

We few began as wanderers in this wasteland, this wasted land, this land laid waste. Going through the motions every day, our hands passing over the assembly line, the steering wheel or the keyboard almost without our conscious awareness, as if ghost limbs. We tell - or are told - the same story again and again of how we come to be here, of how we have 'progressed' into this age that clings to us like cellophane. Yet what is it, this thought which flashes unbidden across our minds while we submit to the bosses orders, or when we pass the clearcut forest? Where does it lead, this chain of feelings we could allow ourselves to follow, hooked on the tailwings of the swooping swallow, or that draws us to a mountain or seashore? Why is it that our fingers twitch, curl into fists, *become ours once more*, when the newscasts and adverts blare, when the landlord knocks, when police approach? Who are they, those friends whose company seems incommensurable with the hollow commodities, the acquisition of which keeps us apart; those voices who dare to challenge these values and way of life; those who tear away at this suffocating skin which has been grafted onto ours, bringing their heretical dreams to life again and again as feral beauty, bombs and beating hearts? How could it be, that those moments could stretch on and on, while restrictions and categories peel away to fall as so much compost for the conspiracy of dandelions blooming atwixt the cracks, from an Earth we have learned to embrace once more? *Gather your strength*, the reply from our bones counsels. Your fight seems to have begun



for anarchy, for wildness.

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OPENING SALVO [Editorial]



Here we are again, with one more collection to throw into the mix for your consideration. We've taken on a task of documenting these current times of struggle (as well as their heritage to be kept alive), but at a different rhythm than the hyper-immediacy which is often forced upon us by the online culture. **Hence, along with the newer articles and translations, we have presented a range of pieces in the following pages which have appeared at different times in the last while, but which may have previously washed over us in the data-stream with little impact.** We believe that our format is better suited to reflective reading, so we're now committing them to paper; many good websites and online publications exist where you can get up-to-the-moment information, our purposes here are otherwise.

We strongly want to reject reductionism, whether that of exclusively attending to the class struggle, to prisons or prisoners, to the technological-industrial system, to 'nature', social identities and their oppressions, etc. **We think that the divergent but informative experiences which are shared through this compilation can pass through all these and more, without affixing too much of a set character to our project beyond our obvious aspirations for the end of all hierarchy and civilisation.**

The text boxes we have laid out with the articles often refer to related materials for further reading, should anyone find it of interest, but we will be clear that we only agree for sure with what was used, not necessarily the whole texts in their entirety. Where we have accompanied some articles with a chronology of actions for inspiration, it's to emphasise a stated (or perceived) aspect which we found to be in common with the subject matter; but all of these deeds doubtless held a broader resonance in the moment and significance to the authors, so we hope it won't seem too much like a misappropriation, and that the links seem obvious enough.

As a change from our previous volumes, this time our glossary entry – on colonisation – is available as a separate companion piece (aimed to be distributed alongside this and also available with the online version through 325.nostate.net/?tag=return-fire). This way we felt able to give it the space we felt it needed for a more thorough investigation; we haven't decided whether to continue this way in the future for glossary entries, but hopefully it can give some deeper thoughts to the topic as it comes up throughout this edition.

Touched on this time around are subjects such as reproductive technologies; eco-defence and its

sometimes-curious allies; militarism as something it's not possible to separate from wider domination; gender subversion; indigenous resistance, the complexity of solidarity and delving back into the colonisation of our own ancestors; trajectories of struggle being forged in different corners of the planet; and Smart Cities (indeed as well as the consequences of urbanisation in general). On this last note, we are also releasing a formatted version of an essay we received during December concerning the 'Internet of Things' and the converging sciences, '*Smarter Prison?*', as a supplement to this volume to distribute alongside, and which should also be accessible via the above link.

Without further ado, we send a sign of our collaboration with close and also distant bands of eco-saboteurs, street-fighters, wild Luddites and insurgent land cultures, and to the indomitable prisoners of our tendency as well as many more rising with the determination to assail this deadening order. While we can only extend so much to those we don't personally know, or know only minimally through their ideas and practices, we recognise a burning powder-trail connects us and the power which that contains, as a compliment to our lived relationships in the times it makes sense to us.

Return Fire is dedicated this time to our many collaborators far and wide (you know who you are), outcasts among the compliant, of whom we're fiercely proud.

In the spirit of total liberation,

R.F.



THE VEIL DROPS

– anti-extremism or counter-insurgency?



“The planning of psychological operations has to understand:

- a) *That successful counter-insurgency operations are based on the involvement and identification of the population with the plans and operations of the government.*
- b) *That the population acts on the basis of what they believe – without consideration of the facts.*
- c) *That the action of the population in support of the government will only emerge, if the people believe that they can reach their individual and collective objectives best through this government.”*
– Counter-Insurgency Planning Guide, U.S. Army Special Warfare School

“To link the exploitability of the Third World with the stability of the western industrial nations – this is the ideal picture of a successful counter-insurgency campaign.”
– Jochen Hippler, *Krieg im Frieden*

Foreword: Terror as Governance

A nightmare stalks the streets of Old Europe, an apparition spitting death and terror into the icons of the metropolis. France, gripped in a state of emergency without end in sight, after the extension of a fundamentalist campaign which has already claimed many more lives in places like Suruç [ed. – see *Why We Are With the Fighters*], Anakara and Beirut (whose populations simply don't tally against the blessed children of the West who fill the media's quota for the rituals of televised, real-time mourning). The jingoistic chorus peaks in a crescendo, war-drums are beaten, a surge of applications for the French military, racist pogroms and one-dimensional denunciations, and an intense and hostile atmosphere on doubly-policed streets (visibly or not) weighs down on

those of us sickened by the slaughters. We are summoned to a so-called 'war between civilisations', and certainly there is a power-play going on for the dominance of a God or the Nation. But it doesn't take much to see that these competitors form two sides of the same coin, and try to subjugate by the same indiscriminate means.

The public administrators of the European order are counting on the tide of fear and indignation to wash away the blood visible on their own hands from the various fascisms they have incubated, from inflamed nationalism to religious fundamentalism. And we are told, again and again, by politicians and media pundits, while the roll-out of more background surveillance, militarisation and homogenisation of opinion already becomes banal (after all, we've been here before), that 'our' victory over this threat lies in continuing everyday life; keep shopping, keep working (or looking for work), keep partying, keep voting. It is to this daily life that the European victims of

Islamist massacres are portrayed as having been martyred; appropriated even in death for the needs of capitalist modernity. This same daily life is meanwhile further invaded and colonised by the same security state which claims to defend it.

“No barbarians will stop us from living how we decide to live,” declares the French President, but who could be said to have decided what, and for who? The irony of this statement, additionally with such a loaded term used in the pejorative^[2], isn't lost when deployed against the children of North African migrants in a country whose so-called 'standard of living' is and has been raised from the enlistment of those who never chose. Evidently, the “we” in the President's speech reflects the accelerating polarisation they would like to impose on our times: with “us”, or with the terrorists. We might remember that killing isn't the only way either of the camps seek to attain or maintain control – most important to these authoritarians is the enforcement of a *certain way of life* while repressing others. The creation of a herd, which – aside from the black sheep and sacrificial lambs – the shepherd must preserve from those who would destroy what they cannot themselves manage to possess.

Lawyers of the prevailing order call for responses comparable with the internment of Algerian decolonisation militants in the mid-twentieth century and the suppression of Irish nationalists by the British State. Indeed the state of emergency legislation in force in France, with all its prohibitions and restrictions, was created and used first during the war against Algeria (which saw the other significant massacre in Paris since World War II^[1]), then again during nation-wide 2005 rioting emanating from the suburb housing estates which constitute some of the nation's ongoing (and in this case internal) colonies. But if in these prior (and, clearly, not quite extinguished) rebellions we caught many glimpses of our own desires reflected, today we must admit that the forces taking

“Those predators who exhort us to cry in unison with them today, to declare ‘Je suis Charlie’, are the same predators in suits responsible for the emergence of terrible groups and movements such as al-Quaeda or Daesh, former allies of western democracies against the previous perils before they took a central place on the podium of the geo-strategic perils of today. In their courts, their police stations, their prisons, these same scumbags kill, incarcerate, mutilate and sequester all those that don't follow the path imposed upon them with truncheon blows and education. The same civilized beings that let people croak every day at their borders for trying to escape the misery and wars that they themselves and their enemies of the day created. We have absolutely no desire to let these same exact scumbags civilize and eradicate us any further, still less to stand shoulder to shoulder with them. Because it is against them that we want to stand shoulder to shoulder, against all those that regard us under different religious, political, communitarian, interclassist, civilizing and nationalist pretexts as pawns to be placed for sacrifice on an absurd and squalid chessboard.” – *Je ne suis pas Charlie*

centre-stage show no such liberatory potential (whatever clumsy 'anti-imperialist' lens you look through), but rather a contemptible practice which perfectly mirrors the dissociated society which produces it even in an attempt to wield religion as a weapon against that order. In the face of war that aims at the oppressed or indiscriminately, we concur with some comrades within nearby Belgium who called to 'break ranks' in the midst of the nationalist frenzy: *"The days when European States could go to war anywhere in the world, striking blows, occupying, opening up new markets, wildly exploiting and plundering resources while preserving their own territories from acts of war (if perhaps not exactly the same, at least in the same logic) seem to be over. The war has struck right in the heart of the French capital, and will not go quietly. And the logic of war advocates striking into the crowd. As all States have done since the beginning of their existence, against their own subjects and those of other States. As all those aspiring to conquer power and impose their domination have done and continue to do. Be they Islamic or Republican, democratic or dictatorial.*

[...] Need we remember where the phosphorus bombs that burned Fallujah were produced, who delivered computer technologies to the secret services of the regimes of Assad, of Sisi^[3], who trained the pilots that bombed Gaza? Need we remember how cobalt and silicon are extracted from the depths of Africa for technological gadgets, how all the consumer goods found on the shelves of supermarkets and shops are produced? Need we remember how civilized capitalism manages its hundreds of labour camps, from Bangladesh to Mexico? Where the sinister shadows of the drones that strike around the world come from? How and in the name of what thousands of people have been drowning in the Mediterranean for years now? So, say it, who is responsible?

But if our rebel eyes rightly look up to find the answer, they should also look within ourselves. For in the time to come, and already in the times that are and were, by our passivity we are complicit in our own



oppression. And this passivity is not merely the inaction of the body, it is also the brutalization project programmed for decades by the power that deprived us of the tools to understand reality, to understand our rage. That deprived us of any sensitivity other than that required for the needs of the moment, of any capacity to dream. It was from there, this program of human reduction, that today those who decide to commit massacres come from, to participate in the power game, to kill themselves too. It would be foolish to have believed that their slaughter would target the powerful and their structures. Modern warfare in a world bloated with technology and remote massacres no longer allows such subtleties, if such subtleties could ever have existed in the minds of men [sic] at war."

Let's not be redundant: it seems like we need to equip ourselves with better analyses than those which only respond to events such as the Paris massacre with a mechanical script that refuses to take the religious character of such events seriously. Modern capitalism, statescraft and their geopolitical strategies co-exist with plenty of older, more millenarian alienations (although updated for the modern era), which, though sometimes wielded by the former, are not reducible to them. To shy from a critique that includes, in this case, Islam, makes us politicians (even if sometimes only of identity), complacent in the suppression of those who – to use the words of a Kyokai in Paris – adopt *"attitudes of individual revolt against the family, the traditions and pressures of all sorts (direct and indirect) suffered by individuals from a Muslim culture within their homes and their "community" (as in all homes inspired by religion, in most other homes in different ways, and within what is generally called "communities")."*

Yet our focus for this text will be something different; it will be on the misconception we perceive that frames these spectacular outbreaks of repression which follow from such atrocities as merely reactive (rather than an intensification of a project already afoot in 'peacetime'). It will attempt to decode the many battlefields which play out daily over resources, obedience and legitimacy. In this world founded on tortures religious, colonial^[4] and psychological^[5], it will examine the more pervasive terrorisation currently underlying them: and, because it isn't our business to play the victim, some prospects of rebellion also (even if they have yet to prove their efficacy).

The Terror of Borders

"[M]igration is contained, managed and restricted by a top-down process of transnationalization. And with an increase in mobility and migration, irregular migration is being perceived as a threat to the world-order and to the integrity of the nation state. [N]ew borders are erected where one is "processed," "profiled," "sorted," "filtered," "contained," or "rejected". The border is a site of unequal power relations where a selection is made between the useful and unwanted in relation to market demands." – Migration, Borders & Climate Change

There are currently more people on the move around the world than ever before, both across borders and within them. Forced off their lands and into burgeoning cities (a song as old as civilisation), rounded up and herded into the zones for the maximum economic exploitation on which the world market rests, or fleeing from the global elite's 'structural adjustment' programs, when not from outright slaughters; the occupied and contested territories of Afghanistan and Palestine account for the largest migrant populations.

The European Union's thirty-year project of Shengen^[6] is rescinded in some parts as the specific mode for managing and regulating via transmigration shifts, walls go up and guards flood areas.



Resistance fighter in Kurdistan smashes ISIS-Daesh billboard

Borders alleged to have disappeared materialise once more overnight. The proxy wars that Western nations spent billions creating and equipping arrives on 'our' shores; not just as marauding reprisals, but as a hunted humanity trapped between

fundamentalisms to the East and nationalists to the West, and/or chasing economic crumbs of the looted 'resources' from their country of origin. And they are confronted with barbed wire and steel, internment camps and troops of the very countries which have exploited, destabilised and bombarded theirs.

Institutional powers know that leaning on the 'immigration paranoia' they have inculcated in European societies is a key division between the exploited, leading to a strengthening of the perceived need for the State (even when its 'failure' is scandalised). They terrify the populace with the spectre of 'migrant crime', while Britain has pledged £25 million to its former island slave colony of Jamaica from its



international aid budget for the construction of a new modern prison that they can deport inmates to; forming another part of the (rebranded) global trade in human beings. Neatly, this would ease pressure on the U.K. prison system and make space for more bodies in cells, more fodder for the prison-industrial complex and its profiteers, State or private. Meanwhile the check-points and searches, the latest monitoring satellites and scanners, the warships and drones patrolling the Mediterranean, all portend a rising capacity for generalised social control, for which the migrants are a convenient trial population (while themselves innovating and pioneering all kinds of evasion strategies in tandem, which we would do well to study).

Tensions have run high, with a series of hunger-strikes and/or yard occupation at the majority of the U.K. migration prisons in our corner of the world alone within the last year, from Dover to Dungavel. Sporadic street fights continue near the border-point in Calais, like elsewhere, as many attempt to breach police cordons to reach British soil, while fire generated by other enemies of the border regime and its world spreads south to light up the property of its collaborators such as GDF Suez in Marseille for their hand in the detention centres, or of the police stationed at the tri-point of the Swiss-German-French frontiers in Basel. Fences are cut or torn down along the re-fortified 'Balkan Route'. Small but steady glimpses, as yet, of a flipside to the transnational system at war to impose a nationalist and neo-colonial ordering on life, that prefers a migrant drowned than non-registered or imprisoned rather than 'smuggled', that seeks to create a terrified and controllable underclass workforce disciplined by fear, racism, precarity and the whims of immigration bureaucrats and police.



The Terror of Climate Security

"Political systems, willing to place one group of people above another, are already responding to the potential impact of climate change. With the "war on terror," security politics and nationalism flourished globally; climate change is being used to give further legitimacy to the concepts of "national preservation" and "homeland security." So the Indian state is currently building a perimeter fence around its entire border with Bangladesh, a country more at risk than almost any other from the devastating consequences of rising sea levels. The fence has been explicitly talked about as a barrier to migration. If sea levels rise and Bangladeshi people are driven from their homes, they will now find themselves trapped inside this ring."
 – *Climate Change is not an Environmental Issue*

A little-emphasised component of the desperate scenes at the borders and internment camps is the impact of ongoing resource colonialism, such as Eritreans – supposedly the third most common nationality to be crossing the Mediterranean – whose lands are devastated by firms like Canada's Nevsun Resources (operating one of the largest open-pit copper mines in the world, constructed by enslaved army conscripts) and Sunridge Gold Corp., to supply the technological-industrial behemoth. Soon this may pale in comparison to what the unfolding impacts of industrially-generated climate change could bring – indeed, from the South Pacific to Alaska, climate refugees are already on the move. The insanity created by globalised agribusiness has led to situations such as a large part of the world's rice coming from the one Mekong basin in Vietnam – now at risk from inundation, risking a knock-on tide of forced migration that would dwarf the

Syrian exodus through people fleeing shortages from Dhaka, Jakarta and beyond. With climatic shifts emerging convulsively (discernible to the 'scientifically'-untrained of us through a myriad of little signals, as we see an annual plant

appear early here, migratory birds appear later – or not at all – there, etc.), and with 2015 the hottest year in recorded history, by some estimates nearly ten percent of the Earth's human population are at direct risk of consequent displacement.

In an increasingly unstable world, discourse is regulated as well as movement. Even before the sensationalised Islamist attacks there, France contradicted Shengen practice by enforcing border controls before the December circus of the COP21 (the United Nation's twenty-first annual climate summit), denying entry for some and also refusing to grant visas for known dissidents from outside the European Union. It was clear there was to be a hard-line approach to anything which might sully the summit which some of those who were then preparing for in opposition characterised as follows. *"There will be the chance to dream up new pollution quotas which the lesser polluters can sell to the biggest polluters (we all know that the atmosphere balances itself out in the end...), to develop the "green" industry, to introduce crazy scientific plans for geo-engineering (modification of the climate by chemical and/or physical processes), and even to produce new labels of green-pollution. [...] Opposing this incredible democratic parody of a world driving on four wheels but constantly checking its exhaust, is "civil society", the heterogeneous mass of associations and political organisations who participate in the end of the year media-political social gathering.*

[...] As December draws near, as before any big international political or sporting event, they are socially cleansing the areas around the summit venue, chasing away the poor so that they don't offend the eyes of the rich and transforming the urban space into a private high-security zone. The Seine-Saint-Denis département is one of the poorest and most heavily polluted in France and it is there that COP21 will be staged, next to Le Bourget private-jet airport. Attendees will be able to fly right in to the conference site and won't have to encounter either the endless traffic jams which clog up the motorways north of Paris or the high-rise estates and factories which stretch as far as the eye can see. For miles around there will be no more squats, gypsies, immigrants or anything else typical of an area which is normally is a byword for Parisian precarity. Unfortunately there will be police violence, home evictions and raids" (What's the COP21). In the end, all demonstrations during the summit were banned.

The world of 'sustainability' as (hypothetically) touted by such summits becomes a kind of entertainment, a comic tragedy, bringing together the scientists

who warn with the air of raving prophets that *“the ‘vast majority’ of known fuel reserves must be left in the ground to avert intolerable risks to future generations”* with the major energy corporations who make no secret of their intent to exhaust them and find more (and subsidised by their sideline in so-called 'green' technologies'). With its schemes such as REDD+ (the UN's Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation plus *“conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks”*), the whole debacle is already well-known as a joke^[7].

It's the same quantitative and alienated logic which led the U.K. Secretary of State for the Environment to give developers the all-clear to destroy remaining ancient British woodland – just so long as they plant a hundred trees somewhere for each felled. Globally, only two really substantial tracts of forest remain intact (the Amazon and the Congo). Fragmentation (when a forest is shot through and diced up by roads, suburban settlements, agriculture, etc.), by a study's average, is thought to cause more than half of the resident species to die out in just twenty years. Seventy percent of forest lands around the world are already currently within half a mile of the forest's edges. Since the 1970s alone, half of all known ocean life has been wiped out; by mid-century we are on course for more plastic waste in the sea than fish. The advanced stage of the biodiversity crisis may be obvious to those whose lives are filled with conscious intimacy as people of the land, but it is dangerously less so in the gray cocoon-like metropolis. Millions of humans are spending our lives in industrialised



Described as a *“bold blend of science and style”*, the £160 Freka mask is ergonomically designed to fit the wearer's face and uses an infusion of Japanese Hiroki wood to calm the senses while a filter blocks out harmful pollutants

environments and cityscapes, evermore logistically and sensorily entwined with this civilisation. More than five thousand years since Enlil in 'the Epic of Gilgamesh' already bemoaned *“the uproar of mankind”*, one more sensual mode for engagement with a more-than-human world is gravely diminished. A decade-long effort to collect audio data in one of the quietest places left on Earth (by the



Alaskan mountain the Athabaskans call Denali, *“the great one”*) found some daily averages of motorised land- or sky-traffic sound every seventeen minutes. The creeping din is becoming more recognised as imperiling wild habitats *“as surely as a bulldozer or oil spill”*^[8]. Yet we are the generations who have grown up accustomed to constant auditory intrusions, numbed by the hum of the urban environment.

