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## A Letter

Gabriel Pombo Da Silva

December 30, 2015

‘..while there is a lower class, I am in it, and while there is a criminal element I am of it, and while there is a soul in prison, I am not free.’ — Eugene Debs

Comrades!

Today I’m in high spirits (you know our life is not a straight line, nor constant, or static...), and those who know me personally know that I have a pretty black a sense of humour (what ‘scandalizes’ others makes me smile, etc.) almost cynically (especially when it comes to talking about/describing facts to do with the ‘Law’, ‘Rights’, the ‘Authorities’, etc.); because these are ‘things’ that I can’t take seriously (even though my life is wrapped up in all that), no matter how serious these ‘things’ are.

So I’m writing informally with a smile on my face (even if I’m talking about serious ‘things’) because a sense of humour is one of the ‘things’ that has always kept me ‘struggling on’. I can’t help feeling surprised when I hear/see parlour politicians filling their mouths with words/concepts such as ‘we live by the Rule of law’, ‘we are all equal before the law’, etc. The

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‘Spanish Trademark’ (as they now call it) doesn’t know what Democracy is (considering that I’m not democratic either); the Law is a ‘mino-cracy’ and only serves the interests of the caste (I like this about the caste, because that’s what we’ve got in this Country), and those of us who don’t laugh at their jokes are all ‘anti-system’. Does anyone have any doubt about it?

Whoever who fills their mouth with these words in this country is a ‘petty thief’ (or a potential one) because ‘common people’ –without even being or declaring themselves ‘anarchist’ – know that the business-political caste (yes, that of the ‘revolving doors’, the Filesa and Malesa cases, the Gal, the Gürtel case, the ‘black cards’ case, the ERE<sup>1</sup>, etc. etc. etc.) has provided all the judicial rackets (C.G.P.J., T.S., T.C.<sup>2</sup>, etc. etc.) with a bunch of ‘scribblers’ who when ‘judging’ (or ‘investigating’, ‘indicting’, ‘catching’) one of their own, go in one door and out through another... and that the Banks, energy and telecommunication companies (not to mention building, transport, rubbish, etc. cartels), the IMF and the ‘European Consortium’ can lavish plenty of money... so much that they can buy everyone and silence the majorities.

The worst thing is realizing how this endemic corruption leaves the most fucked over ones homeless, deprived of higher

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<sup>1</sup> Filesa and Malesa cases: corruption cases involving illegal financing of the Spanish Workers Socialist Party’s election campaign. GAL: Antiterrorism Groups of Liberation, engaged in fighting Basque independentism since the 1980s and responsible for hundreds of cases of disappearance, torture and murder. The Gürtel case: an investigation carried out in 2007 on a network of political corruption linked to the Popular Party. ‘Black cards’: a scandal involving banks in 2014. Almost all the trustees of Caja Madrid (one of the oldest banks in Spain), at the times when Miguel Blesa and Rodrigo Rato were presidents, were provided with credit cards such as ‘Visa Black’, which they used for personal purposes costing hundreds of thousands of euros. ERE: Expediente de Regulación de Empleo – Document of Recruitment Regulation, a system that allows employers to sack workers en masse.

<sup>2</sup> C.G.P.J.: Consejo General del Poder Judicial – Consiglio Generale del Potere Giudiziario; T.S.: Tribunal Supremo – Tribunale Supremo; T.C.: Tribunal Constitucional –Tribunale Costituzionale

education, hungry and helpless... I know there's 'nothing new' in this, but never has all the 'wheeling and dealing' of these reprobates been as widely known as now, in the 'communication' era... nevertheless the Political Parties, the worst thieves and plunderers, the most 'democraticidal' and liberticidal in this country, continue to appear in 'polls'... if it wasn't for the fact that I see so many poor illiterate, marginal and sick people dying (and rotting) all around me, I'd cynically declare: we've got the politicians we deserve. But do we really deserve this? Can we only get to the level of 'indignatos'? Can we only hope (and strive) for a Messiah, a Political Party to 'save' us?

I'm amused by their firm call to the 'Constitution' (and to their 'anti-Constitutionalist' adversaries), 'Democracy', respect for 'Judicial Decisions' (provided that they don't concern them, of course), 'ongoing investigations', a supposed difference that should separate a 'defendant' from one 'under investigation'; and ever since the hand of the Law caught Rodrigo Rato (you know, the great economist!) by the scruff of the neck, they've been talking of 'prisoners' Right to reputation and respect'...

Since when does this country care for prisoners' reputations and respect? What prisoners? If we had any courage and pride left we should set fire to all the Institutions (with them inside) in this country and all over Europe! Sorry, my nihilist self is coming out here... or rather, not 'sorry' take note of it...

Where was I? Oh yes, respecting prisoners! Yes, I've seen how even Bárcenas<sup>3</sup>, in his few months held in a 'respect wing', became anti-system and spoke out against the 'abuses' he witnessed during the time he spent in prison... on the contrary

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<sup>3</sup> José Luis Bárcenas Gutiérrez: Spanish politician of the Popular Party, he was convicted in 2009 following his involvement in the 'Gürtel' case.

