilized desire,” those aspects of our existence which “escape representation,” a “shattering of identity and law,” and that which “shatters our subjective enslavement to capitalist civilization.”<sup>11</sup> *Jouissance* is an ecstatic energy, felt but never captured, that pushes us away from any form of domination, representation, or restraint, and compels us towards fierce wildness and unmitigated recalcitrance. It is “the process that momentarily sets us free from our fear of death” and which manifests as a “blissful enjoyment of the present,” or a “joy which we cannot name.”<sup>12</sup> *Jouissance* is the richness of life evoked by resistance, the spirit that allowed Maria Jakobovics to continue her acts of sabotage despite the sting of the club or the threat of the noose, and the spirit that perhaps allows many of us to lead lives of resistance in absolutely overwhelming circumstances. It is the visceral experience of negation as ecstatic liberation.

Although the spirit of *jouissance* animates many anarchist texts, nihilism seems to approach it with the most naked embrace; for many nihilists, *jouissance* is the core of anarchism. Without expectations of the world to come, without deference to moral code, and without adherence to a right way to do things, nihilism embraces the act of resistance as a goal in itself. Through this lens, the joy of pissing in a Nazi rocket cannot easily be measured against its risks or results — in *jouissance*, we find a richness of life unattainable under the status quo. Without using the word explicitly, some imprisoned members of the CCF describe *jouissance* perfectly: “Neither victory nor defeat is important, but only the beautiful shining of our eyes in combat.”<sup>13</sup> This emphasis on the act, without attachment to its outcomes, is one of the aspects of nihilism that has made it such a puzzling force for other anarchists. Critics of nihilism see this sort of emphasis on *jouissance* and negation as simply a form of indulgent retreat into the realm of personal experience, “because it hurts too much to hope for the improbable, to imagine a future we can’t believe in.”<sup>14</sup> While this critique has some merit, I think it largely misses the strength of the nihilist position and the beauty of *jouissance*. Whatever we may choose to do with it, however strategic, ambitious, or optimistic we may feel, our understanding of we resist can still be solidly rooted in a place of *jouissance*. I think the nihilist position leaves space for victories, while still recognizing that our capacity to win is quite different from our commitment to liberatory action. Even when we run out of optimistic rhetoric and inspiring stories, our lives can still be oriented against the grain of society. Even from a place of utter hopelessness, we can still find the *jouissance* in our bodies to attack. Once again, the CCF insists that:

*“what really counts is the strength we feel every time we don’t bow our heads, every time we destroy the false idols of civilization, every time our eyes meet those of our*

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<sup>10</sup> A word that also has a strong history in Lacanian psychoanalysis, poststructuralism, and feminist theory.

<sup>11</sup> Bæden Vol. I 66,43,44,55

<sup>12</sup> Bæden Vol. I 44,73,53

<sup>13</sup> A Conversation Between Anarchists 1 1

<sup>14</sup> Zlodey 6

*comrades along illegal paths, every time that our hands set fire to the symbols of Power. In those moments we don't ask ourselves: 'Will we win? Will we lose?' In those moments we just fight."*<sup>15</sup>

Jouissance is that which animates resistance for its own sake so that even if we have no future, we can still find life today.

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<sup>15</sup> A Conversation Between Anarchists 11

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