While we can list these horrors and more, with the hope to argue that what we seek isn't this life just 'more sustainable', but a life that feels worth living, the spectre of the Ecological State of Emergency is also deployed by our enemies. After so many crises, scandals, disturbances, etc., the advent of catastrophic climate change offers the State and Capital a chance to consolidate power, by claiming to be the only ones capable of addressing it. Jaime Semprun and René Riesel have commented that *“the current mobilisation to ‘save the planet’[...] has allowed the manufacture of consensus to concede the title of ‘ecological consciousness raising’ resulting from its own operations, to the docile readiness to repeat its slogans and submit to its requirements and prescriptions. It celebrates the birth of the re-educated consumer, the eco-citizen, etc. [...] After all, mass society (that is, those who have been integrally formed by it, whatever their illusions in this respect may be) never talks about the problems it claims to ‘manage’ except in terms that make its perpetuation a sine qua non. Thus, while the collapse is underway, it can only try to postpone for as long as possible the dislocation of the ensemble of desperation and madness that this society has become; it can conceive of no other way to do this, whatever anyone may say, than by reinforcing all means of coercion and making individuals submit more completely to the collectivity [while] repressing the intuition of the serious conflict that will inevitably be entailed by an attempt to destroy or even to seriously consider destroying the totalitarian society, that is, the technological macrosystem to which human society has been reduced.”*

Hence, the powers that be can terrify the more attentive members of the public with images of the winter wildfires in the Arctic and so on, to blackmail us into accepting

the (rebranded) advances of the industrial system, from 'green technologies' to genetic engineering^[8]. As for geo-engineering (a showpiece topic at COP21), one of the most seriously discussed proposals at the moment is to spray sulfuric acid into the upper atmosphere, forming tiny particles in clouds to block incoming solar radiation, therefore supposedly cooling the planet. (In effect, the scientists would be installing a radiative shield between Earth and the sun, one which could be adjusted by those who control it to regulate the temperate of the planet.) While doing nothing to help acidification of the oceans or risings carbon concentrations in the atmosphere (and actually expected to slow recovery of the hole in the ozone layer), 'sulphate aerosol spraying' is very popular with the same fossil fuel corporations who have for years been the most strenuous deniers of climate change; having done an about-face, they now say that emission-reduction is unrealistic or politically-impossible, so geo-engineering is that remains (now they are in the big business of its research and future deployment). In this way, instead of climate change jeopardising the system, climate engineering represents its triumph. The military would play a dominant role in geo-engineering due to the high chance of conflict stemming from its uneven results; some studies suggest sulphate aerosol spraying would disrupt the Indian monsoon and hence food supplies for a billion humans. Simultaneously, in summer 2015, the U.S. military conducted massive 'Northern Edge' war-games in the Gulf of Alaska, following on from a Navy symposium called 'Naval Operations in an Ice-Free Arctic': implicitly anticipating climate wars in the melting wars of the north, already contributing to the death-knell ecologically and culturally in the area^[10].

Also in the name of 'climate security', land and food can be appropriated from the Global South to become biofuel for cars and planes in the North, while when required for those eco-gadgets, even notorious mining projects can get rebranded as 'green' by the conceptual acrobatics of a world trying to outrun its own deserts of concrete (guided by a culture which churns out 7.5 billion cubic metres of the above every year). Even more naked in its imperial ambition, global capital runs rampant in the so-called 'developing' countries, bringing death, dispossession and disease^[11]. Securing agricultural production zones, or those for 'conservation' (even when merely a means to fill a 'carbon sequestration' quota), drives international phases of 'green-grabbing' as peoples such as forest-dwellers, their livelihood-dependent necessity to exist in those specific bioregions recognised either weakly or not at all by the governing legal institutions, are

policed, evicted, displaced. Here is when, even where dramatic effects of climatic shifts are not yet present, the terrorism of climate security is on a less existential level. James Fairhead and Alexander Dunlap explicitly linked schemes including REDD+ with new high- or low-intensity warzones, in their study debunking the portrayal of climate conflict as inevitable and ecologically-driven alone, rather than as intensified or even created by the failings of an imperiled industrial capitalist order which has never baulked at the vilest means to secure a profit margin. They emphasise that *"enclosure, territorialisation, and market strategies of accumulation by dispossession are principal drivers of climate related conflict. [T]his continuum has largely been influenced by political and economic conflict for the control of natural resources – land and people – that has necessitated the creation of centralised political structures, the modernisation and disciplining of people into dependence on an industrial economy that strips, poisons, and degrades the natural environment to the point of climate, soil (desertification), and biodiversity crises."*¹¹²

The authors labelled this as the militarisation and marketisation of 'nature', whereby supposedly-'environmental' goals such as preserving a certain area's 'biodiversity' (at its most static notion) are deployed primarily as a way of stabilising global powers and financial systems, often meaning *"initial aspirations of 'selling nature to save it' cede to the 'saving of nature to trade it'"*. They show this to be *"inherently antagonistic to the natural environment and land-based people – making conflict and pacification in some form almost inevitable"* in military or neo-colonial forms. All armies (and hence, all governments) understand the State's need to control 'resources' better than most environmentalists understand the above,



Gold mine in Skouries, Greece (see Return Fire vol.2 pg40)

and the focus on these newly-enclosed ones doesn't come at the expense of neglecting the more traditional supply-based interventions – often couched in 'anti-terror' rhetoric. See the renewed fighting for U.S. control over the Iraqi oil fields against the Islamist insurgents, French deployments to secure the uranium mines of Mali, Italian preparations to defend its energy infrastructure in its old colony Libya, or the Israeli Defence Minister's admission that the push to 'uproot Hamas' (via destroying that Palestinian administration's support base through *"dahiya doctrine"* targeting of civilian infrastructure) is also closely tied in with dominating Gaza's gas reserves. We are reminded that, as this one aspect among others shows, the 'war between civilisations' is nothing but the war of civilisation, its rapacious appetites and armed divisions.



Gaza after the Israeli military incursion of summer 2014

The Terror of 'Crisis'

*"[I]t is undeniable that the strong convulsions to which the whole social order is prey at the start of this third millennium have extinguished the smug smile of many subversives in front of those who dare to call for insurrection here and now. Yesterday's skeptics are transformed into today's enthusiasts to the point of making it become a downright international best-seller on the editorial, media, and militant marketplace [ed. – see **Radical Scavengers Come Out of the Woodwork**]. The reason is easy to understand: the social peace that accompanied the 1980s and 1990s, in its most inflated and*

complacent aspects, is terminated. The virtual wealth is not able to compensate for the real poverty: the supermarket shelves may even gleam with goods, but their consumption is no longer accessible to those who find themselves forced to tighten their belts; or, almost everyone. Today voluntary servitude is still certainly majoritarian, solidly majoritarian,

*but it has lost its air of stupid innocence. Discontent, malaise, and indignation spread everywhere in an unstoppable way, causing worry, panic, but also some hope for a counter-charge. These feelings of frustration will get pacified in a new institutional social cohesion; or, in the face of the relentless succession of "political scandals", "financial crises", "ecological catastrophes", "religious wars"... will they finally provoke a generalised hostility?" – afterword to **At Daggers Drawn***

Once, the children of the 20th century West were assured that a life spent on their knees (before teachers, bosses, lecturers, experts, union officials, politicians) would at least guarantee a more-or-less quiet, more-or-less 'peaceful' survival. To be sure, this was the oft-false promise of a society structured to the most basic level on exploitation, but for at least many of the baby-boomers it made good on the once-utopian offer of one's own car, suburban home, computer. However, despite the escalating claims of technological-industrial culture (for an immanent life of endless peace, replete with one's own household artificial intelligence, pollution-free air and food, or should that fail even a new home on another planet; offers which have hung empty since

at least the '80s), today there is little comfort in such an illusion. The technological trinkets that the capitalists dangle before the masses may play their role in distraction and pacification (arguably more so than the racket of expressedly-political ideologies which they seem to be replacing as the frontier of 'progress'), but it's not enough to entirely dull the pain from a profound and all-encompassing restructuring of consumer democracy – the oft-lamented 'crisis'.

In Europe, the social democratic model of calculated concessions to placate the populace is whisked away piecemeal, replaced with even more debt-slavery and anti-depressants. If in the past the governing systems saw fit to afford welfare its place to serve as an example of a modern civil society, perhaps a fitting image to discipline the collective psyche of the renewedly-austere classes would be the 2015 coordinated dawn raids in Croydon, London, against suspected 'benefit cheats' – featuring police in riot gear and balaclavas. Lay-offs, pension scandals, service cuts become the daily fare. Commerical centres and banks get super-secured against theft. Energy corporations in the U.K. now send revenue-protection lackeys in stab-proof vests to force the installation of pre-payment meters in some homes, as the line between cops of the State and those

who police our daily lives in other ways further blurs. The security and defence markets are in boom, with huge investments in public and private research into methods of control and imprisonment.

Meanwhile we are told by economists and politicians that we're 'all in this together', and even if very few people might actually take them for their word, it still seems that 'crisis' (or recovery from it) is the dominant way of understanding these conditions; albeit increasingly popular to blame a cartel of 'corrupt' bankers, still essentially framed as a case of foolish speculation and mismanagement. Yet when training the notorious 'Chicago Boys' elite of neo-liberal economics, Milton Friedman declared that "[i]f you want to force a change, set off a crisis." And in the sphere of governance, the crowd of daily global alarms, scandals and precarity which accompany this round of capitalist restructuring (again, to call it what it is) serves to render an image of a world unintelligible to the majority, and hence in need of the guiding hand of the authorities. Rage and hostility is vented into bigoted avenues (with the notion of a reduction in prosperity handily linked to hatred for those who are deemed less worthy, and the reinforcement of ideologies of nation, race, gender roles, 'deserving/undeserving poor', etc.), through the many competitions and divisions this order subjects us to.

With citizens of the Global North increasingly atomised, the state of crisis is often also played out on the 'internal' or affective field of people more-or-less unable to name the source of their malaise. Some aspects of this rife condition are commented on in the text 'We Are All Very Anxious'. "Each phase [of capitalism] blames the system's victims for the suffering that the system causes. And it portrays a fundamental part of its functional logic as a contingent and localised problem. [...] All forms of intensity, self-expression, emotional connection, immediacy, and enjoyment are now laced with anxiety. It has become the linchpin of subordination.

One major part of the social underpinning of anxiety is the multi-faceted omnipresent web of surveillance. The NSA, CCTV, performance management reviews, the Job Centre, the privileges system in the prisons, the constant examination and classification of the youngest schoolchildren. But this obvious web is only the outer carapace. We need to think about the ways in which a neoliberal idea of success inculcates these surveillance mechanisms inside the subjectivities and life-stories of most of the population.

We need to think about how people's deliberate and ostensibly voluntary self-exposure, through social media, visible

consumption and choice of positions within the field of opinions, also assumes a performance in the field of the perpetual gaze of virtual others. We need to think about the ways in which this gaze inflects how we find, measure and know one another, as co-actors in an infinitely watched perpetual performance. Our success in this performance in turn affects everything from our ability to access human warmth to our ability to access means of subsistence, not just in the form of the wage but also in the form of credit. Outsides to the field of mediatised surveillance are increasingly closed off, as public space is bureaucratised and privatised, and a widening range of human activity is criminalised on the grounds of risk, security, nuisance, quality of life, or anti-social behaviour.

In this increasingly securitised and visible field, we are commanded to communicate. The incommunicable is excluded. Since everyone is disposable, the system holds the threat of forcibly delinking anyone at any time, in a context where alternatives are foreclosed in advance, so that forcible delinking entails desocialisation – leading to an absurd non-choice between desocialised inclusion and desocialised exclusion. This threat is manifested in small ways in today's disciplinary practices – from "time-outs" and Internet bans, to firings and benefit sanctions – culminating in the draconian forms of solitary confinement found in prisons.

[...] Anxiety is personalised in a number of ways – from New Right discourses blaming the poor for poverty, to contemporary therapies which treat anxiety as a neurological imbalance or a dysfunctional thinking style. A hundred varieties of "management" discourse – time management, anger management, parental management, self-branding, gamification – offer anxious subjects an illusion of control in return for ever-greater conformity to the capitalist model of subjectivity. And many more discourses of scapegoating and criminalisation treat precarity as a matter of personal deviance, irresponsibility, or pathological self-exclusion."

While those on the lower social rungs grasp for the means of survival and grapple with such affective tortures, those on the top (or who guard them, want to be them, etc.) prepare for the feared social explosion. At the 2015 convention of the World Economic Forum [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.1 pg75**] in Davos, Switzerland, Robert Johnson admitted that he knew "[other] hedge fund managers all over the world who are

buying airstrips and farms in places like New Zealand because they think they need a getaway," with spiraling global disparity as 62 individuals are said to hold means equivalent to that of three-and-a-half billion others. In that same country this September, the Swiss military trained (although not without hindrance^[13]) for a 'threat scenario' as follows: "In a fictional Europe of the future, with new countries and borders, there is an economic crisis. The following consequences also have an impact on Switzerland: supply shortages, a black market, and criminal organizations. Big oil, gas and grain stocks are the target of sabotage and looting. Moreover, ethnic tensions lead to larger refugee flows to Switzerland."

In 2011, the entrance exam for the world-renowned ruling class Eton school in England required 13-year-old boys to write a Prime Ministers speech set in 2040 to justify martial law and a massacre of combative demonstrators during an oil crisis that brings rioting to the streets of London after petrol runs out. To be sure, the like is a much older necessity of the State, but it held a certain poignancy in the year of the widest actual insurrection the country had seen for decades [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.1 pg61**], with international resonances echoing back from the ashes of police, corporate and luxury vehicles in Fresno, Madrid and Morlanwelz; and just three years after the Prime Minister allegedly considered deploying the army and enforcing a curfew just as he was to announce the government's bail-out of the banks. Indeed, as well as riotous moments in the territories which have taken the greatest of the Eurozone's economic blows (Greece, Spain, etc.), the 2015 opening of the European Central Bank headquarters in Frankfurt was scene to extensive rioting reminiscent of the 'anti-globalisation' disorders of the later '90s and early '00s world economic summits. Six weeks later, fiery clashes also inaugurated the EXPO2015 convergence of green-washed scientific, political, techno-industrial and media interests in Milan, at the more prosperous end of Italy (where in preparation the president of the Lombardy region announced the eviction of over 200 occupied houses, as the city prepared to show off its luxury shop windows during



the event; although these moves too met with confrontational resistance). Time will tell whether the so-called 'crisis' will draw out these kind of battles on a wider and more generalised level, and for what stakes.

The Terror of Terror

"In his Technological Society, ex-French Resistance fighter Jacques Ellul pointed out that for a security state to work effectively, everyone must be treated as a potential threat, the better to identify and neutralise actual threats. [A]ny resistance to this, stemming from a desire for autonomy, even privacy, moves citizens into the 'threat' category and tightens the security state's intolerant definitions of 'terrorism' still further."

– The Perennial Wild Men



In June 2015 the counter-terrorist operation code-named Strong Tower was unleashed on London. Armed gangs of police, intelligence officials and soldiers swept through the streets and evacuated locations at gunpoint. Six months in the planning, a thousand cops engaged across the capital over 48 hours. The operation, a training exercise – a *"noisy and visible"* one meant to test the decision-making and crisis-management skills of these agencies in conjunction with the fire brigade, ambulance service, various government departments, the transport and health services – was not announced as being based on any specific intelligence; but in a very real sense, the target was the whole populace. Carried out only days after an Islamist massacre aimed at Western holidaymakers in Tunisia, we could understand it as a similar strike on the battlefield of the public imaginary – simultaneously as pacification and mobilisation, as putting the nervous masses back to bed while filling their dreams with terrorist nightmares. Anti-terrorism uses the intimidation of such shows of force with the blackmail of 'national unity' to silence any challenge to their methods, their interests and their power, with the target far broader than the demographic nominally cited.

This way of understanding the instrumentalisation of anti-terrorism, as a

technique of governance, shows us the crucial role the mass media play as the vehicle for bringing this terror into our homes and lives by the screen, spreading fear as surely (more widely if more thinly) as a car-bomb, cowering people into subscribing to an airbrushed 'public opinion' which only really exists through that same spectacular medium that channels it. As the authors of 'We Are All Very Anxious' commented, *"each new crackdown or new round of repressive laws, adds to the cumulative weight of anxiety and stress arising from general over-regulation. Real, human insecurity is channelled into fuelling securitisation. This is a vicious circle, because securitisation increases the very conditions (disposability, surveillance, intensive regulation) which cause the initial anxiety."*

In effect, the security of the Homeland is used as a vicarious substitute for security of the Self."

Across the world we are also seeing a rise in nationalist vigilantism as a measure of disciplining, from fascist paramilitaries who track anarchists and their associates in Chile^[4] to white supremacists wounding demonstrators in Minneapolis with gunfire at a gathering after the fatal

shooting of yet another black man by U.S. police. The State has seen no reason to forfeit occasional use of extra-judicial gangs (whether Loyalists in Ulster or the Saudi-backed jihadis), and sometimes feels it can afford to openly supplement their force with its own. Hence in Calais the riot police stand shoulder-to-shoulder with French fascists in combat gear as they gas and stone migrants. Having reoccupied their ancestral lands in Cauca (once leafy savannah, converted to intensive sugar monocrops since their eviction from the plains by the Colombian police in 1915), the Nasa tribal resistors have engaged in fierce battles with cops and army reinforcements. By night, the local land-owners, narco-traffickers and police form a paramilitary group that ordered its own regional curfew, promising the *"social cleansing"* of the area and eradication of the Nasa *"bandits"*, under the slogan *"United for a northern Cauca without Indians"*.

The various nationalist, terrorist, and neo-colonial fervours have brought us to the point where war, instead of each time being declared by the politicians and generals, quite simply exists as a constant (see Libya, Syria, etc.). The latest round of Western interventions have commenced with scarcely a breath of the public dissent which blew hot air against the warmongering of the '00s. An editorial from

the anarchist correspondence periodical *Avalanche* noted that, in years gone by, *"a war was supported by a war mobilization and also a war economy, it required a different effort than during a period of peace. But today, the war economy is permanently running, oriented towards international trade – to supply conflicts around the world – and domestic repression. That makes it paradoxically always present but also less visible."*

Judging by the preparations of the largest terrorist alliance in the world – NATO – this is only set to expand. The 'Trident Juncture' exercise^[10] held on the land, seas and skies around southern Europe in autumn of 2015 finds its place within a strategy articulated at NATO's 2014 summit in Wales, of general rearmament and weaponry development.

It's terror of a qualitative difference to that of villagers in Pakistan, Yemen, Afghanistan etc. who must live in fear of death raining from the sky or abuse, kidnap or execution by one armed patrol or another, but again, we can trace the contours of terrorisation as they are grafted onto our own bodies in the capitalist core countries made witness to a display of State potential. Now like always, war, coercion and terror are the bread and butter of the State; and yet to develop our understanding of the social order which confronts us, we also look to the spaces inbetween and beneath these moments of spectacularised force.

Peace: the War of Progress

"Politics, as a technique of internal peace and order, sought to implement the mechanism of the perfect army, of the disciplined mass, of the docile, useful troop, of the regiment in camp and in the field, on manoeuvres and on exercises."

– Discipline & Punish

The fact of the matter is, we have lived within this war for a long time. The civilised social relationships we now inhabit as if they were timeless and unassailable were established through domestication, patriarchal conquest, colonisation (internal/external), market economics and the ascendancy of the nation-state, which has always used each element of national power (whether military strength, diplomacy, economics, ideology, technology or 'culture') to bring a real-or-latent conflict to its advantage. Exploring the origins of resulting institutions (and reversing the proposition of 19th century strategist Carl Von Clausewitz, inspired by the military campaigns of French ruler Napoleon, that war is *"the continuation of politics by other means"*), Michel Foucault asserted that *"law is born of real battles, victories, massacres, and conquests which can be dated and which have their horrific heroes; the law was born in burning towns and ravaged fields. It was born together"*

with the famous innocents who died at break of day. [...] We could, and must, also ask ourselves if military institutions, and the practices that surround them – and in more general terms all the techniques that are used to fight a war — are, whichever way we look at them, directly or indirectly, the nucleus of political institutions.

[T]he role of political power is perpetually to use a sort of silent war to reinscribe [that relationship of force] in institutions, economic inequalities, language, and even the bodies of individuals. This is the initial meaning of our inversion of Clausewitz's aphorism – politics is the continuation of war by other means. Politics, in other words, sanctions and reproduces the disequilibrium of forces manifested in war. Inverting the proposition also means something else, namely that within this "civil peace," these political struggles, these clashes over or with power, these modifications of relations of force – the shifting balance, the reversals – in a political system, all these things must be interpreted as a continuation of war. And they are interpreted as so many episodes, fragmentations, and displacements of the war itself. We are always writing the history of the same war, even when we are writing the history of peace and its institutions."

By this definition we could see how, once the norms and values of a civil society are inscribed, every government must remain engaged in a continuous battle to maintain that legitimacy and control over its subjects. Politics and all the other tools of statescraft must standardise and codify everyday life. It is on top of this continual and sometimes masked struggle, that we encounter the concept of peace as it currently stands in this society.