Ortega Cano<sup>4</sup> gave ‘political advice’ to the PSOE<sup>5</sup> at the very doors of the jail (during one of his prison leaves). I also saw them cheering Isabel Pantoja<sup>6</sup> (when she also got out with a leave permit) ...beautiful! Resist! And also how they granted ‘permits’ to Jaime Matas<sup>7</sup>, in spite of the fact he had ‘ongoing trials’! Not to mention the ‘Torete’-style fleeing of the Countess or Marquise Aguirre<sup>8</sup> (I never get these military, clergy and aristocratic ranks right) through the streets of Madrid.

The ‘prisoners’ I know (those around me) are not that ‘illustrious’ and naturally they don’t get ‘permits’ (never mind if they have served a quarter of the sentence, have just a month left to do, are terminally ill or are in poor mental health) or rights because they are ‘poor’, ‘anti-system’, ‘anti-constitutionalist’ and/or declared ‘terrorists’... Respect for prisoners’ rights? Don’t make me laugh!!

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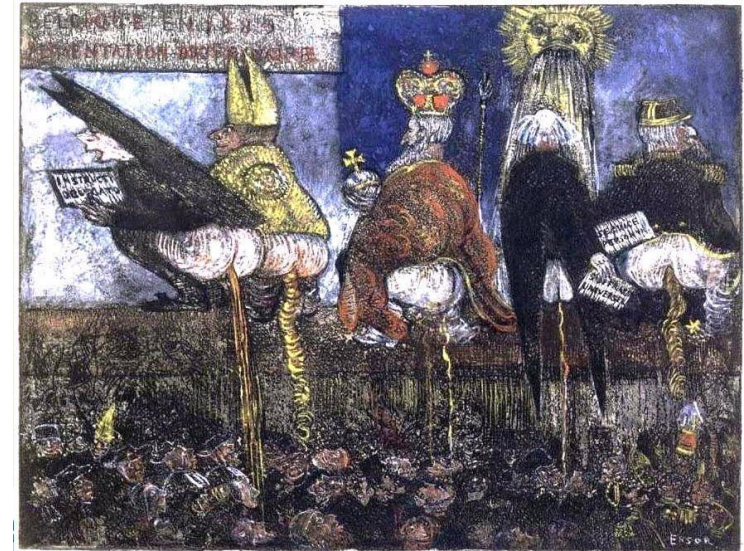
<sup>4</sup> José Maria Ortega Cano: Spanish torero who went on trial following a serious car accident he caused in 2011 while drunk, killing the driver of one of the vehicles involved. In 2013 he was sentenced to 2 years, 6 months and one day for ‘culpable homicide and dangerous driving’ but was released on bail after 1 year and 1 month.

<sup>5</sup> PSOE: Partido Socialista Obrero Español – Spanish Workers Socialist Party

<sup>6</sup> María Isabel Pantoja Martín: Spanish singer and actress. In 2007 she was involved in the scandal known as the ‘Malaya case’, the name given to an operation against municipal corruption. Accused of various finance crimes and money laundering she was sentenced to 24 months in 2013 and jailed in 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Jaime Matas i Palon: ex Spanish politician and onetime president of the Popular Party, he went on trial for twelve offences, including embezzlement, fake documents, finance crimes and electoral corruption. In 2012 he was sentenced to 6 years and was jailed in 2014, but only 3 months later he was given day release.

<sup>8</sup> Countess Esperanza Aguirre y Gil de Biedma: Spanish aristocrat and politician, one time president of the Popular Party, she was involved in the ‘Gürtel’ case. Accused of illegal financing of her own election campaign, she made a spectacular escape (according to the media of the regime), ‘Torete’-style, referring to the homonymous ‘outlaw’ character’s style in a Spanish TV series.



In the jail where they're presently 'holding' me (I say 'presently' because my odyssey is not over yet), they are more concerned about how to reduce the quantity of books I can read per month (I am/we are allowed 4 books a month, whereas the Prison Regulations state there is no limit in the number of books, magazines, etc.) than with decreasing the amount of anxiolytic, antidepressant, etc. drugs they stuff prisoners with, so that they don't think and they stop being human beings, become zombies.

The prisons are not in flames but some of us still have the fire of rebellion in our gut.

How sad it is that a people like ours that carried out the last Idealist Revolution, be turned into a health spa for British and German pensioners!

If indignation doesn't arm itself with courage, solidarity and awareness, we're fucked.

Greetings!

**Gabriel**

*These words are dedicated to all those whose subversive conscience was armed by injustice in the form of Law. To my brothers and sisters, prisoners and free, all over the world.*

'Doctrinal Nourishment' (1889), James Ensor

When this category of prisoners (those from below on the left, as Sub-Marcos would say) are denied their 'permits' and/or rights, I don't see old screw of the Realm (Ángel Yuste Castellanos) making speeches to Parliament or giving press conferences outside the Ministry of Justice.

