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# The Will to Powerlessness

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**This text is a translation of the article “La volonté d’impuissance” published in the third issue of the french anarchist newspaper Mauvais Sang.**

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The state, with its army, its courts, its police and its surveillance apparatuses, has interest in having everyone believing (even going as far as being completely irrational) that it is all-powerful, even all-knowing, especially thanks to new technologies of videosurveillance (cameras, DNA analysis, motion detectors, phone localisation, etc). It also seems that the more the state is in crisis, the more its foundations and its legitimacy are contested, the more the rhetoric of its defenders becomes one of mastery, with as corollary the attempt to scare all those who would want to contest it.

The more the state is fragilized and the more it calls itself powerful, able to crush its enemies. We remember with regards to this the context of repression of the Yellow Vests, when governmental and prefectural announcements of risks of being injured in protests used these effects of fear, aiming at having everyone hiding in their corner, scared and paralyzed. We can be almost certain that the state, until it dies under our revolts, will hold tightly to its point of view of absolute master. The state would love to be an immortal god.

But us, who know it mortal, contingent, historical, to sweep away from the present and the future, why do we not dedi-

cate more energy to think about its cracks, its weaknesses, in order to give it blows from which he will not recover ? Why do we not see in the rights it gives to us breaches to destroy it ? Paradoxically, it seems to us that lately, even militant discourses have unconsciously turned into “relays” of the fear of the state.

With this articles, we seek to understand how forms of distrust and refusal of state domination can at the end of the day end up diffusing a certain collective powerlessness within struggles, by rubbing it in the logic of the fear of the state.

The hypothesis posited here is that this diffusion of fear on the left originates in the tendency of using indignation, shock and stupefaction in order to “scandalize”, by thinking that it is becoming conscious of the terror imposed by the state that will mobilize everyone. When during a protest people come to film all police violence and share them on social media, they probably don't wonder at all if this participates to the police's work and fonctionnement (that is to say frightening through affective zoom on situations cut from all context and analysis)... quite the contrary, what results from this is a discourse that talks about testimony, denunciation of violence, journalism and freedom of information !

We can regret that rarely, during protests, what becomes of these images is questioned, and what they often serve (even almost systematically) to supply the files of intelligence services and the case files of charges against protesters in the court. So it's about emphasizing on police brutality, shouting, lamenting... But where can it lead us ? To revolt ? Not that sure. How many people are terrified at the idea of going to protests, sometimes without ever going to one ? What collective force can be found in such perspective ?

This can only prevent the deployment of a subversive reason, a real social critique and a revolutionnary praxis. The logic of the market has of course interest in permanently soaking with events and social facts of sensational and victim pathos,

given that the role of victim is to talk until the end of times to a futile court of History: victims talk, produce discourse, endlessly recuperated, recuperable, endless given that suffering could not be bought back.

Media hungry for emotional first pages love victims. But revolution knows neither victims nor heroes, it knows only revolutionnaries who fought and were fought. Let's not betray their memories in order to recuperate them. Revolution is illegal and revolutionnaries are guilty ? Very well, it is in that that we will defend them. We think that the logic of revolt is necessarily in rupture with the positions of victims and martyrs.

As always, and on every form of struggle, resistances appear to face control, surveillance, exploitation, the left prefers fantasizing about a total control, with the sole goal to seduce. This fantasy of the total state is in fact the fantasy of the total state. Reality is much more complex, full of breaches, crisis and asperities. Being in line with this half-terrified, half-fascinated vision of a kind of omnipotent state can only radicalize in two completely counter-revolutionnary ways: it becomes either pragmatic of building a counter-power that would be nothing more than a statist opposition to the current government (oh, here's the left !) ; or everything pathologically appears as an absolute conspiracy, letting everyone only the choice of being the exegete of this morbid sacralization of the state which takes hold everywhere in the world at our current era (damn, already Lundi Matin and L'Appel annoying us ?).

To ensure that the state becomes just an old apparatus of domination of the past, long live the revolution !