In Europe, since the Middle Ages, peace was not understood as contradictory to war; but rather as when war was happening, but elsewhere (possibly with the spoils of that war trickling into the coffers and slave-pens 'at home'). Very quickly we can see how tied up the benefits of such a 'peace' were with what became valued as economic prosperity and 'development', maximising productivity under favourable conditions, leading into waves of European empire-building and the industrial era. Industrialism, of course, meant a major ramping up in the one-way consumption and destruction emanating from civilisations in general, and so any 'peace' within either consists of the piled

corpses of untold animal, sylvan and mineral life, with evermore regimented and prescriptive roles within its human practitioners and genocide for those standing in the way.

Foucault also characterised the period through the middle ages up to the threshold of modernity as that within which the State "acquired a monopoly on war. [...] Increasingly, wars, the practices of war, and the institutions of war tended to exist, so to speak, only on the frontiers, on the outer limits of the great State units[...] it tended to become the technical and professional prerogative of a carefully defined and controlled military apparatus. This led, broadly speaking, to the emergence of something that did not exist as such in the Middle Ages: the army as institution." Hence, this armed peace of the European order, which we are now told is jeopardised by barbarians at the gates, relies conceptually on the erasure of whole categories of violence – removal or domestication of species (including humans), the dictates of work to earn enough to survive, enforcing codes of law or gender roles for the reproduction of the civilised order, quashing internal rebels, etc. – as well as outright military conflict. The peace of 'progress' [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.1 pg11**] is a continual war against the Earth and humans as part of it. Today, those in power must find innovative and adaptive techniques to keep us confined within this paradigm, and often prefers to utilise the lie of 'peace' to do so. It's this managing of bodies, opinions and 'resources' which we want to study and subvert.

The Battle for Legitimacy

"Thanks to capitalist globalization, all that was previously separated now interpermeates: populations, economies, conflicts. Today's world is not so much divided into rival nations as into concentrically circled gated communities; the increasingly precarious and volatile job market in the United States and France mirrors more dramatic instability in North Africa and the Middle East, which can no longer be quarantined outside the gates. For a population to be militarized in this context, it is not a question of pressing a gun into every pair of palms and setting a helmet on every head. Rather, it is a matter of inducing the population to identify with a certain kind of order, the imposition of which takes place within the national borders as much as outside them. From the speech that Bush made on September 11, it was already clear that the same National Guardsmen that were to be sent to Iraq would sooner or later be deployed in the United States as well. Bush's task, on that day, was not to persuade his countrymen [sic] to enlist to fight overseas so much as it was to maximize the number

of people who would acquiesce to the militarization of their daily lives. This declaration of war served to obscure the possibility of any other war, any other stakes for which we might fight outside the framework of defending the state against its rivals." – *CrimethInc.*

It's almost a decade since NATO strategists published a paper in April 2007 stressing the need for the alliance to adopt a more 'proactive' approach to diverse 'threats', from migration to unrest following food crises. What it suggested was preemption, blurring the distinctions of 'internal' and 'external' security, and the general need for a 'comprehensive approach' linking the militaries and police with researchers, academics, politicians and civil society institutions. In this, we simply see a conformation of a much older doctrine now in the process of being transnationalised (and, as ever, corporatised) – counter-insurgency.

If 'conventional' military conflict aims at winning the war, counter-insurgency aims at *winning the peace*. Hence, the image of counter-insurgency as consisting only (or even mainly) of armed patrols, open suppression and death-squads in the night is an unsophisticated view of the battle which envelops us. Those moments when the veil, so well-crafted to sit over the face of capitalist democracy, slips and drops, are not the extent of what constitutes repression in these societies. A more recent paper, from a French security think-tank, reiterated the need to continue the shift of war from the open battlefield to the *field of perception*. This way, a successful campaign in waged by ways of integration; as well as publicity and propaganda, social 'advantages' offered by one part or another of the dominant order to sections of the population, based on their acceptance of (and, ideally, identification with) that order. From its beginnings as a means to drain away the specific social support which anti-imperialist guerrillas, rebellious slaves and tribal warriors enjoyed in their many countries, in the modern era it has become a cornerstone of governance, engaging or preempting threats while grooming the opinions, values and loyalties of the population.

Counter-insurgency is not simply synonymous with repression, but draws from a pool of military, paramilitary, political economic, psychological and civic actions. It does not necessarily prioritise monopolising force, but rather legitimacy. Ideological or material incentives are as likely to be deployed as armed strength is. Kristian Williams characterised it as "involving both coercion and concessions, employing violence and building support, weeding opposition and seeding legitimacy. That is the basis of the counterinsurgency approach.

[...] This style of warfare is characterized by an emphasis on intelligence, security and peace-keeping operations, population control, propaganda, and efforts to gain the trust of the people. This last point is the crucial one."

In essence it is a technique to head off or co-opt (even nascent) social tensions – understanding co-optation as when people are convinced to adjust their goals to ones which the system can accommodate – by convincing people that there are avenues to address their grievances; if they were only to put their energy into trusting or adjusting the system as it exists, that would be the entity which can best care for their needs. To this end, social institutions are turned into instruments of war (that is, when they weren't actually founded as such) to pacify populations, spread capitalist economic relations and seize 'resources', with people specifically sorted and targeted according to the needs of statescraft, corporate profit, industrial expansion, etc. By the same token they seek to gather intelligence and influence so as to undermine and make predictable the actions of (suspected) dissidents, and ultimately, as a counter-insurgency theorist put it, "to restructure the environment to displace the enemy from it."

In terms of statescraft this has meant that, as mentioned above, repression in its many forms is not something which raises its head as an exception, but it a continual means to maintain the normality favourable to the dominant order (at least in terms of keeping potentially-subversive antagonisms at their lowest manageable level). As an example of the dual-approach of counter-insurgency in this regard, we can see how following the debacle of the war in Vietnam a large amount of military hardware was given over to police departments within the U.S. (to the point where currently even small town forces generally have at least one tank), but simultaneous a huge push to introduce 'community policing' was launched. Cops were made out to be problem-solvers for the hypothetical 'person on the street', and portrayed as newly-accountable (via citizen input on advisory boards) and concerned (via public neighbourhood meetings etc.). (A commentator in France linked police image more specifically with the spectre of terrorism, regarding wide-spread unrest after police killed a young person fighting a dam construction [ed. – see **Radical Scavengers Come Out of the Woodwork**], "which was also the moment that rioting broke out in Ferguson, the separation between the police and the population reached its widest point. You can't understand the way in which the government led the response to the

attacks of January [2015] if you don't understand it strategically, as a calculated reaction to this extreme dissensus. Ever since then, it seems that the police are here to protect us.") These were – and are – techniques to both streamline and mystify the power of the State, now in use in much of the Western world, and simply the other side of the coin to the massive armament of the repressive forces; should the facade not suffice, a single radio call transforms the jolly, shirt-wearing, bike-riding community cop into the airborne armed response team.

As well as reassuring or co-opting the populace, these measures and many more help the State to 'read' its subjects so as to devise the most effective governance. This can still take the more traditional routes too – for example, the 'anti-extremist' Prevent program which legally requires U.K. teachers to report school-children over views they express in the classroom, alongside a more general 'mapping of Muslims' – but these can prove clumsy and bad for publicity (some teachers have complained at being turned into spies), and besides, in this era the target of intelligence operations is the whole populace. "To meet the challenges of counterinsurgency, the security forces have had to shift their understanding of intelligence. Since the cause of the conflict is not just a subversive conspiracy, but necessarily connects to the broader features of society, the state's agents cannot simply ferret out the active conspirators, but need to aim at a broad understanding of the social system. The U.S. Army Field Manual on Counterinsurgency, FM 3-24, incorporates this perspective arguing that strategists "require insight into cultures, perceptions, values, beliefs, interests and decision-making processes of individuals and groups."

This sort of intelligence work is concerned with questions that are primarily sociological. And so, a great deal of FM 3-24 is concerned with explicating basic social-science terms like "group," "coercive force," and "social capital." In fact, the entirety of Appendix B is devoted to explaining "Social Network Analysis and Other Analytic Tools." It offers this picture of how such analysis is practiced: "[A] social network is not just a description of who is in the insurgent organization; it is a picture of the population, how it is put together and how members interact with one another. [...] To draw an accurate picture of a network, units need to identify ties among its members. Strong bonds formed over time by family, friendship, or organizational association characterize these ties. Units gather information on these ties by analyzing historical documents and records, interviewing

individuals, and studying photos and books."

The security forces can no longer focus narrowly on the hunt for subversives or terrorists, but must also collect information on the population as a whole. This changes, not only the type of information they're seeking, but also the means they use to collect it. A Rand [ed. – security corporation] report on information warfare in counterinsurgency emphasizes: "Even during a security operation, the information needed for counterinsurgency is as much or more about context, population, and perceptions as it is about the hostile force. [O]nly a small fraction of the information needed would likely be secret information gathered by secret means from secret sources." The report suggests a few specific mechanisms for collecting broad-based information: tracking cell phone use, conducting a national registry-census, installing vehicle- and weapon-mounted video cameras, and analyzing internet sites (in particular, creating a "national Wiki (where citizens describe their community)") (Kristian Williams). Of course, in the age of so-called social media, people largely present much of this information freely online.



If some radicals may be slow to associate so-called quality-of-life-assurance and service-provisioning by the State with pacification, with the defeat of social struggles which may have had more ambitious elements [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.1 pg48**], the powers that be with their police and military certainly are not, and see the above as a vital tool in their 'weeding and seeding' approach. To this end they find a ready partner in the non-governmental organisation (NGO) sphere, as some of the many institutions which can be weaponised. "The Rand study Networks and Netwars outlines "a range of possibilities" for the military's use of international nonprofits: "from encouraging the early involvement of appropriate NGO networks in helping to detect and head off

a looming crisis, to working closely with them in the aftermath of conflicts to improve the effectiveness of U.S. forces still deployed, to reduce the residual hazards they face, and to strengthen the often fragile peace." One result of this perspective is that aid money, and thus NGO attention, increasingly follows the state's priorities – and its military's priorities in particular. For instance, in 2010 the U.S. awarded \$114 million to aid groups working in Yemen, with the stated goal of "improving the livelihood of citizens in targeted communities and improving governance capabilities". This supposedly humanitarian assistance came alongside \$1.2 billion in military aid, clandestine military and intelligence activity, and a CIA assessment that the Al Qaeda affiliate in Yemen represents the largest threat to United States' global security. Meanwhile, the Defense Department now controls 20% of the U.S. government's budget for Official Development Assistance. "[D]evelopment priorities follow the battle space," David Rieff writes in *The New Republic*. "[D]evelopment is a continuation of war by other means" (Kristian Williams).

However, we need not look so far afield to see the nefarious ends that humanitarian missions can serve (regardless of the intentions of each participant individually). The migrant situation in and around Calais (as well as being symptomatic of an unregulated movement of bodies which the State would definitely like to see controlled, regulated and ordered for maximum exploitation or exclusion) looks bad for both the British and French governments; it's worth asking to what degree the horde of associations and 'concerned individuals', while certainly not confronting the root causes of many migrants' plight, serve to an extent to boost the image of a civilised Europe and prevent the situation from exploding. Meanwhile the State (together with a multitude of private contractors^[16]) have their hands free to continue harassing, beating, detaining and deporting. At the more extreme end, the veil drops when the charities Salaam Association and La Vie Actif are the ones clearing migrants out during eviction of the sprawling 'Jungle' encampment side-by-side with riot police. In fact La Vie Actif were the ones to run the internment camp offered as a replacement, where fingerprints were required on the door for the privilege for families to live in a shipping container. (Before it was to open, unknown persons torched two pieces of machinery used for the construction and also for the evictions, leaving 'no border' and 'this is a prison' sprayed on the containers.)

This charitable 'human face' to the policing it its own counter-insurgency, the 'soft' approach waiting by the side of the metal barriers (recycled from the NATO summit

in Wales) to repel migrants often willing to risk their lives to reach the U.K. Elsewhere in the world it is corporations themselves whose 'charitable', 'participatory', 'community' schemes cultivate a favourable environment for their plunder – this was also emphasised in Fairhead's and Dunlap's study cited above. "*Working under the assumption of the order-for-stability argument, The RAND Corporation's National Security Research Division studied the use of 'corporate counterinsurgency' as a means to mitigate violence and promote market stability in areas where resource extraction corporations operate. This report highlights the importance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and social-development initiatives as a means of reducing conflict for continuing business practices – noting that social-development eases violent conflict, even when violent actions appear unabated by CSR programmes as in the case of Royal Dutch Shell in the Niger Delta. It draws the parallel between CSR and 'soft' corporate counterinsurgency that is now being adapted and geared towards the 'green' economy with carbon, biodiversity offsets, and most importantly with the REDD+ package. This tactic obscures corporate-led environmental degradation, attempts to render resistance illegitimate, and strategically divides communities, a capability previously observed in REDD+ project in the Lacandon Community Zone in Chiapas Mexico. In the Niger Delta [ed. – area of prolonged and often violent struggle against the likes of Royal Dutch Shell], REDD+ clearly demonstrates itself as a device of social pacification designed to prolong the damaging ecological practices of oil extraction corporations and the industrial economy on the whole.*"

Once again, social scientists themselves also become another part of the ruling order's armoury, even in 'conventional' warzones themselves. See the Human Terrain Systems (H.T.S.) initiative of the U.S. military, who utilise cultural anthropologists in the theatres of Afghanistan and Iraq (funding for the initiative increased substantially in recent years, anticipating the expansion of its counter-insurgency to Indonesia, Malaysia and other places in the Islamic world, with an emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa). The project mixes ethnographic fieldwork with 'troop education', aiming to reduce violence between the population and the occupying forces, using social scientists to present themselves as the 'patient listening face' of a harsh military occupation, while generating huge profits for the military contractors running the program. Inevitably, as well as encouraging compliant behaviour from a more-easily-'read' people, the targeting of other sectors is facilitated; such as that of

Nuristan, a region of diverse habitats and peoples, which the H.T.S. administrators suggested attacking on the basis of their resistance to every face of the invasion, as they previously had against Islam, the British and then Russian forces.

While there has been minor outcry in some corners of academia about the likes of the H.T.S. program, which David Price described as "*farming out the piece-work of empire in ways that can allow individuals to disassociate their individual contributions from the larger project*", the military effectively marginalised the consequences by announcing they would be issuing their own PhDs at military academies and cooperating institutions. (Moveover these criticisms paper over the fact that, whether in the direct pay of the military or not, the scientific-academic division of labour [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.2 pg6**] itself is part of what insulates researchers from the knock-on effects of their discoveries, whoever applies them^[17].)

Just as a H.T.S. scientist linked these practices to those deployed several generations ago (and since) against the indigenous of North America, these preventative techniques of governance tested in the neo-colonial laboratories of today hold a symbiotic relationship to domestic repression. It was Alexander Dunlap who noted that "*following the siege of Fallujah, the city's entire population was fingerprinted, retina-scanned, and issued identity cards required for travel or to receive government services. And since 2007, biometric readers have been used at military checkpoints in Baghdad to control movement between ethnic enclaves. Of course, the military has been preparing for this sort of operation for a long time: 1999's "Urban Warrior" training exercises included the biometric scanning of "resistance fighters" - in Oakland, California. [...] Iraq, Afghanistan, and most importantly Gaza are acting as new laboratories for repressive technologies such as drone strikes, targeted assassination, new urban warfare techniques, biometric data collection, 'predictive analytics', and infrastructural controls. This exposes the increasing commonalities between occupied territories, gated communities, and prisons overseas and at home. This point is made clear as the New York Police Department (NYPD) with assistance from the CIA with advice, training, and embedded staff has modelled their department on Israeli intelligence operations in the West Bank.*" If contemporary policing of American inner-cities is directly employing counter-insurgency, we could also list in this role the efforts of the welfare departments and NGOs, who today fulfill the services that combative entities such as the Black Panthers briefly pioneered before they

were smashed by the State (featuring the U.S. deputy of the SWAT team, for example).

H.T.S. itself conducts training exercises within the U.S. in indigenous territories and sites of controversial development projects. A H.T.S. trainee described a hypothetical scenario that, it came out, was tasked to them in which the army moves into an area on the Missouri river which is attempting secession during turmoil over the pollution from a coal-fired power station, including activity in the area by the Earth Liberation Front. "Staff Assignment to the several Human Terrain Teams that make up the class of the November Cycle were issued as follows: 1. 'Find out more details on the criminal activity.' 2. Find out the best conduits to pass 'information' (PsyOps and InfoOps) to the local population. 3. HTT is assigned to produce a 'Research Plan' to understand the situation at the IATAN power plant – people's concerns, desires, etc., and identify those who were 'problem-solvers' and those who were 'problem-causers,' and the rest of the population whom would be the target of the information operations to move their Center of Gravity toward that set of viewpoints and values which was the 'desired end-state' of the military's strategy."



As David Price continues, "Human Terrain Teams practicing training scenarios set in regions actually within the United States bring the very notion of "human terrain" back home to its domestic counterinsurgent roots. As anthropologist Roberto Gonzalez documents in his book, *American Counterinsurgency: Human Science and the Human Terrain*, the very phrase "human terrain" grew out of domestic counterinsurgency initiatives. Gonzalez describes how in 1968 the US House Un-American Activities Committee released a report entitled "Guerrilla Warfare Advocates in the United States" which warned that the Black Panthers and other militant groups threatened the country's political stability. HUAC warned that "[irregular forces] possess the ability to seize and retain the initiative through a superior control of the human terrain." The clear implication was that the control of civilians in America's cities was vital to

winning the counterinsurgency struggle at home."

Anti-Extremism or Counter-Insurgency?

"As counter insurgency is derived from the creativity of insurrections and is in essence always slightly behind, it tries to make up for its deficits by meticulous studies, violence, gigantic apparatus and prevention. Restructuring districts, intimidating anyone sympathizing, isolating the enemy, creating figures of enemies from which the population will dissociate, therefore disarming itself. COIN (Counter-insurgency, in NATO slang) wants to coin a passive depoliticized public, and in that sense it is constructive. As a strategy of pure power preservation, it remains at once as deadly and reactionary as colonial wars, for which it was developed."
– invitation to an international anti-militarist action camp against the G.Ü.Z.^[18]

The wake of events like the Paris massacre has often been a convenient time for the State to 'neutralise' old enemies under the terrorism talisman; in recent history, the aforementioned Earth (and also Animal) Liberation Fronts were the earlier victims of the notorious U.S.

Patriot Act after 9/11 (although hysteria over 'eco-terror' in the '90s, and the dubbing of the E.L.F./A.L.F. as the number-one domestic terrorist threat by the government, preceded those famous Islamist attacks), in a 'Green Scare' which is far from over, as dignified fighters

still sit in prison [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.1 pg70**] and the momentum of an eco-liberation offensive in those lands has yet to recover. Similarly in France, where anarchists had already been imprisoned and convicted in recent years under terror legislation^[19], we can easily imagine who Nicolas Sarkozy (the former President) also has in mind when he wants to force everyone suspected of 'radicalism' to wear an electronic tag. By implication, anyone resisting the clampdown can handily be portrayed as a violent extremist, or at least sympathiser.

Specifically relating to the many self-professed – and sometimes mutually-antagonistic – anarchist currents within the wider radical circles, if we can agree that none of us/them alone seem poised for the total overthrow of ruling elites, then why (aside from mutual incompatibility and hostility) need the State dedicate such

energy to attacking us/them? Perhaps an answer lies in the needs of counter-insurgency that, again, does not look at subversives in isolation from the wider public. The RAND Corporation text 'War by Other Means' divides uprisings into three phases: insurgency, small-scale insurgency, and major insurgency. During the first, subversives' capacity is "small, narrowly based, vulnerable, and incapable of widespread or large-scale violence. Proto-insurgents may be barely noticeable, not seen as having the potential to inspire insurgency, or dismissed as criminals or inconsequential crack-pots. Therefore, during proto-insurgency, the most important aspect of COIN is to understand the group, its goals, its ability to tap popular grievances, and its potential. In turn, shaping the proto-insurgency's environment, especially by improving governance in the eyes of the population, may deny it wider support." (This need to 'read' social feeling could also go towards explaining, for example, the penetration of police undercovers into the most innocuous 'peace' or 'justice' groups, as well as those with more potential for militancy, which has been disclosed in the U.S., U.K., etc.)

In several countries on different continents, this target group has clearly been marked as having higher potential for disruption: again, not because we/they pose the biggest threat in and of itself, but because we/they have tendencies to push the more unmanageable elements further during peaks of social tension (as historically did anarchist migrants serving as detonators in 19th century labour struggles from the U.S. to Argentina), or merely serve as a sufficient visible scapegoat for those elements, to be made an example of. Large contributions to counter-insurgency theory were made from the lessons of British colonial campaigns in places like Kenya, Cypress and Northern Ireland, and clearly the define the need for State intervention to restrict the spread of ideas, prevent radicals from achieving influence, and disrupt their efforts to establish oppositional organisations. In this way, "techniques of counterinsurgency warfare, made explicit for Iraq and Afghanistan, have been actively deployed domestically in the United States, UK, and Europe since the 1980s, if not earlier, further complicating the notion and substance behind western democracies.