Tell me indignatx! Are you really interested in the Rights of all prisoners? Do you know that rights are just scrap paper here? What kind of 'Right' is Ghosting? Doesn't the L.O.G.P.<sup>9</sup> say that all prisoners have the Right to serve their time in the communities they come from?

Tell me! Don't they say that all prisoners have the Right to participate in all social, cultural and sports activities? And why not those in the F.I.E.S.? Talking about F.I.E.S., do you know what it is by any chance? Doesn't the L.O.G.P. say that all terminally ill prisoners must be released so that they can die with dignity in their own surroundings with their families and loved ones? But there's more... when the 'waves' of citizens took to the streets demanding that 'Sovaldi' be administered to patients with hepatitis C, did they really mean all citizens? Also prisoners? Are prisoners 'citizens' or do they lose all rights when they go to prison?

Do you know the painter James Ensor? If you don't know him I suggest you look at his work entitled 'Doctrinal nourishment'... 'the ones below on the left' are definitely us: the nobodys... only, today the shit comes to us from the TV screens.

But let's get back to the Constitution (this book Sacred as the Bible, that none of us would even use as paper to roll a spliff). Although it might sound strange to you I have read it, along with hundreds, thousands of books and Treaties and Penal Codes (the fact is 30 years in prison are quite a lot) to see what these trashy 'democrats' say. The right to decent housing, work, education... are you with me? The right to have rights, you might say. Fuck! And then they say that we anarchists are

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<sup>9</sup> L.O.G.P.: Ley Organica General Penitenciaría – General Prison Law

'utopian'... is this because we are not such dickheads as to write a Sacred book full of bullshit that we would never be able to bring about?

I have never voted (nor will I ever) because I refuse to delegate my responsibilities to the puppets of IBEX-35<sup>10</sup>... but there was a time when, yes, I struggled so that prisoners had their Rights respected (we used to get so many beatings that we weren't even worth a stone), but then I saw how these Rights were rigorously applied for those of the GAL, for the corrupt, the fascists and the arse-licking 'prisoners'! How ironic! Thousands of prisoners have been struggling from below for Decades only to see how such Rights were applied exclusively to those above.

By the way, I forgot to say that when I came back (extradited from Germany) to the cells of this country, 'someone' sent me a script based on the book 'Huye, Hombre, Huye' (by Xosè Tarrío) evidently for making a film... they said that the scriptwriter was 'one of us' (I've never known what 'one of us' means exactly), and luckily so, because if he had been 'one of them' he couldn't have done it better. Tarrío, the man, is reduced to the sad tale of a social outcast. I suppose this is meant to explain his violence and put people's conscience at rest... and because they didn't give him RITALIN when he was a child.

'Curro Jiménez'<sup>11</sup> was running across the Sierra Morena with his own Law as he didn't accept the Law of those capable of enforcing it just because they had more muskets and tunics. We don't know if 'Curro' was ever beaten by his father, but we do know that he had moral principles. We know about 'Curro' the man... has anyone ever thought that 'Curro' was a victim of social hardship? So, if we know about 'Curro' the

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<sup>10</sup> Ibex-35: the index of the Madrid Stock Exchange

<sup>11</sup> Curro Jiménez: the bandit and outlaw protagonist of a Spanish TV series.

man, where the fuck is Tarrío the man? Tarrío the anarchist? Tarrío my brother? Why do we only see his marginalization? To reduce him to that is TO KILL HIM ALL OVER AGAIN.

I wonder, where 'Curro Jiménez's' scriptwriters are? They portrayed an 'outlaw' and his reasons. They explained his situation on the margins, more or less deliberately ideologising him. It's not like that now. It seems they only want to give a picture of a personage on the margins in the sense of a victim of society, a social misfit with moral principles.

Today's conservatives and social Darwinians don't do any better, on the contrary they have a remedy = RITALIN and treat 'hardship' as a disease contracted in childhood. The script stinks of this ideology of 'hardship'. As I was reading it a sad monotonous song from my childhood came into my mind: 'I'm a rebel because the world made me so, because no one gave me any love in this world...' As long as I live you won't appropriate our stories of struggle (that is to say lives full of freedom and firmness against all authorities) to transform them into 'films' to be shown on some 'Paramount Chanel' series entitled 'Chine Quinqui'<sup>12</sup>.

Sure I am also from the 'Quinqui' world; from the world of poverty and the poor, of dictatorship and emigration... and I'm proud of it!! It is also sure that you become an anarchist, are not born one. Unlike my 'Quinquis' brothers, I'm still in prison despite having served my sentence (in terms of Rights and Legality). I suppose the 'problem' (for the institutions, not for me) lies not so much in not having known how to overcome my 'marginality' (in spite of the many inconveniences) as that I was unable to avoid my radicalization. Yes, comrades, in order to write my own story, to follow my own path, besides being 'quinqui' I became an 'anarchist' – 'terrorist'.

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<sup>12</sup> 'Quinqui': 'misfits', 'lowlifes'. These refer to a 'subculture' whose socially marginalized members often turn to delinquency.