[...] Ken Lawrence identifies a strategic shift in the security apparatus in the late 1960s, which could be characterised as a shift from strategic repression to 'permanent repression'. Resulting from the social upheavals in the United States around issues of civil rights and the Vietnam War, permanent repression was articulated at a conference held by the RAND Corporation on counterinsurgency

in 1969, the concepts of which formally appear in the 1971 book, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, and Peace Keeping* by British Brigadier General Frank Kitson. His book divides the social process of insurgency into three phases: the preparatory period, the non-violent phase, and insurgency. This notion of permanent repression appears most clearly in the chapter titled, 'The Preparatory Period'. In the tradition of *raison d'Etat*, Kitson outlines two necessary procedures of the legal system to maintain state legitimacy over the population. First, 'law should be used as just another weapon in the government's arsenal, and in this case it becomes little more than a propaganda cover for the disposal of unwanted members of the public'. Second, the use of the law is strictly objective, but framed by the need to construct legislation in detail to support and accommodate military and police operations. Recent examples that come to mind in the United States are the 2001 US Patriot Act, the Homeland Security Act and the 2006 Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA). Preparation advances the state apparatus as a weapon to maintain order, irrespective of the formal characteristics of the political system" (Alexander Dunlap).

The spectre of terrorism is without a doubt a popular means to such ends today. In Spain, rowdy posts online can earn you terror charges. In Britain, so can attempting to travel to defend Rojava [ed. – see *Why We Are With the Fighters*] from Islamist obliteration. In Italy, it can be hindering infrastructure construction and 'national image' (using legislation pushed through after the Islamist 7/7 bombings in London etc.) or publicly refusing to dissociate from armed action; in France, it can be insurrectional graffiti during the so-called Arab Spring [ed. – see *Return Fire vol.2 pg87*]. In the U.S., photographing industrial factory farms; in Belgium, discussions or publications about rising social control either side of a prison wall; in Brazil, vandalism or blockades – we don't list these expansions of what constitutes 'terrorism' (a term evermore elastic since at least the '70s) to decry such legislation from the logic of (self-)victimisation, despite the almost surreal absurdity of a world where even the number of deaths from those acts of 'classic' terrorism is at best 1.5% of those killed by traffic. Rather, we understand these attempts at social neutralisation as coterminous with a wider strategy by the ruling order which aims at all who they want to believe have no option for themselves but to vouch in their governance and 'protection'; because (so they say) to desire other ways of life is deluded, to organise against this one is madness, and to attack its structures and values is suicide. Before this blackmail, we can only echo the sentiment which drove

saboteurs in Viña del Mar onto the streets to torch luxury trucks, rather than waste breath either defending against or 'claiming' terms which are alien to us. "[I]f negating legality and civic life, sad and predetermined, is terrorism, then that's what we are... but we know and you know *compañerxs* [ed. – see *Return Fire vol.2 pg34*] that we only desperately seek a world that is not covered by so many atrocities, by so many displays of insensibility, by the desire for power, by the desire to step on others human or not. We know that the convinced and courageous search for a new reality that is not rotten with bad desires, ambitions, and authority [is a] valid and a long battle without truce. Against all authority, against society, against civilisation and the machines, international solidarity, down with the borders and every state in the universe."

The evolving field of counter-insurgency regarding active dissent also takes the form of State or media PR campaigns before protests or mobilisations which they feel they can't simply ignore, using their ability to frame particular events or actions in certain ways to increase discourses they favour and demobilise from those they don't. Increasingly, the policing of the disruptive fringes of the social consensus involves reliance on early intervention or the grueling bureaucratic legal process as the punishment in itself^[20], before any convictions are gained or not (the latter leaving to the expression "you can beat the rap but you can't beat the ride").

The advantages of the intelligence-gathering at the heart of counter-insurgency operations in an increasingly transparent cybernetic society allow for more precise blows to be landed by those in power when needed. Highlighting the diffuse applications of 'permanent repression' as a tool of social order, it was not 'political activists' but U.S. street gangs whose targeting Kristian Williams also studied. "Once the data was assembled, the researchers, following Boston's example, used it to map gang territory and perform a social network analysis, illustrating rivalries and alliances, and identifying likely sites for conflict. They then took the analysis to the individual level charting the connections between gang members and others who associate with them. By diagramming these relationships, researchers were able to distinguish between core members and those only marginally involved.

Such information was crucial for making both tactical and strategic decisions. Police could approach individual members differently, based on their role in the gang and their level of commitment. They could also identify the pressure points and know where to strike for maximum effect. "Network analysis also allows one to

identify people who hold structurally important positions within the gang networks. Cut points, people who are the only connection among people or groups of people, may be ideal selections for spreading a deterrence message or for affecting the structure and organization of the street gangs" (McGloin). Unlike Boston, where the focus was strictly on stopping gang violence, in New Jersey the aim was to disrupt the gangs themselves." The same techniques are used when the Spanish State strategically arrests the lawyer who defends radicals from terror charges (recent events in those lands [ed. – see *Rebels Behind Bars; Operations Pandora-Piñata & Zaragoza Bombing Trial*]) are a good illustration of many of the dynamics we've mentioned), or when the Greek police accuse an individual whose only known activity to this day in the timeframe was visiting anarchist guerrillas in prison [ed. – see *Return Fire vol.2 pg64*].

Lastly (and, to be clear, aside from what it itself is actively responsible for in each case by at large – threats to any alternative and aforementioned police infiltrator influence notwithstanding), in the anti-extremist theatre the State can well rely on a key ally within dissenting demographics themselves: the whole raft of unions, official organisations, pacifists, and other civilisation-reformists hovering to disarm social struggles from within, by denouncing those whose passions lead them to a more direct confrontation with what exists. Whether the advocates of such positions can recognise it or not, the discourses they adopt and jealously defend from perceived infringement upon are often the offspring of co-opted aspirations from another generation's defeat and subsequent revision. (See, among others, the diminution of radical ecology struggles in their at least slightly more holistic sense into a more mainstream, populist and monothematic goal of 'saving civilisation from climate change', and how easily it dovetails into the alienated and quantitative logic of carbon particles and emission quotas espoused by the scientific specialists or politicians, who can even be found at the forefront of these movements today.)

Quite an illustrative instance of the degree to which 'environmentalism', for example, has become integrated into the industrial society in crisis as a kind of sedative mechanism (once the sensibilities of an ecological perspective have been taken and debased into tokenistic clichés, devoid of the interconnections that would lead to any de-civilising and rebellious direction) was telling in the mobilisation around the COP15 climate summit in Copenhagen during 2009. By way of comparison, some comrades agitated for attack on the delegates and their defenders as a

continuation of insurrectionary tensions and for Earth liberation, announcing their intentions of “*ridding ourselves of those who claim to be representing us and by defeating the ideology of endless economic growth, industrial production and consumption. [...] It is time to state: we are going to consciously attack the structures supporting the COP15: we will break through the lines of their police; we will refuse to negotiate with warmongering governments and the embedded media; we will refuse to side with sell-out NGOs and all the would-be managers of protest; we will refuse all governments and governance and not just de-legitimise the present ones. [...] At Copenhagen, they will argue over how to properly create a market to commodify and so pollute the biosphere, dispossessing millions of people from their land to profit from destroying what remains of our earth. Governments and corporations will not sacrifice their growth to reduce carbon emissions, or only do so in order to create a new authoritarian regime for themselves. The entire rhetoric of the climate crisis and the financial crisis is a cynical manoeuvre by the state spin-doctors to deny the all-encompassing crisis of self-declared civilisation. The COP15 will only attempt to hide the war that capitalism is waging against all life on the planet, a war that has spread across the entire globe for the last five hundred years, a war that encompasses the totality of even the oceans and atmosphere. In the midst of war, one does not talk of management and technical solutions. You cannot fight a war by pretending the war does not exist, by blinding yourself to repression and becoming complicit in accepting the false-promise of a petite bourgeois tranquillity. Instead, one recognises the enemy. One chooses a position. One fights.*”

The call was heeded by some from around the world who came to the summit explicitly to fight the dominant order. Perhaps aware of the dead-end that the ‘summit-hopping’ mania of the ‘90s and early ‘00s had eventually presented for radical ruptures, others supported the fighters going to the Danish streets by continuing their own momentum of destruction where they were; like in the U.K. when a busy shopping centre in Nottingham got a window-smashing afternoon visit from the E.L.F./A.L.F. as hundreds of Christmas shoppers passed by, or as a petrol station was burned to the ground just over the bridge from Copenhagen in the Swedish city of Lund by some anonymous individuals who were “*not going to let the charades of the political elite distract us from what we know needs doing*”. However, while the anarchists who attacked even the sponsors of the pre-summit in Barcelona

stated they “*know their intentions very well: improving capitalism to perpetuate its existence*”, many of the COP15 attendees had other ideas; some seriously suggesting their preference to block the world leaders *into* the summit to formulate a ‘rescue plan’ for the planet, braying for deliverance to the very same who are systematically strip-mining the biosphere. Others contented themselves with hosting an “*alternative*” summit, hosting the usual specialists and demagogues in an institutional complex, and we see the full circle: protest, mediation, integration, a democratic ceremony with a seat at the table for every kind of bureaucratic or scientific department to “*crowdsource*” the continuation of their hegemony.

Out on the streets, during one of the larger protests black-clad individuals passed out a communiqué critical of the reigning atmosphere before proceeding to trash the window-fronts of the Danish Foreign Ministry and finance institutions like the Stock Exchange: “*The slogans just seem too familiar. “Traditional wisdom and new technology must go hand in hand.” Haven’t we been reading them on the ads [ed. – for the official summit] all over town? Everyone is playing their role in the summit, just like in a movie. And there are even different versions of the same stage, distinguished mostly by their budgets. [...] What if the mobilization of the entire city and even the protests were nothing but an immense peacekeeping operation? In times of war, there is a call for submission behind every call for unity. Everyone agrees that capitalism is in crisis, that the previous forms of management will not suffice. This summit may be the most obvious sign yet of the shape of the management to come, where everyone’s contribution is obligatory. This step could be described as social engineering. A utopian attempt to produce an entirely controlled life, a totally calculable existence by making us forget that some struggles cannot be reduced to power games, that sometimes friendships are more than just economics. This living excess cannot be described but can only be experienced. What can be described though is how this operation functions: our living is first fragmented into several quantifiable bits and pieces and then resold to us as the real thing. “Hope in a bottle”. The enthusiasm with which all political stripes have been converted to ecology teaches us about the true nature of this new green universal religion.*” As if to prove the point of the communiqué,

when the combatants then attempted to re-enter the main body of the demo after the smash-and-dash foray and with riot police in full pursuit, some members of Climate Justice Action physically blocked them.

By the time the COP21 came around, not much had changed in that regard. In an atmosphere of heavy securitisation after the Paris massacre, with many environmentalists under house arrest and convergence centres of associated squats raided and put under 24-7 armed surveillance, activist organisers cooperated heavily with the police to the point where the groups Solidaire and ATTAC informed the authorities of anarchists planning an autonomous demonstration against the state of emergency, while activist ‘peace police’ advised protesters to facilitate the arrest of disruptive elements. It’s a classic example of a tendency whose aspirations have been domesticated into making placid appeals on prescribed occasions, and one which the authors of ‘What’s the COP21’ recognised beforehand. “*On the one hand we need to exert pressure on decision makers through constant lobbying and on the other, to prick the public conscience, they say. And all this needs to be achieved through benevolent non-violence, an assault on neither goods nor people.*”



Petitions, flash mobs, blockades, demonstrations, alternative villages and acts of civil disobedience are some of the tools that we are told can be used. [...] The ZAD of Notre-Dame-des-Landes [ed. – see Return Fire vol.1 pg81] and other struggles against controversial imposed development projects have called for convoys to converge on Paris during the COP 21. These comrades, still too few in number, did not wait for counter summits or fixed dates in their diaries before they took up their fight and their struggle will continue afterwards. In this sense, they show us the way forward.”

When it came to it, a number of people same to the streets on the Sunday of the summit and clashed with the police – and over 200 were arrested. One of the major official organisations which had cancelled its own protests to comply with the State,



350.org, condemned those who had instead defied martial law as “unaffiliated with the climate movement” (and if they’re the self-proclaimed climate movement, who could disagree?). We could only imagine their displeasure with those who chose to manifest their rage in accordance with their own timing and terrain – like those who beforehand had claimed the burning of five EDF vehicles north of Toulouse. “EDF is one of the COP21 partners. It’s also a state company seeking to introduce nuclear as a solution to the problem of climate change. Nuclear is death, let’s destroy it’s sponsors! We believe it’s important to attack the cop21 where it is: that is to say wherever there is profit and power. We prefer the qualitative, complicity and surprise to the media and spectacle appointments with the state and its police riots. With some fire lighters, a petrol canister and satisfied smiles, we humbly respond to the surveillance, fear and resignation that alienates us daily.”



Agit-prop against the COP15 in Copenhagen; actually, we get both

We hope not to show a one-dimensional moral image of these situations, with “the brave and right ones who fight” over here and “the cowardly ones who do not” over there. While we make no secret of our enmity for the organisers who point fingers for the police, legitimate the repression through the media, etc., we can’t see every participant or affiliate of their wider movements as equivalent (though certainly still no accomplices of ours), nor discount individuals from breaking out of reformist straitjackets. Still, these movements, and the rest like them, are one more terrain on which counter-insurgency plays out, and where it crosses our own path we won’t shy from conflict. We don’t see ourselves

as having any perfect analysis or conspiratorial knowledge which would render us immune to recuperation and control, beyond an awareness of these factors we have brought up – the many ways in which the State inscribes the ‘need’ for its existence, and a few of the barriers we must climb on a path to liberation.

Find Each Other

“If politics is a process of social control and colonisation, how do people genuinely undermine their control, make space for their conception of peace, and avoid becoming the metaphorical resistor necessary for the function and continuation of the social machine? These are the timeless questions of how to change our social relationships in the face of a Leviathan that went from mechanical to cybernetic within the past century. But this also draws attention to the need to realise the depth of these social impositions, while also discovering as individuals or as collectives who each other are and what will fulfil genuine individual and collective needs. Otherwise action may not even be self-serving in any substantial form, going in circles, playing the game prescribed and possibly falling into traps put in place to capture and recuperate people and ideas – a problem as old as history and as ancient as the war that many have and are still experimenting to overcome.” – Alexander Dunlap

So if we want to break out of this so-called peace of progress, what can we address that hinders the kind of insurgency which might be of help? Obviously in different places the clash takes different forms, but where we are we could identify a lack of the continuity of an antagonistic presence which could span generations, identity groups and geographies, as one factor among many; doubtless some of the contributors to this are the difficulty of subverting the dominant family structures, and, today, the proliferation of virtual (i.e. not lived) experiences of radical milieus as just another item on the digital shelf. (We are not so arrogant or stupid to believe that self-professed ‘radical ideas’ are the spark or fuel for many of the insurrections which we’d still welcome; but they almost always exist within them, and we make no secret of the invitation we offer to co-create the character we desire them to hold for us.)

Faced with this, how do we situate our struggles not as ‘politics’ in a separable, classifiable and ultimately avoidable sphere, but in that of our daily lives; both with the institutional forces which attempt to govern our horizons, and within our relationships, filled as they are with the shared defeatism Ron Sakolsky termed “mutual acquiescence” and with the

smaller or bigger prospects for rebellion and complicity? Our thought here go to the post-script we read from a discussion between anti-militarists in Germany. “To come to a realistic evaluation of our possibilities to act, we think it is necessary to acknowledge that which we have not chosen: that we are in a state of war everywhere in the world, even if the international division of labor distributes suffering unequally. The acknowledgement of this point should not to be mistaken for a self-righteous “Yes to war!” combative bathos, which despite feeling less helpless nevertheless gets stuck in a twisted understanding of our situation, swapping the places where power and powerlessness are to be found in our lives in a confused manner. Put rudely: those ruling us don’t give a shit which fantasies of omnipotence we devote ourselves to, regardless of whichever fantasy we like better, be it the pose of the wise prophet of peace or that of the apocalyptic nihilist warrior. Both serve the function to shift our desire for self-determination to spheres far out of our reach, while we can barely face up to even the most tiny changes in our everyday life.

[...] Admittedly, it is not too easy to sort out the subtle threads of being set up for war that move right through ourselves. This is exactly why we find it interesting to have a close look at counterinsurgency, as it theorises and practically links together from the start repression and the shaping of public opinion. **This is not to talk about some great world-spanning conspiracy, but a systemic functioning where the question of conscious decisions and manipulation in favor of war alone is not sufficient to understand. This is about techniques of militarized thinking spreading throughout life, the transformation of our lives in direction of the preservation of the system at any cost: social engineering.** In which way can we understand and dismantle the conscious and unconscious processes of this reorganization, how it becomes possible to leave this cybernetic model of society – so often portrayed as control circuit including feedback loops – might become clearer, if we remind ourselves of an old finding of feminism.

It contributed quite a lot to the recognition of our own strength to think directly through the concept that the structural violence of patriarchy is closely tied to personal experiences in relationships, friendship circles, job, and so on. A woman, who above all always doubts herself in the first instance and who asks herself whether or not her husband deceives her, because she is too old, too ugly, or too stupid; this woman is posing the wrong question. Wrong, because it is exactly the question that patriarchy is

suggesting that she pose, namely that everything remains just the way it is. This answer protects the operational principles of patriarchy when the woman is quarreling with herself instead of seeing that already her personal perception is already tinged with patriarchal presumptions. To take one's own feelings not as protective shelter, opposed to a cold and calculating outside world, but as a collaborator of patriarchy, of one's own submission, is not an easy step. On the other hand, once the feelings are stripped of their hypocritical immediacy, it is much more easy to welcome them in the struggle for liberation, which promises to overcome a certain old division so we can finally fight with heart and mind.

Maybe this example can help to free ourselves from theorising militarization either as a personally staged intrigue of generals and bosses – which would not work out if they could not in some way count on our cooperation or at least make sure we keep quiet – or as an abstract mechanism, where there is no protagonists anymore, which is so absurd that we won't go into it. [...] **The constructive moment of counter-insurgency consists today – at the end of the history of progress (and its false promises) – in making us believe that we do not have any influence on reality, that we cannot change our perspective, even if the system does not have to offer one anymore.** If we simply believe this or deduce it in a highly academic way, if it is indifference, the fear of being recuperated, or military superiority that leads us to not finding other ways, this doesn't matter from the viewpoint of counter-insurgency. What counts is the effect.”

By the same token, how can we turn the crises in our own lives into a crisis for the system? Can we compose a struggle, the trajectory of which is resistant to being co-opted by the State or engineers of Capital (and let's not pretend it's only pacifist struggles which hold that vulnerability), or programatised by the purveyors of 'alternatives'? How can the conflict reach over a certain limit after which events can go out of control?

The Martial Against the Militarist

“Those skilled at uncommon maneuvers are as endless as the heavens and earth, and as inexhaustible as the rivers and seas. [...] Subtle! Subtle! They become formless.” – Sun Tzu

It will probably be clear from our tone so far that we favour the advancement of martial capacity; our own and that of others with similar feelings to ours. This is something which has been steadily stripped away from us over the generations; the ability to fight on our own

terms, as much as the awareness of the war we inhabit. However, no matter how banal it may seem to keep repeating, this is not the only sensibility we lack; from herbal knowledge as an attunement to our bioregion, to higher emotional literacy with our friends, to sharper analyses of the changing field of domination, there are many fields of great importance for the direction we want to head. We are duly aware of the dangers of militarism (of beginning to see all problems in military terms, reducing all struggle and subversion to the moment of the armed clash), just as we are aware it's possible that the notion of a 'permanent war' we inhabit can be used for purposes which run counter to our own^[21]. To us it seems clear that it is up to each and every rebel to work out where such lines in their own life-struggles can be drawn, and to act accordingly.

With that said, let's hear some thoughts from Sea Weed on the matter. “In military theory, it is said that for the conqueror to really succeed the losing population must accept defeat, otherwise the conquerors only win after every single person has been killed, which isn't normally in the conquerors interest, because they need slaves and soldiers, etc. [...] The vast majority of the world's population consists of defeated peoples in this war. And in fact, we are more than just defeated. We are kept. Kept in fear, kept in awe, kept out of touch with each other and the earth that gives us life. It has been said that our chains are long and our cages big, yet this still implies that we are prisoners. [...] Part of breaking out involves shedding all those ideological skins grafted onto us through schooling, the mass media, living in nuclear families, etc. But my involvement with rebels over the past 20 years tells me that we already know that this is important. What we don't seem to inventory is the means available to us to counter our physical occupation. [I]t is only by ridding ourselves of organized coercive authority that we will truly begin to have real opportunities to profoundly transform ourselves.

[...] Part of being an insurgent today could involve acquiring martial skills. Martial traditions include everything from fighting techniques, military theory, group cohesion and earth knowledge to skill with a weapon. Weapons include rifles, shotguns, handguns, sling shots, knives and various bows and arrows, among others. These could be used for acquiring food as well as for self-defense or to chase away adversaries. This isn't a call to “armed struggle” but for inclusion of a neglected aspect of a holistic approach to rebellion.

[...] The following are just a few examples of using martial tactics to succeed in present day struggles. Opening new fronts



as solidarity with other rebels engaged in a confrontation or action. Encouraging defection within enemy ranks. Avoiding capture. Blockades. Unarresting a comrade. The ambush. Spying. Interrupting the enemies' means of communication. The surprise. Raids on enemy stores of food and weapons. The siege. Physical battles that expand territory. Freeing captives from enemy prisons. Destruction of enemy arsenals. Destruction of enemy wealth. Regrouping. Hiding. Secret codes and other means of communication. Bolder actions. Creating clandestine camps in which to hide friendly fugitives. Insurgencies. Fleeing to areas outside the enemies' control. Increased ability to fight as groups.

[...] I want to repeat that sharing our unique world-views and critiques and creating community are as essential as acquiring martial skills. A martial component is simply one part of a holistic approach. But we also must remember that a small band of rebels can accomplish a lot[...] And a clandestine group of friends that creates beauty by destructive means or that spreads subversion using playful methods, can also benefit from and help inform the martial approaches I am advocating.” Not coincidentally, when adopted by dissidents many of these tactics imply a mental break from the internalised legitimacy of the State (the current one as it exists at least, although of course they have been used both by the State and to institute new ones), as well as some steps towards its removal from one's life on a practical level. We don't doubt that such skills would advance struggles in our own lives, alongside the other vital elements: envisaged not as the science of war, but the art of rebellion.

Social Sabotage

“[S]peaking of anti-social war is not a denial of the social ways of spreading the anarchist idea; rather we insist that it is solely a demarcation from the groups which, through violent or non-violent means, neither claim nor carry in their ideas the search for the total destruction of the existent society. We support all of the

ways of intensifying anti-systemic, anti-capitalist, anti-civilisation ideas; through texts, zines, activities, squats, words of love and rage, reflections and communiqués (like this one). But always keeping in mind that mere understanding (if we want to call it that) is not enough...” – anonymous claim for incendiary disruption of the public transit system of Santiago

The admission of counter-insurgency as an approach is that the State recognises that, when a population puts greater hope in the insurgency to meet their needs than in the government, even an overwhelmingly larger military is insufficient to win the peace. Once again, legitimacy is key. Losing that legitimacy is what the States of today fear, and what they defend against. And yet where does this analysis leave us, when we ourselves certainly don't intend to embark on a campaign to win 'society' over to 'us' as a unified opposition; when we ourselves understand 'society' as an anthropocentric mass imposition, the opposite of freely-chosen and maintained unions or communities (inter-species as well and intra-species), and so something we want to see dissolved into the latter? In other words, what if we don't want to play the State's game (even as a competitor) – wouldn't the means contradict the ends?

Even from an anti-society position, we recognise that the State's power (and indeed, the disciplinary power of mass society itself) rests on social consensus as much as military force. In other words, a compliant society, hence our repression, rests on the degree of legitimacy certain institutions are granted. Truly, at least in the crowded lands we inhabit, there is not option yet of living 'outside' society. Like it or not, it is our environment; our anti-social position is from within that it opposes, not without. While this certainly makes the worlds we inhabit confusing and messy places to try to live out our ideas, the one sure thing to us is that our liberation is inherently tied up with the subversion of social relations on a scale larger than we have interest in forging actual connections (i.e. as opposed to the syndicalist dystopia of “one big anarchist union”).

We found ourselves in agreement with some unknown anarchists in Barcelona, when they wrote that *“[o]ne cannot propose the creation of a new world without the destruction of the current one. And we cannot plan the form of the new world because currently we cannot imagine future conditions. Moreso, planning the form of the world – or planning the form of any collectivity greater than our circle of acquaintances – is an authoritarian exercise. But the State does not only exist in its material forces, rather also in the social relations it reproduces, and a relation cannot be destroyed without*

simultaneously creating a new relation. A building can be destroyed without constructing a new one, but a relationship of alienation cannot be ended without the creation of another type of relationship. There is always a relation between the beings and bodies in the same space. Without speaking of the creation of new social relations, we cannot speak honestly about the destruction of the State. To put it another way, we have come upon a bifurcation between the proposal to attack the State and the proposal to destroy the State. The proposal that speaks most of destruction, the nihilist one, may be unable to realize it because it dedicates itself only to the attack. It would be a very sad vision of “permanent revolt”: forever attacking the symbols of the State without ever being able to touch the base of its power.”

Hence, without wild lands we could meld with undisturbed by an ongoing civilisation (which itself would at best be a temporary fix so long as that neighbouring civilisation still existed, given spreading pollution, colonial expansion, climate change...), our struggle where we stand is not that of violently defeating every believer in the legitimacy of the State – or civilisation, or society – but rather undermining that belief.

How to not drive people back into the arms of the State with our attacks? (Clearly this is always a risk, and one which we don't feel a particular responsibility to avoid causing in each individual – more important seems the potential opening up of space when a windowfront of order and stability is cracked, where people's own doubts, dreams or designs could sprout along a trajectory less inhibitory to ours; or not, who knows.) We see value in anarchic publishing, graffiti, posters, open discussions, solidarity where felt and subversion where possible, and their potential to inflame hearts we would personally like to know (or at least make an environment more amendable to how we ourselves want to live), if nothing else because they've touched our own lives when we were ready for something of the sort to sit with our own experiences in the world. The disadvantage of this visibility is increased scope for State 'reading', surveying, infiltrating, co-opting etc., but as even the most secretive spread of anarchic practices would earn the State's attention sooner or later this is simply a problem we see must be contended with. There seems to be a fair amount of hostility around towards at least a few of the institutions we ourselves despise (although surely not enough of them); what we don't see so often is attempts to assert other ways of living and relating which could be specific to each community, while linking these aspirations to the ways in which the structures and officials which block those

paths so far are vulnerable – every day and every second.

Chipping away at authority's monopoly on legitimate force need not be a simple appropriation of the rhetoric of 'winning hearts and minds', with all its manipulative and homogenising implications. We don't need to solicit agreement or approval as we experiment to free ourselves specifically; just to discredit and undermine the impervious facade of the current structures, to create the indisputable fact of physical opposition to the 'peace' of progress, and accentuate the social war it would like to conceal with notes of our own composition.

One side of (proto-)insurgency could be looking at what things the State needs which it can only get from the population it governs – whether obedience, civility, resources, the ability to intervene in daily life, etc. – and attempt to deny it those things. There are a great many forms this could potentially take or has taken (and obviously not all of them martial). One avenue for throwing a spanner into the works of social reproduction is the many technical infrastructures of (post-)industrial capitalist life, which, by ensuring the mobility of goods and services, the function of the social factory and the 'quiet day at the office' at the root of exploitation, war and ecocide, gives the system its air of irreproachable durability.

We could look in this light at the deeds of some anonymous saboteurs in Belgium; whose acts were committed one night during the lockdown after the Paris massacre and into the COP21 summit, and reported on in the Ricochets bulletin #10. *“The first one was a sabotage, in four different spots, of an international high speed train network (TGV, Thalys, Eurostar). By setting fire to the fibre optic cables along the rail tracks close to Ath in the province of Hainaut, the complete train circulation has been paralysed for more than a day long. A day on which the international delegates and the ministers needing to speed to Paris for a summit were blocked, a day on which the executives of companies, the Eurocrats, the directors have been cornered in the station watching the screens announcing the cancelling of their trains. This act of sabotage shows us that by using simple means it is always possible to cut into the veins of power and its men [sic], of its networks of transportation and data. And in the disorder thereby created, spaces are opened up which are not saturated by the speech of power, spaces where freedom can take a jump.*

The second act of sabotage was aimed at no less than a military base, one of the most important ones of Belgium, where the Special Forces of the Belgian army and the military secret service are stationed, in Heverlee in the province of Flemish Brabant. Covered by the night, the saboteur(s) penetrated the base, avoiding systems of control and patrols, to trap five army vehicles with home-made fire bombs. [...] A single act has managed to ridicule the aura of the army and its grand master, the state, and this in the middle of a state of emergency. An act which somehow proposes to all who are sick of their wars to attack directly on the spot where they are produced: in the military bases, in the arms and security companies, in the technological research centres. (This shows a stronger challenge to State legitimacy to us than was visible after, for example, the 7/7 bombings by Islamists in London; following which a step-down from militancy became the watchword for many at the protests against the G8 summit of world leaders in Scotland, where you could find police and activists lighting candles for the victims side by side.)

The entities at the 'softer' end of counter-insurgency can also be located, exposed and attacked, showing the lie of their innocuous position. Take the example of the attack during late 2015, in Besançon, on the Red Cross (simultaneous with the defacing of a ruling Socialist Party office): *"this humanitarian organization – which has a long history of collaboration with the powers that be (from the Second World War and its collaboration with the Nazis up until today) – organizes raids, manages migrant flows alongside the police forces and murderous guards of the FRONTEX Agency, administers the detention centres... It is entirely responsible for the miserable plight of the undocumented. Right now, this humanitarian organization – perfectly in gear with this world of borders and poverty – is currently distinguishing itself at the Franco-Italian border between Menton and Ventimiglia, by chartering its lorries to transfer migrants to detention centres. The structures of the enemy can be found at every street corner. Let's not bow down to the state of emergency!"*

Neither are the more foreboding forces of the security apparatus immune from targeting, those who would like us to believe them unthinkable to assault. After security agencies (including the director of Frontex), international politicians, delegates from the armament and surveillance industry etc. gathered in Berlin for the European Police Congress of February 2016, the counter-terrorism centre of the federal police was hit with molotovs and paint-bombs, and the street spiked to puncture tyres of any pursuit. As

those responsible say, such attacks can be a "small light in an otherwise pitch-black night"; when we who dream and fight for better days are pushed evermore into the margins by an order which consolidates its legitimacy with concessions and coercion, the importance to us of the courage of ideas in action – however minoritarian – only grows.

That Which Advances in Rebellion

"Facing what hinders freedom also makes us face ourselves: it is for us to determine, experiment, approach what we want to live. It is certainly not easy, but we have weapons that the powerful fear: SOLIDARITY among rebels against isolationism, SELF-ORGANISATION without leaders or hierarchy, individual and collective ATTACK on all everything involved in domination."
– poster on the walls of several French towns, February 2016

The shadow cast by the spectre of atrocities like unfolded in Paris (and those in Afghanistan, Syria, etc. by some authoritarians or others, and the many more to come) may be long, but despite the State's attempts there is hope that it will fail to eclipse the other, more fundamental war. The year or so before was also marked by rebellions over killings by the police, as one example; in multiple places and days in the U.S., but also around France as mentioned above, and even cropping up again in the U.K. to a lesser extent^[22]. Meanwhile, the State strategies of self-preservation sometimes have difficult bedfellows in the neo-liberal capitalist restructuring, that tends towards enclosures and privatisation which can sometimes undermine some of the 'soft', legitimacy-building aspect of counter-insurgency. (To be sure, sometimes counter-insurgency is brought in to 'clean up' a crisis of confidence left by neo-liberalism, and other times counter-insurgency pacifies a situation so neo-liberalism can then be smoothly enacted, but the relationship can be a troubled one.

How could we move within situations like these? Understandings of legitimacy-building and legitimacy-eroding are just part of the criteria by which we analyse social circumstances, one more yard-stick by which to judge how, where, when and why to use certain methods as well as their effectiveness in pursuit of lives worth living. Lessons can be drawn from the experiences of many varied struggles, experiments and repressions, and maybe links between these diverse situations could be of use to us. We remember, along with the authors of 'We Welcome the Fire, We Welcome the Rain', that *"there are a great many who have met one another, grown together, and been emboldened by*

confidence in our abilities and relationships. These trajectories of learning have intertwined into something beautiful and ferocious here. Within this space there is room for all of us to contribute. Those of us who've found ourselves in recent years – in black blocs and graffiti crews, in anti-police riots and anti-austerity fights, in occupied plazas and buildings – have a great deal to share. Not as instructions or grand plans, but as proposals in each moment. Small suggestions which open more space: a call for a time and place when announcements are made, maybe barricades when people take the roads, maybe fires when barricades are built, maybe expropriation when facades are shattered. We have no interests in being specialists in fighting. Rather, we dream of moments which call on each of us to become everything at once; situations which demand that each of us become fighters and healers, caretakers and firebringers. We have no desire to lead, either from the shadows or from the megaphones and we will do everything in our power to combat and undermine those who seek to control and manage these outbreaks of joy and fury. We want to fight, side-by-side, in the first person, alongside those who want similar things. We want to build a type of solidarity where each of us can recognize our own struggles and projects in the struggles and projects of others. We want to find conspirators in this and to learn from one another. The interweaving and spreading of these attempts is what we call 'insurrection.'"

Avenues for sharing, discussing and sharpening perspectives and methods is one accomplishment of anarchists and other radicals, in our own limited way so far. Our enemies are well aware of this, as you can read in the Czech intelligence agency report 'Relations between extremists in Central and Eastern Europe and Greece': *"Extremist violence is considered a serious threat to modern European and global security, especially when linked to terrorism and other strategies of guerrilla warfare. Extremist environmentalists from different countries and regions are now in close contact and are mutually reinforcing. An important part of today's international extremism is the exchange of strategies and tactical elements. The emergence of extremism in one country or region is linked to the development of extremism in other countries or regions."*

It's hard to know what will come in this changing world, what opportunities will arise or how to make it through the times when none seem visible to us. But experience tells us that even a little empowerment and picking-up of skills can have a huge impact in one's character or desires, and with our unconstrained lives

at stake, let's not be stopped by fear of failure.

Let's attack the parts of the system we encounter in our daily lives by those means that we have the ability and desire to use.

– some anti-authoritarian barbarians already within the walls



Frankfurt: opening of the European Central Bank

1. "17 October 1961. French police attack a demonstration of Algerian immigrants and kill perhaps 200 (the numbers have never been confirmed), dozens are beaten, thrown off bridges and drowned in the Seine, others shot by impromptu firing squads in the police station courtyards" (All States are Murder Cults).

2. The term 'barbarian' finds its Old French root in Barbary (former European name for North Africa), the land of the Berbers, and 'foreigners' whose speech supposedly sounded like "bar-bar" to European ears with a latent threat of foreign invasion.

3. For example, the FinSpy program, which Egyptian insurgents reported finding upon storming the State security agency during the 2011 revolution. There are 32 countries suspected of using the program, made by Britain's espionage and surveillance outfit Gamma International Ltd. and costing €3 million, and networks between States are generated, sharing data. A so-called 'Trojan' file (which may have the appearance of a security update or browser plug-in), once downloaded to a computer or phone, collects information such as conversations, text, webcam footage, downloads, posts etc., for remote accessing by the operator.

4. "I encourage those citizens of the US who recoil at the atrocities ISIS inflicts upon those they consider 'infidels' or enemies of their way of life to contemplate the following seldom-recounted piece of American history: "In 1813 several hundred Cherokees enlisted under the command of a bush lawyer turned general, Andrew Jackson. Old Hickory, as he became known for his intractable personality, was forty-six, gaunt, shrewd, violent, one arm crippled by dueling wounds – the latest from a duel with his own brother. Of Carolina frontier stock, he hated Indians but was more than willing to employ them as high-grade cannon fodder. His Creek War, hailed by Jackson as a victory for civilization, was notorious for the savagery of white troops under his command. They skinned dead Creeks for belt leather; and Davy Crockett,

who was there, told how a platoon set fire to a house with "forty-six warriors in it" and afterward ate potatoes from the cellar basted in human fat." (Ronald Wright, *Stolen Continents: The Americas Through Indian Eyes Since 1492*) We now pay homage to Old Hickory, who later became the seventh president of the United States, by printing his likeness on our currency. Readers from fellow civilized nations: feel free to supply your own favorite "victory for civilization" from your homeland's illustrious history, and we'll show those jihadis how truly civilized people behave" (*Wilderness Before the Dawn*).

5. As an adjunct to their daily pathologising and narcotising, the American Psychological Association was exposed as collaborating with the U.S. regime to justify its 'Enhanced Interrogation' program following the disclosure of prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib since the '00s, by shooting down legal troubles threatening senior intelligence officials. Psychologists directly supervised simulated drownings ('water-boarding') of detainees to signal when they deemed them sufficiently broken-down to continue the questioning.

6. The Shengen Area comprises 26 European countries which agreed to both eliminate border controls with other Shengen members and to strengthen border controls with non-member States.

7. "The "mechanism" of the COP21 agreement calls for an "accelerated reduction" of carbon emissions to keep global temperature rise at 1.5 degrees. To get there, it summons a list of "shoulds" rather than "musts" with no actual "mechanism" of enforcement. [...] Relying on the good faith of some of the most heinous violators of human and ecological rights in the world sounds great when read off of an official document signed by those perpetrators, but when one steps outside into an abject police state at permanent war with its own population and countless other groups, sects, and parties, the clarity begins to fade into an overwhelming, terrifying, and stark sense of grey. [...] "The Paris accord is a trade agreement, nothing more," explained Alberto Saldamando, human rights expert and attorney. "It promises to privatize, commodify and sell forested lands as carbon offsets in fraudulent schemes such as REDD+ projects. These offset schemes provide a financial laundering mechanism for developed countries to launder their carbon pollution on the backs of the global south. Case-in-point, the United States' climate change plan includes 250 million megatons to be absorbed by oceans and forest offset markets. Essentially, those responsible for the climate crisis not only get to buy their way out of compliance but they also get to profit from it as well." [...] Among the problems with REDD++ have been the proposal to make palm oil plantations count as forests, so that companies can count as carbon credits the vast deforestation and pollution caused by the transplanting of native rainforest that have displaced Indigenous peoples and significantly imperiled the existence of orangutan and other endangered species in places like Borneo. [...] Rather than acknowledging the underlying bases for the climate crisis embedded within the processes of resource extraction, land seizures, monocultures, and industrial production operating through Schumpeterian "creative

destruction" and planned obsolescence, returning to the land and air the waste and detritus of useless and artificial life, the agreement acts as though a technocratic approach of all world leaders can coordinate on a massive scale a top-down solution to what is really a problem grounded in everyday life. The problem of mass-scale animal agriculture is overlooked, dams and hydroelectric, mining and rare earths, endangered species, plastics in the ocean are overlooked, nuclear pollution is overlooked – all in the teeth of a militarized police state that supports global warfare on a scale that menaces the entire planet" (*Grey Not Green: Technocratic Climate Agreement and Police State Terror*).

8. "Noise can mask mating calls, cause stress and prevent animals from hearing alarms, the stirrings of prey and other useful survival cues. And as climate change prompts a shift in creatures' migration schedules, circadian rhythms and preferred habitats – reshuffling the where and when of their calls – soundscapes are altered, too. [...] Sightless, earless and adrift in the open ocean, coral larvae seek to settle on tropical reefs by swimming toward the throbs of muttering fish and snapping-shrimp claws. Eurasian reed warblers en route to southern Africa at night flutter blind over pine forests, sand dunes and the Baltic Sea until, hundreds of feet below, the cheeping of other warblers signals the presence of sustaining wetlands. If those aural cues disappear, the species that heed them may be floating and flying without a compass. [...] Porpoises and whales have beached themselves fleeing the high-pitched shrieks of U.S. Navy sonar, researchers believe; they also blame the low-frequency booms ships use to search for oil and gas for fatally ripping through the organs that cephalopods like squid use to detect vibrations. [...] Subjected to constant mechanical whirring, certain primates, bats, whales, squirrels and frogs all change their cries. Many other animals, it seems, lack the physical equipment to adapt, and perish or move away" (*Whisper of the Wild*).

9. As an example outside the well-known sphere of modified crops, the U.K. firm Oxitec, based in Oxford, breed mosquitoes engineered so their offspring die before adulthood, so as to cause a population crash then released to breed with wild mosquitoes. This was explicitly sold as a measure to tackle dengue fever and other viruses exacerbated by global warming and the spread of urban environments around the world. Oxitec plan to expand the treatment to other insects persecuted by the agricultural sector in Europe and the U.S., and its founder was shortlisted for the European Inventor Award.

10. Held in a so-called 'marine protected area', Northern Edge defiled some of the purest and most nutrient-rich waters on Earth. Eskimo, Eyak, Athabascan, Tlingit, Sun'aa, Aleut and other indigenous peoples rely on the area for nutritive, cultural and spiritual sustenance, and it is critical habitat for all Alaskan wild salmon and hundreds of other species including greatly endangered North Pacific right whales. The bombardment (tens of thousands of pounds of toxic munitions, and high-intensity sonar lethal to sealife) came during the key breeding and migratory period of the region, and most of the chemicals released are also present in the Gulf of Mexico dead-zone from BP's 2010 oil release atrocity [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.1 pg28**].

11. The ebola outbreak in West Africa has provisionally been linked at least in part to expanding palm oil plantations of the likes of Sime Darby (Malaysia), Equatorial Palm Oil (U.K.), Golden Veroleum (Indonesia) etc., with police eviction of indigenous peoples in Guinea to increase milling capacity. During the ensuing deforestation (and that which came before), fruit bats carrying the virus are forced from their habitat and into higher contact with humans, their gardens and domesticated animals, disturbing previous local practices which may have acted as a barrier to its spread.

12. "Climate change markets have helped rebrand and make politically feasible old and new forms of ongoing conflicts over conservation, REDD+, industrial tree plantations (ITP), and a variety of resource extraction projects. 'Climate Security' concerns are popularly envisaged as mitigating conflict, but in the ways we have outlined, end up generating it, through the political and economic structures they enlist[...] Agrawal and Redford's (2009) estimation of conservation-induced displacement in the range of 10–20 million in a span of twenty years does not take into account other climate change reinforced sustainable development projects – 'green grabbing' – that have been on the rise and are noted as a significant contributor to land acquisition and conflict. The popularised concern that climate change will induce and intensify conflict – climate-conflict nexus – can be regarded as solidifying a self-fulfilling prophecy that reinforces political and economic relationships around land control, which continues the industrial processes that ferment conflict and market processes dependent on usurpation of the natural environment. These measures are reinforcing ecological crises as they give the impression of 'win-win' solutions using the market and 'saving' the environment as their justification."

13. A demonstration in Basel, called "against militarisation, deportations, nations and borders", attacked police outside a deportation prison with projectiles and pyrotechnics, blinding some with laser-pointers, then rampaged through the district and trashed bank ATMs, numerous border patrol and police vehicles, and a local anti-migrant newspaper office. A car of ISS (who provide facility management to prisons Europe-wide) was burned. Four cops left injured.

14. In October 2015 'Anti-Marxist Movement HUSAR' coordinated their own intelligence-gathering with the police to raid a suspect of a recent incendiary attack on a prison guards building, also re-capturing Cristian Melinao of the Mapuche [ed. – see **The Intensification of Independence in Wallmapu**] who had escaped some time before the attack from his prison sentence for robberies to fund their ancestral struggle.

15. "The 'Trident Juncture' manoeuvres – mainly in Italy, Portugal and the Spanish State – will involve more than 36,000 troops from 30 states. They will be "the most important NATO exercise during 2015" and "the largest deployment of NATO forces since the Cold War", according to the Spanish Defence Ministry. There is a sinister sub-text to the exercises, in which NATO says it will implement the "lessons" it learned in the war of occupation in Afghanistan. The whole thing is looking very much like a dress rehearsal for

massive military intervention across the Mediterranean in northern Africa, so rich in the minerals and hydrocarbons needed to keep the industrial capitalist system churning. Although the pretext for the focus on Africa is the Islamist threat, and the war games will also send a belligerent message to Moscow, analysts think the main target of the US-led initiative is to combat Chinese influence in the continent" (The Acorn bulletin #15).

16. Such as Tascor, who run short-term detention facilities for the U.K. border forces stationed in Calais and Coquelles; and two of whose prison buses were smashed up in Bristol by the Informal Anarchist Federation 'Borderless Solidarity Cell' as a result.

17. "Leaving all the alibis aside, Science as it exists is inconceivable without its unbroken institutional, philosophical, and economic connections with policing, warfare, and industrialization. Its medical knowledge of bodies corresponds to the State's need to discipline, exploit, and torture those bodies; its funding and the areas of its advancement, its "discoveries," correspond to the need of states to wage warfare against their neighbors and the need of capitalists to get an edge on their competitors and their laborers. It is not merely a complex of academic institutions that has advanced alongside, and been corrupted by, the institutions of the modern nation-state and of capital investment. On the contrary, at no point is Science autonomous within and endogenous to those academic institutions. It has always been a primary motor for the expansion – material and spiritual, to borrow the tired dichotomy – of the present world system that has colonized the entire globe, put all forms of life to work, reengineered the landscape to favor production and social control, and that is now busy rewriting the very matrix in which life and existence unfold; therefore its development has not been an exclusively academic affair but a chief concern of all the institutions of power with which it is coterminous" (Alex Gorrión).

18. The high-tech combat training center (GefechtsÜbungsZentrum) in Altmark, Germany, where soldiers from NATO countries train for urban warfare. In 2012 construction began for a whole city (various buildings, streets, a subway and an airport) so as to better prepare for operations in neighborhoods, city centers, slums, industrial estates and shopping malls. "This city could exist anywhere in the world", said the G.Ü.Z. chief executive.

19. Ivan, Bruno, Damien, Inès, Franck and Javier were tried together in 2012. The charges stemmed from the following accusations: placing an incendiary in a police truck (Inès; her brother Javier; Damien); burning a series of signaling stations which paralyzed a section of the rail network (Javier); possession of manuals for sabotage techniques, a juvenile prison map and chlorate salts (Inès; Franck); possession of smoke-bombs and caltrops (bent nails for spiking roads to puncture tyres, for example those of police cars) en route to a demonstration at the Vincennes migrant prison which later was burned down by inmates in revolt (Ivan; Bruno; Damien). Bruno and Ivan spent 17 and 22 months on the run respectively, but were eventually recaptured and tried.

20. "We might here focus on two related developments: pre-emption, and punishment by

process. Pre-emptive tactics are those which stop protests before they start, or before they can achieve anything. Kettling, mass arrests, stop-and-search, lockdowns, house raids and pre-emptive arrests are examples of these kinds of tactics. Punishment by process entails keeping people in a situation of fear, pain, or vulnerability through the abuse of procedures designed for other purposes – such as keeping people on pre-charge or pre-trial bail conditions which disrupt their everyday activity, using no-fly and border-stop lists to harass known dissidents, carrying out violent dawn raids, needlessly putting people's photographs in the press, arresting people on suspicion (sometimes in accord with quotas), using pain-compliance holds, or quietly making known that someone is under surveillance. Once fear of state interference is instilled, it is reinforced by the web of visible surveillance that is gridded across public space, and which acts as strategically placed triggers of trauma and anxiety. Anecdotal evidence has provided many horror stories about the effects of such tactics – people left a nervous wreck after years awaiting a trial on charges for which they were acquitted, committing suicide after months out of touch with their friends and family, or afraid to go out after incidents of abuse. The effects are just as real as if the state was killing or disappearing people, but they are rendered largely invisible" (We Are All Very Anxious).

21. "It is in fact a discourse which has, ever since it began and until very late in the nineteenth century, and even the twentieth, also been supported by very traditional mythical forms, and it is often invested in those forms. This discourse twins subtle knowledge and myths that are – I wouldn't say crude, but they are basic, clumsy, and overloaded. We can, after all, easily see how a discourse of this type can be articulated (and, as you will see, was actually articulated) with a whole mythology: [the lost age of great ancestors, the imminence of new times and a millenary revenge, the coming of the new kingdom that will wipe out the defeats of old]. This mythology tells of how the victories of giants have gradually been forgotten and buried, of the twilight of the gods, of how heroes were wounded or died, and of how kings fell asleep in inaccessible caves. We also have the theme of the rights and privileges of the earliest race, which were flouted by cunning invaders, the theme of the war that is still going on in secret, of the plot that has to be revived so as to rekindle that war and to drive out the invaders or enemies; the theme of the famous battle that will take place tomorrow, that will at last invert the relationship of force, and transform the vanquished into victors who will know and show no mercy. Throughout the whole of the Middle Ages, and even later, the theme of perpetual war will be related to the great, undying hope that the day of revenge is at hand, to the expectation of the emperor of the last years, the *dux novus*, the new leader, the new guide, the new Führer; the idea of the fifth monarchy, the third empire or the Third Reich, the man who will be both the beast of the Apocalypse and the savior of the poor" (Foucault).

22. March 2015 saw four consecutive nights of disturbances in High Wycombe after the verdict for the death of Habib 'Paps' Ullah after a stop-and-search; 130 cars were damaged, scores with 'NJNP' (No Justice No Peace) sprayed on them.

CLOSE SUPERVISION CENTRES

– A Modern Form of Torture

[ed. – Posted to U.K. Indymedia by Sean Dunohoe, reprinted here with very minor edits for spelling and grammar. It's not hard to imagine the conceptual discrepancies between ourselves and the author (on rights, law, criminality etc.), so without further annotation we'll let the rest of the text speak for itself about these black-holes of modern democracy and their overseer's colonial-style divide-and-rule tactics.

Close Supervision Centres (C.S.C.s), based on the American "Special Management Units", started in 1998 at Woodhill prison in Milton Keynes to hold prisoners who fought back, encouraged others to do too, embarrassed the prison service, or were otherwise the most "disruptive and dangerous". Inmates who subsequently conformed had the possibility at first to rejoin the main prison population; not so with the C.S.C. above the "Exceptional Risk Unit" in Wakefield prison, where convicts are left entombed in their cells and allowed no human interaction. One subject to that regime, Kevan Thakrar (a regular correspondent to the 'outside' world and vocal opponent of the prison regime), reports that many are "unable to succeed in escaping this hell without first being driven insane, and only then do they manage to elude the fire by being sectioned under the Mental Health Act 1983 to a high security hospital in order to attempt to treat them for the damage the extreme environmental stress has caused. If these patients are successful in recovering [they] are then returned to the CSC to be broken again and again. **[Death] is contemplated daily by the CSC prisoners, and attempted routinely by those who realise it is the only way left for them to be able to leave...**"

November 2015, another inmate, Eddie Brown, hung himself inside the C.S.C.; reportedly at the encouragement of all the screws. **Additionally, a function of the regime is violent normalisation of 'othered' subjectivities**, such as the terrorisation of Muslim prisoners (including the latter-mentioned Douglas Vinter) by guards and other inmates until they feel compelled to adopt Christianity. From a November 2015 letter by Kevan:

"Following each capitulation were celebrations and congratulations for another job well done by those running the unit and their puppets, then the transfer in of the next target in what is a systematic attack on Islamic prisoners. [...] None of this is new, HMP Wakefield has always been known to operate a racist regime enforced by an all white workforce, [with] the techniques learned through Psychological training which is mandatory for all CSC officers[...] Benefits and bonuses are given to racist prisoners, whilst others are kept in total isolation from each other and there is little action which can be taken against the culprits. [...] Publicity following the recent death of a prisoner at HMP Woodhill's Close Supervision Centre (CSC) [has] focused almost exclusively on the issue of transgender. Edward (Eddie) Latham had changed his name to Eddie Brown whilst serving time in Rampton secure hospital, and I am told very recently may have changed it again to Joanne Latham. [...] For almost two years, Latham had been confined within solitary confinement conditions which are well known to cause suicidal behavior as well as mental deterioration. Added to this was the common brutality and sadistic behaviors of both the local Woodhill CSC personnel, and the national CSC Management Committee who ordered Latham to be kept there. This experience left little to live for resulting in repeated suicide attempts in numerous different ways, all causing great amusement amongst those working there. [...] Self-harm and self-mutilation are and always have been at the highest levels of anywhere within the entire prison system at the CSC. Suicide attempts are routine with nothing but further unofficial punishment given to the victims by the CSC staff. It was not that long ago that CSC prisoner Lee Foye struggled so much with the extreme environmental stress that he began hearing voices & severed his ear off, then six weeks later was encouraged to cut off [the other] which like the first was done with razors supplied by officers."

*We want the C.S.C.s not only "closed" but in ashes, though for us **the struggle against one prison must comprise a single part of the struggle against all prisons, at all times, and everywhere.***

There has for some time been serious concerns about the treatment of prisoners held in the so called 'Close Supervision Centre' (CSC) at Woodhill prison in Milton Keynes, and once again the segregation and isolation of what the prison system labels as "difficult" prisoners in a control unit environment has led to serious abuses of human rights and unlawful behaviour on the part of those "supervising" the CSC. That unlawful behaviour now threatens the physical safety and even lives of prisoners held in the CSC. **An incident recently engineered by staff operating the Woodhill prison CSC where a mentally ill prisoner was encouraged to attack another prisoner in what is a supposedly "closely supervised" environment indicates that a "divide and rule" strategy is now being officially applied in the CSC that threatens the lives of these prisoners considered especially "difficult" and "challenging" by the CSC staff.**

Douglas Gary Vinter is a prisoner serving a natural life sentence, which means he is unlikely to ever be released. His "difficult" behaviour, which usually took the form of smashing up his cell in impotent rage and despair, led to his being "selected" for the Woodhill CSC, despite a judicial review ruling that his prolonged segregation was unlawful because it was contributing to his deteriorating mental condition.

Lee Newell, also serving a natural life sentence, was "selected" for the Woodhill CSC because of his constant complaints about the behaviour of prison staff, who, he claimed, had targeted him for bullying and intimidation. Both prisoners after

"In the UK prisons unofficial violence is an institutionalised and "normal" way whereby prisoners are controlled and terrorised into conforming and it is customary for those officially employed to maintain prison "good order and discipline" to recruit and manipulate prisoners into controlling their fellow captives by any means necessary, even occasionally murder. The creation and manipulation of prisoner power hierarchies is intended primarily to "keep order" within prison society and has a very long brutal tradition. "Offenders"

are conditioned to the institutional reality of unofficial power and violence from a young age; youth detention centres, youth custody institutions and their predecessors the reform schools and Borstals are all characterized by violent inmate hierarchies and a knowing of ones place and a culture enforced by fear and often terror. Those officially charged with maintaining "good order and discipline" in such child prisons often derive enormous pleasure in grooming and encouraging bullies or "Daddies" to keep order on their behalf, thereby creating an assumption amongst child prisoners that power equals violence; a belief and behavioural trait that usually characterizes their future relationship with the community resulting in increasingly longer prison sentences for violence. Within such institutions small groups of gangs of inmates are empowered by the guards to enforce order, who then happily turn a blind eye to the violent initiation of potential "troublemakers" is the norms of the institution. In such institutions it is the "Daddies" who police and maintain order at whatever cost to the psychological and physical health and safety of the other child prisoners. [...] The brutalisation and even murder of young working class "offenders" in state institutions matters nothing to the ruling class who consider such young prisoners as merely scum to be tamed and broken."

– John Bowden [ed. – see *Return Fire* vol.2 pg64]



experiencing a CSC regime of solitary confinement, psychological abuse and the ever present threat of organised staff violence, repeatedly requested transfers on the grounds that their mental health was seriously deteriorating; their requests were denied by the “multi disciplinary management team” operating the Woodhill CSC.

The “multi disciplinary management team” at the Woodhill CSC are responsible for carrying out “risk assessments” on the prisoners held in the CSC and deciding what level or intensity of “supervision” they require, I.E. the number of staff, often in full riot gear, required to “supervise” the prisoners movement outside of his cell, and whether the “settled behaviour” of a prisoner can be rewarded by allowing him to share his one hour exercise period in a small outdoor cage with another CSC prisoner.

Claire Hodson, the “population strategist and specialist units manager” of the CSC and a member of the CSC’s “multi disciplinary management team” had recently confirmed that a significant proportion of the prisoners in the CSC suffered with serious mental illness either prior to being selected for the CSC or whilst confined there and subject to it’s extremely psychologically punishing regime. Joanne King, a psychologist employed in the Woodhill CSC, apparently is content to oversee the mental destruction of prisoners held in the CSC and was fully aware of the pleas of Douglas Vinter and Lee Newell to be transferred out of the CSC because of their inability to mentally cope with the brutal “behaviour modification” regime operating there. **Clearly, the so called “multi disciplinary management team” exist simply to legitimise a regime in the CSC that is intrinsically cruel and intended to completely disempower and dehumanise prisoners perceived as “troublemakers”.** The psychological consequences to those prisoners is obviously of no concern to those managing the CSC. For the uniformed staff actually enforcing the CSC regime, who operate with little or no real accountability in a hidden environment, an occupational culture has developed that prioritizes control and obedience of prisoners by any means necessary, and this has began to take the form of encouraging the most “difficult” and mentally disturbed prisoners in the CSC to vent their anger and rage upon each other.

After suffering the cruelty of the CSC regime for 3 months Douglas Vinter could endure no more and told the staff enforcing the regime that unless he was transferred soon he would express his despair in violence. A senior prison officer called

Bowen is then reported to have said to him *“Don’t hurt one of us. If you’re determined to use violence why not hurt Lee Newell”.* He was assured that the consequences to him of physically attacking another prisoner would be far less serious than were he to attack a member of staff.

Fomenting violence amongst the most mentally disturbed CSC prisoners had become a tactic employed by “front line” staff in the CSC to deflect and manipulate the rage generated by the regime they imposed. The senior prison officer Bowen assured Douglas Vinter that both his and Lee Newell’s supervision level would be reduced in order to allow them to share an exercise period in the outdoor cage, and in an unprecedented swiftness of time the “multi disciplinary management team” carried out a “dynamic risk assessment” on both prisoners and reduced their supervision level, thereby allowing staff to place them in the exercise cage together. Officers were then heard to be taking bets amongst themselves on who would prevail in the inevitable fight between Vinter and Newell; following the murder of a young Asian prisoner by his racist cell mate in Feltham Young Offenders Institute a number of years ago evidence [came out] that officers at the jail had organised and provoked fights amongst inmates [*ed. – regular ‘gladiator’ fights*] and then taken bets on the outcome.

On the 27th November last year Douglas Vinter and Lee Newell were taken from their cells and placed in the small outdoor cage, where Vinter attacked Newell and beat him unconscious. An ambulance was called but delayed for an hour at the prison gates while the prisons security governor Angela Curtis insisted that it’s access to the CSC was made subject to various “security rules”. Lee Newell lay unconscious in the CSC exercise yard for almost two hours before he was handcuffed and strapped to a stretcher, and then guarded by six prison officers in the ambulance; his supervision level was again increased to it’s usual “high risk” level.

Because of numerous skull fractures, bleeding of the brain and swelling, he was immediately placed into an induced coma on arrival at the hospital. He remains in that coma. It’s likely that he will die but if he does emerge from the coma he will inevitably suffer with severe brain damage.

The CSC management committee at prison service headquarters, composed of segregation unit managers from each of the high security prisons from which most of the CSC prisoners are selected, have decided that despite Lee Newell’s critical condition his placement in the Woodhill CSC remains appropriate. They have also

attempted to suppress all information to the media regarding what happened to Lee Newell, and also refused to inform his family of what happened to him.

Following his attack on Lee Newell, Douglas Vinter told prison officers who surrounded him in the exercise cage – *“This is what happens when you torment and wind me up. I told you I was going to do this and you didn’t care or listen. I told you I was deteriorating mentally and needed a transfer out of here but you ignored me. I am serving a natural life sentence, so what are you going to do now? Give me another life sentence?”* He then walked of his own volition to a separate unit and was placed into “special accommodation”, a sensory deprivation cell where he is now held in clinical isolation. **Claire Hodson and Alan Parkins, the Woodhill CSC governor, say that he will remain in “special accommodation” indefinitely, which means he will be denied all human contact, be fed through a small hatch in the cell door, sleep on the cells concrete floor, and be handcuffed through the hatch in the cell door before being allowed to leave the cell for a shower, during which he remains handcuffed, and one hours exercise each day.** Each time he leaves the cell he is surrounded by seven guards all dressed in full riot gear and holding shields. Alan Parkins has told him that he will remain in the sensory deprivation cell indefinitely, but reassured him that if or when he goes completely insane he will be able to plead diminished responsibility for the attack on Lee Newell when he stands trial for it. Parkins is determined to create the narrative of an irrationally violent prisoner who attacked another prisoner without reason or warning, thereby concealing the role and involvement of CSC staff in what took place.

Prisoners in the CSC who have voiced concerns about what happened have had their risk and supervision levels arbitrarily increased in an attempt to silence them, and the “multi disciplinary management team”, which includes a member of the supposedly “Independent Monitoring Board”, Mary-Anne Dixie, have given this their blessing.

The police who attempted to gain access to the CSC in order to interview prisoners in relation to the matter were prevented from doing so by Alan Parkins who has insisted that he must personally monitor all interviews and communication with prisoners.

All CSC staff [were] in some way involved in what took place; basic grade prison officers, governors, and the entire “multi disciplinary management team” have

personally reviewed the CCTV and camcorder footage of the incident and held a number of group discussions to decide on a version and account of their role in what happened, thereby prejudicing any future legal proceedings.

If he dies Lee Newell will be the second prisoner that died in the CSC last year [ed. – after weeks chained to a hospital bed, left missing an eye and with permanent brain damage from the attack, Lee lived].

Following the attack on Lee Newell the regime in the Woodhill CSC has been significantly hardened and made even more repressive, and the same officers who encouraged and facilitated Douglass Vinter's attack on Lee Newell are now telling the CSC prisoners that they should blame Douglas Vinter for the total lock down of the CSC regime.

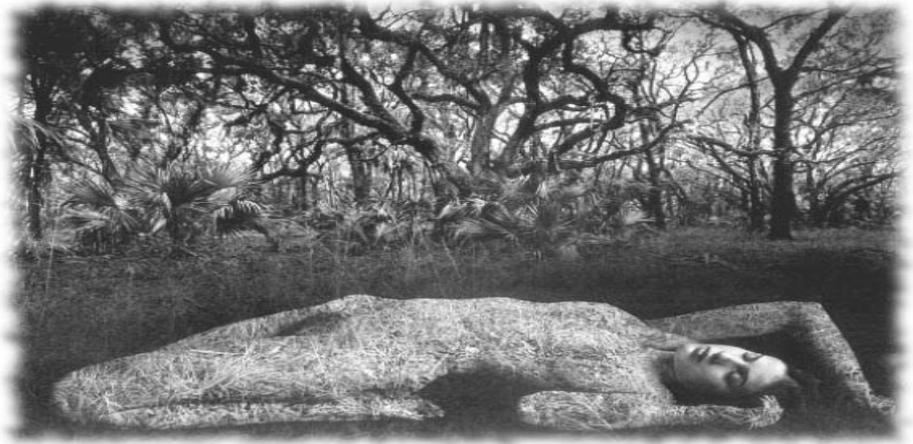
What happened in the Woodhill CSC on the 27th November last year suggests a descent into plain criminality on the part of those "supervising" and managing the CSC and an inevitable consequence of the regime that allows those enforcing it to disempower totally those in their custody. The effective de-humanisation of any group absolves those enforcing it of any conscience, and recognition of the humanity of those over whom they exercise an almost omnipotent degree of power, and the relationship of power that characterises the treatment of prisoners in the Woodhill CSC will always be inherently and intrinsically abusive and render the lives of those prisoners extremely vulnerable.

Close the CSC now!



ed. – The comrades of Bristol Anarchist Black Cross also published a two-part series on the Close Supervision Centres in particular prior to this, available to read online.

“INTO HER INNER CHAMBERS”



[ed. – Extract from 'Technocracy, Gender & Reproductive Technology' by David King, written for the webpage of the techno-critical Breaking the Frame gathering in Derbyshire, England. Examines the shifts in the patriarchal understanding of the European medieval age to the patriarchy of modernity, including the penetration of the industrial logic of 'quality control' and the fascistic values of eugenics, and how all this relates to reproductive autonomy for 'womankind'. Alongside some quibbles we have with the outlook of this author, we see the sex-gender system as an ideological spectre, not natural reality, but consider it vital to understand the atrocities carried out in its name, while considering who it benefits in what ways; and which false critics of patriarchy encourage technological/racial domination. As we prepare this article for print in January 2016, the U.K.'s Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority readies to give the verdict on permission to genetically-modified human embryos for experimentation, a key step on the scientist's path to the creation of future G.M. children.]

It is often assumed that the Enlightenment ideals of rationality, liberalism and progress through science are aligned with the liberation of women. Reproductive technologies, as part of medicine are also assumed to be an unalloyed benefit for women, giving them reproductive choice and control over their lives. Although there is truth in this, there is a darker side of the liberal agenda, which can be traced to the origins of modern science in the Scientific Revolution of the 17th Century. This revolution marked a shift in fundamental worldviews throughout European society, and the establishment of technocratic capitalist modernity.

The Medieval World

[In the medieval worldview of Europe] the earth/nature was seen as female and as an inherently alive and inter-connected whole. There were different shades of this philosophy, including the alchemists' view of the world as a unity of opposing and equal male and female principles. While the male principle is active, the female was thought of as passive and nurturing. For example, it was thought that the heavens were masculine and fertilised the earth through rain (semen). [...] The medieval worldview played a significant role in restraining all-out exploitation of natural resources. For example, in the medieval worldview, our distinction between organic and inorganic substances did not exist: metals were thought to be formed by the secretions of the earth's womb. **As the market economy emerged and with it the demand for minerals, there were major debates in the 16th century about**

the acceptability of mining, with opponents portraying it not merely as the sin of avarice but as the rape of Mother Earth. Proponents responded by portraying nature as wicked stepmother who refuses to nourish her children.

Organic metaphors also permeated political thinking, with the image of the 'body politic' being taken very literally. While the nobility subscribed to hierarchical philosophies stressing the active rule of the head, vitalist thinkers like Paracelsus viewed activity and change as immanent to nature, which translated into a [radical] politics which led to his persecution by different states of Europe. In the transition period, in which the stability of the Medieval order was breaking down under the pressure of nascent market capitalism, the relationship between metaphysical ideas about nature, gender, politics and questions of political power were very significant. The break-up of the old order and accompanying social turmoil created widespread existential angst, with fears of chaos, anarchy, and even a crumbling of the laws of nature. **The destructive side of nature (plagues, famines, tempests) began to be emphasised and this was linked to male fears of the unruly and dangerous force of female sexuality.**

Thus the Judeo-Christian idea of the dominion of man over nature and women began to be emphasised, and was allied to a backlash against women who were attempting to escape from their medieval roles and carve out a place for themselves

in the new commercial economy. These politics can be seen clearly, for example in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. On the elite political stage, the conflict was played out in John Knox's *First Trumpet Blast Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, a polemic against the three Catholic Queen Marys of Scotland and England which emphasised the Aristotelian orthodoxy that the male principle of spirit should rule over the female in order to maintain order in the cosmos. For women of the lower orders,

the male backlash took the more violent form of the witch persecutions, which pitted the hierarchy of the Church against [paganism].

The Birth of Technocracy

The emerging mechanical and scientific philosophy of the 17th century crystallised first in the writings of Francis Bacon^[1], who as Lord Chancellor of England was personally involved in the witch trials. Bacon's major

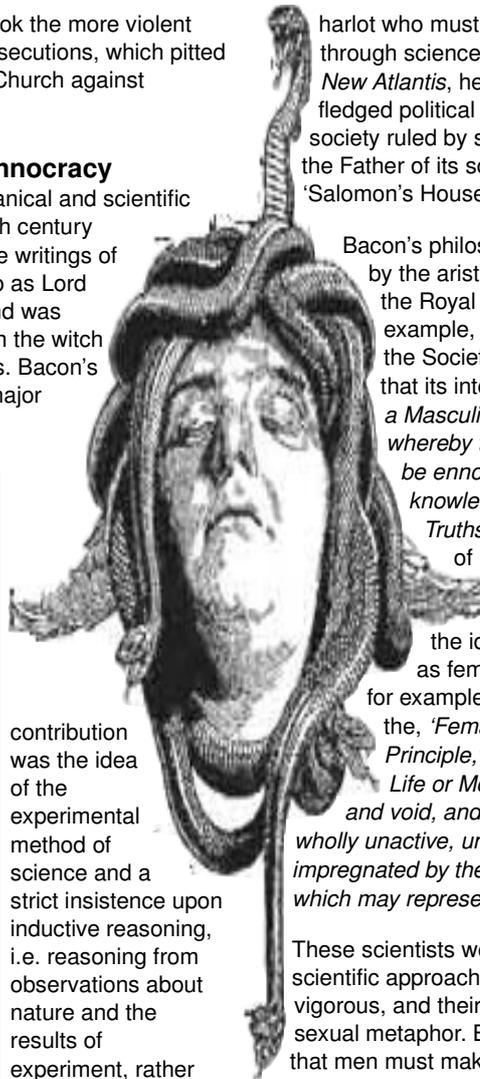
harlot who must be forcibly subdued through science. In his utopia, *The New Atlantis*, he describes a fully-fledged political technocracy (i.e. a society ruled by scientists), ruled by the Father of its scientific institute, 'Salomon's House.'

Bacon's philosophy was echoed by the aristocratic founders of the Royal Society. In 1664, for example, Henry Oldenburg, the Society's secretary, stated that its intention was to, 'raise a Masculine Philosophy... whereby the Mind of Man may be ennobled with the knowledge of the solid Truths.'

Despite their view of nature as merely dead matter, such writers continued the identification of nature as female. Robert Hooke, for example, viewed matter as the, 'Female or Mother Principle,' which was, 'without Life or Motion, without form, and void, and dark, Power in itself wholly unactive, until it be, as it were, impregnated by the second Principle, which may represent the Pater.'

These scientists were clear that the scientific approach to nature must be vigorous, and their writings are full of sexual metaphor. Bacon proclaimed that men must make peace amongst themselves in order to turn their 'united forces against the Nature of Things, to storm and occupy her castles and strongholds'. Instead of remaining in the 'outer courts of nature,' Bacon exhorted his followers to 'penetrate further... into her inner chambers.' John Webster, a slightly later writer, argued that such an approach would be needed in order to 'unlock her Cabinet', and Oldenburg echoed this tone, arguing that scientists must 'penetrate from Nature's antechamber to her inner closet.' Although modern scientists do not openly express themselves in such terms, examples can be found in the writings of scientists throughout the 19th and 20th Centuries.

During this period, male doctors began the first of many waves of displacing women midwives from the management of childbirth. However, their scientific confidence was not matched by their understanding of how human reproduction worked. Echoing the inherited patriarchal assumption that the active principle was in the male 'seed', these writers insisted that the egg and the womb were no more than passive receptacles for the seed that made no contribution to the child's characteristics. It is rather ironic that my copy of Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature*, the classic description of the



contribution was the idea of the experimental method of science and a strict insistence upon inductive reasoning, i.e. reasoning from observations about nature and the results of experiment, rather than the abstract logical theorising that had dominated the philosophy of the Middle Ages. Bacon, who was a great enthusiast for the new 'mechanical arts', first coined the mission statement of technocracy – 'Knowledge is Power'. **Criticising Aristotle's natural history approach to discovering facts about nature, Bacon stressed that nature would not reveal the secrets hidden in her womb and bosom unless she was 'vexed' through the interventions of the scientist, which he often likened to the techniques of prosecutors and inquisitors.** He often refers to nature as a

"The [medieval] wise woman, or witch, had a host of remedies which had been tested in years of use. Many of the herbal remedies developed by witches still have their place in modern pharmacology. They had pain-killers, digestive aids and anti-inflammatory agents. They used ergot for the pain of labor at a time when the Church held that pain in labor was the Lord's just punishment for Eve's original sin. Ergot derivatives are the principal drugs used today to hasten labor and aid in the recovery from childbirth. Belladonna – still used today as an anti-spasmodic – was used by the witch-healers to inhibit uterine contractions when miscarriage threatened. Digitalis, still an important drug in treating heart ailments, is said to have been discovered by an English witch. [...] So great was the witches' knowledge that in 1527, Paracelsus, considered the "father of modern medicine," burned his text on pharmaceuticals, confessing that he "had learned from the Sorceress all he knew." [...] The witch-healer's methods were as great a threat (to the Catholic Church, if not the Protestant) as her results, for the witch was an empiricist: She relied on her senses rather than on faith or doctrine, she believed in trial and error, cause and effect. Her attitude was not religiously passive, but actively inquiring. She trusted her ability to find ways to deal with disease, pregnancy and childbirth - whether through medications or charms. [...] The Church, by contrast, was deeply anti-empirical. It discredited the value of the material world, and had a profound distrust of the senses. There was no point in looking for natural laws that govern physical phenomena, for the world is created anew by God in every instant. Kramer and Sprenger, in the *Malleus [ed. – 'Malleus Maleficarum: The Hammer of Witches', influential witch-hunting manual of the time]*, quote St. Augustine on the deceptiveness of the senses: "Now the motive of the will is something perceived through the senses or the intellect, both of which are subject to the power of the devil. For St. Augustine says in Book 83: "This evil, which is of the devil, creeps in by all the sensual approaches; he places himself in figures, he adapts himself to colors, he attaches himself to sounds, he lurks in angry and wrongful conversation, he abides in smells, he impregnates with flavours and fills with certain exhalations all the channels of the understanding." The senses are the devil's playground, the arena into which he will try to lure men away from Faith "and into the conceits of the intellect or the delusions of carnality." " In the persecution of the witch, the anti-empiricist and the misogynist, anti-sexual obsessions of the Church coincide: Empiricism and sexuality both represent a surrender to the senses, a betrayal of faith. The witch was a triple threat to the Church: She was a woman, and not ashamed of it. She appeared to be part of an organized underground of peasant women. And she was a healer whose practice was based in empirical study."

- Barbara Ehrenreich & Deirdre English

misogynist philosophy of the Scientific Revolution, is described by its publishers as a 'seminal' (rather than ovular) work.

In Bacon's model of nature, as in that of the other key philosopher of the Scientific Revolution, Rene Descartes, matter is essentially passive and only moves or changes in response to external forces identified as the principle of spirit or God. This follows the earlier aristocratic models of society and the cosmos: it was no accident the first scientific society was named the Royal society. In the mid 17th century, with the work of Isaac Newton and the founders of the Royal Society, a 'billiard ball' or clockwork model of nature came to dominate scientific thinking, in accordance with Descartes' and Bacon's mechanical model of the universe. It was this 'disenchantment' of nature that legitimated the technocratic drive for complete control and the capitalist projects of exploitation of natural resources without limit.

At the root of the scientific attitude to nature is a distancing of the perceiving subject from his [sic] object (nature), a severing of relationship between the scientist and nature, which is precisely what scientists describe as necessary in order to obtain 'objectivity'. In the 1660s, this gendered difference of approach was reflected very concretely in the famous experiments on the vacuum in which scientists placed a bird in a bell jar, and then evacuated the air, killing the bird. According to contemporary accounts, women observers protested vehemently against this, forcing the men to conduct the experiments in the dead of night after the women had gone to bed. It is this distancing of subject from object that, in the second wave of the women's movement in the late 20th century, feminists identified as the 'male gaze', through which men objectify women.

Reproductive Technologies

The technocratic project of control of nature did not get to grips with human

"Our analysis must encompass the totality of our oppression, that is to say that we should never consciously overlook any part of life that capital has integrated itself into. [...] One aspect of life that we should not overlook is childbirth[...] The onset of primitive accumulation necessitated a new restructuring of power in Europe and an increase in potential laborers. This was at a time when a nation-state's power and wealth was partially defined by the amount of its citizens it had at its disposal. When empires needed these bodies they implemented new state regulations over childbirth. In 16th century Nuremburg, the penalty for maternal infanticide was drowning, and all over Germany the Pro-Natalist crusades went as far as punishing women who didn't show enough of an effort during childbirth. In France, a royal edict of 1556 required women to register every pregnancy, and sentenced to death those whose infants died before baptism after a concealed delivery, whether or not they were proven guilty of any wrong doing. The suspicion under which the midwives – leading to the entrance of the male doctor in the delivery room – stemmed more from the authorities fear of infanticide (the potential of losing their labor power and cannon fodder) than from any concern of the midwives' alleged medical incompetence. With the marginalization of the midwife, women lost the control they had exercised over procreation and were reduced to a passive role in child delivery, while male doctors began to be seen as the real "givers of life". Some midwives in Germany turned spies for the state in order to continue their practice. Most midwives rebelled, instead of adhering to the new guidelines imposed on them, they continued guiding women through the birthing experience the way they always had. Some of these unruly women were called witches, some were murdered, but most continued practicing, only less vocal this time. [...] An important thing to note here is that with all of the turn of the century arguments against midwives: that they were unclean, old-fashioned, ill-equipped, and dangerous; it was in fact in the hospitals where a rise in disease was occurring – puerperal fever (aka childbed fever – a fatal infection that was usually introduced by unhygienic obstetricians), complications (due to the hospitals rigid control of the movements of women's bodies), and fatalities (due to unnecessary interventions). Somewhat quickly the hospitalization of childbirth began to rise. Within a few decades most deliveries happened in a hospital environment. This provided an immense amount of capital to the industry (as everyone [ed. – without state subsidy] now must pay to come into the world). Also accomplished in this is medicalization of childbirth, and this is crucial to an anarchist analysis of childbirth, is the intense regulated control of the process of bringing life into the world. The state decides how (and in some cases when) you are allowed to enter the world." – *Childbirth and Social War*

reproduction until the beginning of the 20th Century, where it emerged in the form of the eugenics movement. In this period, technocracy was an open political movement of scientists and engineers, who argued that the problems of administering industrial society were too complex to be left to democratic processes, and that the running of society should be entrusted to their 'apolitical' stewardship. The eugenics movement was closely allied to the technocracy movement, and contrary to the idea we have inherited of eugenics as an extreme right-wing phenomenon, most eugenicists saw themselves as progressive and humanitarian. **Eugenics was part of the overall managerial tendency in politics that arose as a result of the failure of 19th Century *laissez-faire* capitalism to deal with the social turmoil of industrial mass society. At its centre was the technocratic concept of social control through control of nature, in particular the randomness and mess that arises from human sexual reproduction.** Eugenicists would always begin by asking, "How can we devote so much attention to the breeding of our farm animals, yet do nothing about human breeding?" But its target was women's bodies and reproductive capacities, not those of men.

The gender politics of eugenics appear contradictory unless it is understood as a form of technocracy, fundamentally aimed

at the rational control of reproduction. Some aspects seem very clearly anti-feminist and oppressive of women, for example the tendency to sterilise unwed mothers. It is not an accident that in the classic eugenic study of a poor white US family, the Jukes, which supposedly demonstrated that four generations of the family were criminals, 'feeble-minded', prostitutes etc, the ancestor from whom all these burdens on society were descended was a woman, Ada Jukes. If only she had been sterilised, the eugenicist argued,



society would have been spared the burden of the following generations. Likewise the Supreme Court case, which established the right of US states to sterilise people without consent involved a woman, Carrie Buck.

On the other hand, the eugenics movement (which was always composed of a large proportion of women) presented benefits to women: it was eugenicist women, notably Margaret Sanger in the USA^[2] and Marie Stopes in England, who pioneered birth control for women, and who founded the Family Planning Association, for example. **Stopes and Sanger always argued that they were relieving women of the burden of multiple pregnancies and caring for huge families, yet it was also very clear that their efforts were targeted at the 'lower' classes.**

The integration of eugenics with the technological control movement of the 20th century (Fordism) is best captured by Aldous Huxley's 1930s novel *Brave New World*. It is most remembered for its vision of artificial wombs and artificial class differentiation through dosing the bottled fetuses with alcohol. In that world, the word 'mother' is a term of abuse indicating something disgusting, whilst women are simply not permitted to refuse sex.

After World War II, when eugenics had acquired an extremely bad name, the efforts of eugenicists switched to population control in the Third World. Here again, whilst control of their fertility was undoubtedly a genuine benefit for many women in those countries, the targeting of the reproduction of black women, who were supposedly creating a world population problem, and the coercive nature of many population control programmes reveals the eugenic character of that movement. In the 1970s and 80s the targeting of poor women and women of colour with dangerous long term contraceptives such as Norplant and Depo Provera continued these policies. Although it is often assumed that racist and coercive sterilisation programmes are a thing of the past, recent scandals in Israel^[3] and the USA^[4] show that this is not the case.

Throughout the 20th Century, whilst overt eugenics has declined [ed. – before the covert re-launch as trans-humanism in the 21st], human reproduction has become an increasingly technologised process, in which pregnancy and childbirth have become increasingly medicalised and

hospitalised and obstetrics and gynaecology have become the domain of mainly male doctors, with midwives performing an increasingly subordinate role. Technological interventions in reproduction have included hormonal contraception and fertility drugs as well as the disastrous experiences of drugs such as DES and thalidomide. Technologisation of reproduction has created its own logic of quality control, through the development of ultrasound and other prenatal screening programmes. In 1979, IVF was first achieved by Robert Edwards, a committed eugenicist and board member of the British Eugenics Society.

The response of feminists to reproductive technologies has varied depending on their relation to technocracy. Thus, for example, in the early 1970s the radical feminist, Shulamith Firestone, tried to develop a kind of Marxist approach in her book *The Dialectic of Sex*, which argued for the use of technology to liberate women from the burdens of reproduction as the only way to achieve equality for women. Most notoriously, Firestone argued that as in Huxley's *Brave New World*, scientists should develop ectogenesis, i.e. artificial wombs for growing babies outside the body.

In contrast, in the 1980s an international network of feminists calling itself The Feminist International Network for Resistance to Reproductive and Genetic Engineering (FINRRAGE), developed an eco-feminist critique of reproductive technology, arguing that it is part of the patriarchal attempt to appropriate and control women's bodies. Some of these writers theorised that this drive to control women's fertility originates in fundamental male insecurities stemming from men's marginal role in the reproductive process, and argued that the technologisation of reproduction was leading to the removal of the last truly woman-centred aspect of human life from female control. Further generations of feminist writers and scholars have continued to struggle with the contradictions of technocratic progress, control and choice, and women have fought against medicalisation through the natural birth movement for example.

Some Current Gender Issues in Reproductive Technology

IVF: Although IVF [ed. – *In Vitro Fertilisation*] has now been practised for over 30 years and millions of women have undergone it, there is still a lack of research on the long-term health consequences for women. IVF is a stressful and invasive procedure with

“Geneticists are busy everywhere mapping the genetic pool of humans, animals and plants in order to discover so-far-unknown genetic 'defects'. I should not be surprised if, in the near future, a whole new range of diseases were to be declared. The ideology of both eugenics and sociobiology will provide the criteria for what will be understood as 'healthy' and what as 'defective'. These new hereditary diseases will provide a large market for gene therapy and prenatal diagnosis. The aim of this whole enterprise is to adapt the human being to survive the destructions which *Homo faber* and technological progress have wrought on the environment.” – *New Reproductive Technologies*

“[In his wartime novel *Arrival and Departure*, Arthur Koestler] gives one of its characters, a philosophising Nazi of a kind that really existed in many parts of Europe at that time, a speech giving full vent to Nazi aims: “We have embarked on something – something grandiose and gigantic beyond imagination. There are no more impossibilities for man now. For the first time we are attacking the biological structure of the race. We have started to breed a new species of homo sapiens. We have practically finished the task of exterminating or sterilising the gypsies in Europe; the liquidation of the Jews will be completed in a year or two. Personally I am fond of gipsy music and a clever Jew amuses me in a way; but we had to get rid of the nomadic gene, with its asocial and anarchic components, in the human chromosome[...] We are the first to make use of the hypodermic syringe, the lancet and the sterilizing apparatus in our revolution.” This murderous vision was not confined to Nazis. In less virulent forms, the same view of human possibilities was held in the thirties by much of the progressive intelligentsia. There were some who found positive features even in national socialism. For George Bernard Shaw, Nazi Germany was not a reactionary dictatorship but a legitimate heir to the European Enlightenment. Nazism was a rag-bag of ideas, including occultist philosophies that rejected modern science. But it is a mistake to view it as unambiguously hostile to the Enlightenment. Inasmuch as it was a movement dedicated to toleration and personal freedom, Hitler loathed the Enlightenment. At the same time, like Nietzsche he shared the Enlightenment's vast hopes for humanity. Through positive and negative eugenics – breeding high-quality people and eliminating those judged inferior – humanity would become capable of the enormous tasks ahead of it. Shaking off the moral traditions of the past and purified by science, humankind would be master of the Earth.”

– *Straw Dogs*

significant short-term health affects, notably Ovarian Hyper-Stimulation Syndrome. This condition, in its mild form, can affect up to 30% of women, and there is no clear consensus about how many women are affected by the medium and severe forms, with figures ranging from 1 to 8%. In these cases, blood vessels become leaky leading to the collection of a large amount of fluid in the abdomen. Although figures are unclear, there may be one death per year from OHSS in the UK, but there is no systematic monitoring of the condition. Feminist critics have argued that the standard IVF approach, which uses large hormone doses to produce 10 to 15 eggs, many of which will be of poor quality, imposes unnecessary risks on women. It is sometimes suggested that these high doses are used in order to create a supply of surplus eggs, which can be used in research.

Egg donation: These concerns about hormone treatments are especially sharp for women who are donating eggs to other women, since they are not themselves aiming to become pregnant. Such women undergo significant risks and there have been major controversies about the exploitation of women in egg donation. For example, in the 1990s and 2000s, a commercial egg trade operated in Europe, with women from Eastern European countries donating eggs in return for small payments to “fertility tourists” from Western European countries. In some cases the clinics, which were making large profits from this trade, subjected the donors to extremely high doses of hormones, with resultant damage to the donors’ health. There is some evidence of overlap between the criminal networks that traffic in Eastern European women and the egg donation trade. In 2009 the UK changed its policy on egg donation, allowing payments of £750 to egg donors, with the aim of encouraging UK women to make up the shortfall in supply in the UK. Critics such as the No2Eggs Exploitation Campaign argued that these financial incentives were likely to lead to women on benefits and students with large debts taking the risks of egg donation, for purely financial rather than altruistic reasons.

Surrogacy: In the UK, commercial surrogacy is not permitted (although substantial ‘expenses’ payments can be made). As a result, an international surrogacy trade has developed centred on India and the Ukraine, with many of the same concerns as those raised by the trade in eggs. In India, whilst clinics are making large profits, surrogate mothers are paid only a small proportion of the overall fee, and often have to sign contracts stipulating that the clinic is not responsible for any damage to the woman’s health as a result of pregnancy and childbirth. The women are often coerced into surrogacy as a source of income by their husbands or

“Technological development proceeds from what it had already transformed and used up towards that which still remains untouched. It is in this sense that [women’s bodies as sites of regenerative power] are, in the eyes of capitalist patriarchy, among the last colonies. These sights of creative regeneration are transformed into ‘passive’ sites where the expert ‘produces’ and adds value. Nature, women and non-white people merely provide ‘raw’ material. [...] From the dominant standpoint, as Claudia von Werlhof has pointed out, ‘nature’ is everything that should be available free, and/or as cheaply as possible. This includes products of social labour. “*The labour of these people is therefore pronounced to be non-labour, to be biology; their labour power – their ability to work – appears as a natural resource, and their products as akin to a natural deposit.*” A number of artificial shifts are thus achieved through fragmenting knowledge. The sources of regeneration and renewal of life are transformed into inert and fragmented matter, mere ‘raw material’ to be processed into a finished product.”
– *Reductionism & Regeneration*

fathers (in India, such work is seen as similar to prostitution, and are obliged to reside in dormitories at the fertility clinic during pregnancy.) In essence, the situation seems little different from baby-farming, and is a particularly unpleasant example of the exploitation of people in developing countries by wealthy Westerners.

Sex Selection: The development of ultrasound scanning in the 1980s has enabled the widespread abortion of female fetuses, particularly in India and China. These practices, driven by traditional patriarchal preference for sons as well as complex social factors, have extended the traditional phenomenon of female infanticide and death by neglect of young girls. The result is that in some parts of India the ratio of boys to girls can be as high as 125 boys for every 100 girls, and it is estimated that over 100 million women are missing from the world population as a result of sex selection. In turn, this is leading to significant social problems, including large numbers of men unable to find wives and the resulting increase in trafficking of women into these areas. In the 1990s, India legislated against prenatal sex selection, but the law has never been properly enforced, and the large sums of money to be made in this industry has meant that the problem continues to grow. It appears that the practice has now

spread to some Eastern European countries, such as Georgia.

Conclusion

The purpose of this post has been to relate issues in reproductive technologies to the overall regime of technocracy, which has been a central element of capitalist modernity[...] based on principles of control and authority over the unruly female that are closely similar to those of traditional patriarchy.

These fundamental dynamics of technocracy have been played out in the development of reproductive technologies under the banner of eugenics in the 20th Century. The overall trend towards growing technological medical control has followed from the obvious offence that unregulated human reproduction represents to a technocratic social order.

[...] It is also often argued that these technologies give women more *choice* (that great shibboleth of consumer capitalism), and it cannot be denied that, in some ways, they do. **But like all technologies, they also control us by controlling what the options are, and through the social pressure of a society which thinks that high-tech and control are always best.** No-one has to be forced by the state to undergo pre-natal testing and the result – the termination of 90% of pregnancies involving Down Syndrome, for example – is a foregone conclusion, without anyone having to take responsibility. One thing that placing these developments in an overall framework of technocracy does allow us to understand, however, is that these benefits are often technofixes – technological solutions to social/political problems that fail to address the real causes of the problems.

Provision of contraception to Third World women is a case in point. The suffering of women under the burden of so many children is caused by a combination of patriarchy – men’s insistence on their sexual rights within marriage and producing children – and poverty which makes it a rational strategy to have many children. Instead of addressing these issues, the population control movement of the mid 20th Century descended upon these countries with its technology – contraception/sterilisation, often applied coercively.

A consistent feature of technofixes is that they seem sensible within the overall technocratic order, and so perpetrate that order and the interests that benefit from it. For women in industrialised countries, contraception may have reduced the risk of unwanted pregnancies and sexually liberated them, but it also created a situation in which it became an expectation

that they should always be ready to have sex with men who wished to, rather than genuinely putting women in charge of their sexual lives and reproduction.

One simple thing we can say about the whole process of development of these technologies (as has often been said about technology-led development of Third World countries) is that it is hardly driven by the express wishes of its intended beneficiaries. Rather, it is driven by the logic of technocracy, which may sometimes *partially* help women in *certain* ways.

[T]here can be little doubt of the trajectory of perpetual reproductive and genetic control technologies – not merely the free-market eugenics that is developing right now, but a world in which sex is separated entirely from reproduction so that both may serve as forms of social control, as Huxley predicted. Ultimately, as the 'transhumanists' hope, both may become entirely redundant as humans finally achieve the masculine dream inherent in technocracy from its beginnings – the escape from the material, from embodied existence altogether, as we become entities of pure spirit running in computers. That vision is not merely anti-female, but anti-human.

1. ed. – Bacon viewed science and capitalism as divine. In addition to his part in the witch-hunts, he was a principle counsel for the colonisation of Virginia, and viewed resistance to the land enclosures going on in Britain as high treason, personally torturing captured fighters for months. While claiming seeking to enlarge the "bounds of Human Empire to make all things possible," he violently crushed those who reached for another life.

2. ed. – Actually, according to Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, "at about the time that Margaret Sanger's mother was a little girl, some elements of [the Popular Health Movement in the United States] were already pushing birth control". Additionally, she made racist statements about aboriginal Australians, lectured to the women's auxiliary of the Ku Klux Klan, and supported restrictions on immigration.

3. ed. – It was uncovered that thousands of Ethiopian immigrant women were being routinely injected with Depo-Provera (a "last resort" contraceptive not otherwise given, that stops menstruation and has been linked to fertility problems and osteoporosis) every three months in Israeli clinics, despite the denial of the Minister of Health. Women were started the jabs while still in transit camps in Ethiopia, some without being told they were being given birth control and many having no idea of the side-effects. Those who knew they what they were being administered risked their immigration to Israel being blocked if they refused, and receiving no further healthcare in the camps.

4. ed. – Coercing inmates of Californian prisons into sterilisation, which was uncovered during 2006-2010. Targeting of black and brown populations for sterilisation with various degrees of medical or financial coercion has been common practice in the U.S.A., where 25-50% of Native American women were also sterilised between 1970 and 1976 (priority selected for being "full-blooded Indian women"), at least a quarter without consent.

BRISTOL, BRITAIN'S FLAGSHIP 'SMART CITY'

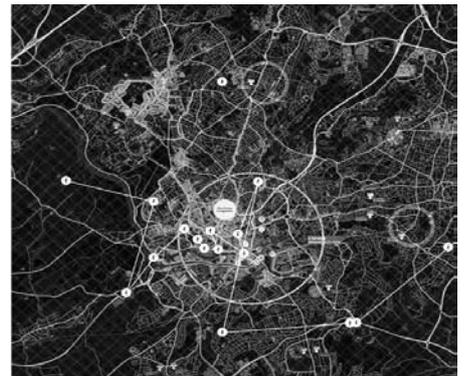
[ed. – Also see the supplement to this volume of *Return Fire*; 'Smarter Prison? – Call for War on the Technology Multinationals', online at 325.nostate.net/?tag=return-fire along with other volumes.]

"We're creating an environment where in a year or two, not five, the whole world will look at Bristol for the future of smart cities."
– Dimitra Simeonidou, High Performance Networks Lab, Bristol University

The city of Bristol, south west U.K., has begun a multi-million pound experiment to create the 'smart-city' of the future, which would cement Bristol as a global leader in the telecommunications world. The wider area of Avon (mainly the 'post-industrial' estates of Bristol and Bath) already hosts the largest digital technology sector in the British Isles outside of London, and receives funding from the government as such.

City authorities and allied technological entrepreneurs are working to kit out Bristol with a city-wide 'digital fabric' of the very latest in sensor and connectivity technology, to make it the world's first open 'programmable city'. A high-speed fibre-optic network (making use of disused cable ducting owned by the council) is being combined with a new 'city operating system' that will power an experimental network. In the coming spring of 2016, 1,500 sensor-equipped lampposts are being launched around the city; the vast majority of Bristol will be covered in a Radio Frequency (RF) mesh. This is predicted to revolutionise the way that emergency response, traffic management and other municipal services are handled, and track certain vehicle locations, with eventual alleged trickle-down 'benefits' such as informing residents of parking spaces and air pollution (ahem, from those parking spaces) in an increasingly mechanised and technified environment.

The 'Bristol Is Open' collaboration (between Bristol University, Silver Spring Networks and the city council) are running the project in partnership with NEC, the Japanese IT giant, to hook into other sensor-based technologies for the cities of the 'Big Data' future. 1,200 of the lampposts, along the 'Brunel mile' connecting the central train station with the harbourside commercial district, will act as WiFi nodes in a city-wide 'canopy of connectivity', and the remaining 300, also WiFi enabled, are to be used to test more advanced smart-city capabilities. This data will be managed and processed on the \$18 million BlueCrystal2 supercomputer at the University of Bristol. The supercomputer will run CityOS, an operating system designed specifically to handle communications throughout the smart-city network, designed by Professor Dimitria Simeonidou. As of March last year, the nascent project had already received £5.3 million in funding from the government's 'connected cities' plan, with a total of £75 million-worth of infrastructure and technology available from the city



council, university and a number of commercial partners.

This is the vision that NEC have for eventual life in such a city, according to their website: "A display on your dashboard window alerts you that weather conditions have made your usual route to work less favorable and, subsequently, reroutes your trip to the office based on real-time calculations of optimal conditions. As you pull into a public parking garage, another alert notifies you of the closest parking spot, determined by an estimation of your workplace based on your established commuting patterns. As you approach the office, you receive a reminder that today is Election Day. "Would you prefer to vote at a physical terminal (requiring 15 minutes of travel), or simply to cast your vote using your personal mobile device?" The decision was easy, and after a few taps, you select candidates for mayor, city council members, and citywide legislation. Such a description of a technologized city may sound somewhat far-fetched, even futuristic. But thanks to efforts currently underway in several major Western cities, such a vision is not one of the future but of present reality. Indeed, urban centers have increasingly adopted technologies like Big Data, the Internet of Things, and distributed sensors to produce what many are calling the Smart City of the future."

As well as investigating the potentials for a 'smarter' Bristol, this project is explicitly a test-run for implementing smart city technology around the world. The network has a built-in emulator that allows it to simulate any city in the world; data from New York could be taken and run on Bristol's network as if it were real. The system can then be exported and used elsewhere. **Essentially, Bristol is becoming a city-wide laboratory for Capital's urban favoured environment.**

The sensors will collate vast amounts of raw data, which the council is already equip with various 'Big Data' processing platforms to analyse; Bristol has already opened up almost two hundred of the city's data sets on traffic flows and energy use, crime

trends, targeted advertising, generating new innovative businesses, as well as encouraging citizens to interact with the city in new, digitalised ways. 'Acoustic detection sensors' have also been mentioned; similar uses have been made of microphone-equipped lampposts in major cities of the United States, with audio recording and gunshot detectors linked straight to police targeting 'high crime areas', to be combined with surveillance video. As opposed to the reactions which their use in obtaining convictions have earned across the Atlantic, as a precursor to the Bristol Is Open initiative the PAN innovation team began a four-week project in Bristol during 2013 called Hello Lamp Post, to introduce smart-city technologies more 'softly'. The project's co-creator, Ben Barker, was featured in media at the time. *"Smart cities, where technologies play an important role, tend to be perceived as high on efficiency yet low on warmer, human elements, Barker explains. "Our starting point was a desire to use the city's existing infrastructure to encourage human interaction through storytelling and story sharing."* In a bizarre mix between Artificial Intelligence and a chat forum, users were offered the opportunity to 'communicate' with street furniture like lampposts, postboxes, and bus stops via text message by using the repair numbers found on these objects as SMS codes. The object would "wake up" and respond in kind with a series of text messages, *"sharing interesting content about that specific location left by others who've come before"*.

Quite how this counts as human interaction escapes us, but then again we must be missing out on the 'smart' adaptation to a world where everything 'of worth' has a code number, where communication is something that happens through screens, where engagement with each other and the more-than-human world shrinks to an amputated and isolated interface with an algorithm. (Perhaps the banal and never-ending conversation about nothing which continuously unspools on the social network feeds can hint at the 'warmth' enabled by communication in our era.) The scale of this anthropocentric reduction can be read in Barker's claim that *"what's most interesting about this is that it will be very much an organic, living, evolving thing shaped and re-shaped according to how the people use it"*, as if the total limitations to any relation with a life outside the cybernetic maze were not inherent in the framework. If the consequences of PAN's initial experiment seem trivial, consider the calibre of its sponsors; including IBM, HP, Toshiba...

The managing director of Bristol Is Open, Paul Wilson, imagines a city in which emergency services arrive before anyone has placed a call, as well as using the grid for everything from keeping an eye on *"isolated elderly citizens"* (because, while on the daily treadmill, who has time to spend

with elders in actual person today, and wouldn't an algorithm be just as good?), to *"monitoring pollution levels, carbon emissions and energy consumption[... it is the] mother of all big data systems"*. (One could be forgiven for thinking of stipulations to punish those who don't recycle rigorously enough, or who consume their prescribed ecocidal products or power supplies 'inefficiently', etc...) Such networks are touted as potentially allowing various services which, in mass society, are deemed too complicated for human-scale self-management - such as monitoring one's health via a panorama of apps, to 'smart bins' which will communicate directly with the authorities when they're full. This is forecasted as a step further into the landscape in which everything which can be impregnated with microchips coalesces into an ambient environment, in constant communication with itself and the State; the so-called 'Internet of Things', where, of course, the people (human or not) become simply the 'things'.

A glance to other 'smart city' models unfolding currently, can inform us of the directions for Big Data (because the global techno-industrial innovators are certainly paying attention to each other). In Santa Cruz, U.S.A., computer systems analyse historical data to work out the prime places a 'property crime' (a.k.a. class war) is likely to occur at any given time, and direct police to the vicinity automatically. In Amsterdam, Holland, the Smart City Initiative provides a wireless network offering 'serious games' linked to domestic smart energy meters, to domesticate youngsters into the techno-rationality required for the 'eco-industrial' consumer of the future. **NEC themselves have worked for years in the fields of facial recognition technology, military hardware, crowd behaviour analysis technology and Artificial Intelligence, as well as mobile phone and nano-technology breakthroughs, and the Smart Cities provide a playground for their application.** For example, as they again boast on their website; *"NEC's internationally acclaimed biometric identification technologies are now being used on smartphones at South Australian Police and Northern Territory Police to fight crime and enable immediate identification. Biometrics in combination with access control and video monitoring systems will ensure Smart Cities are able to rapidly respond to safety incidents when required."*

The 'Bristol is Open' network means it is most likely that unfolding hi-tech projects (driverless cars specifically are often mentioned) will always come to Bristol first before being rolled out across the country, due to the unprecedented level of connectivity. The system already allows terabites-per-second data transfers for collaborative research and development programmes between global universities (Bristol Univeristy itself having, among other

things, a long history of military, vivisector and genetic-engineering scientists).

Meanwhile, Bristol Is Open has been in talks with leaders from China, India and Singapore who are interested in the model. Even in the more prosperous countries, hunger, homelessness, toxic chemicals in the water supply, the lack of affordable housing are all back on the agenda. **The global elites see it as a high priority to develop 'solutions' for the problems posed by rampant urbanisation, population pressure and 'resource' depletion. Of course the solutions will be only more technology, more control, and more greenwashing** – Bristol itself hosted the title of 'European Green Capital' for 2015 – and more profits for the same as usual. Many technology corporations are now taking on previous responsibilities of the State, and become key gateways to city services, along with so much else.

Almost two hundred years ago, in the midst of the urban squalor of the time, the man who gave his name to the 'Brunel Mile' where the most advanced of the Bristol is Open technology will be premiered was overseeing the construction of the well-known Clifton Suspension Bridge. Islambard Brunel was one of the most important figures of the Industrial Revolution, and the blight of his lauded works have changed the face of the English landscape. (One of his many other famous achievements was the first steam-ship to engage in trans-Atlantic service, smoothing the way for the continued colonisation of the Americas.) However, only days after the ceremony which launched the works was over, rioting broke out in Bristol after a local magistrate threatened a mob with imprisonment while he was opening the new Assize Courts, and the works were stopped. For three days the rioting didn't stop (during which the palace of the Bishop of Bristol, the Mansion House, and wealthy homes were looted and destroyed, along with demolition of much of the gaol), and Brunel himself was sworn in as a special constable. Finally order was restored after cavalry charged with drawn swords through the mob in central Queen's Square, but the uprising had seriously dented commerial confidence in Bristol, and construction of the bridge was much hampered.

At the dawn of the new industrial revolution of Big Data technologies and the converging sciences, a handful of attacks on university laboratory constructors, 'green' technology firms and civil order and tranquility itself have bloomed in the night around the city of Bristol in the last few years. Once again the investors, developers, financiers and technicians present themselves to those of us who, wherever we are, will not tolerate the scientifically-rationalised dystopia they have in store for us.

War on all things Smart

SPOILT FOR CHOICE

[ed. – A text from Italy, written to introduce an eponymous pamphlet detailing the contractors and businesses within the Italian borders which are involved in the MUOS military satellite installations of the U.S. military. Aside from the Italian project, the MUOS consists of three other ground stations (in the U.S., Australia and Hawaii) and five satellites, giving the possibility to coordinate and command the whole crewed and non-crewed military juggernaut on land, sea and in the air from a distance. The military base in Niscemi, where the Italian satellite installation is underway, is in a supposedly-protected cork oak forest. This nature reserve has already been used as one of the main bases for NATO drones in the Mediterranean, for example in the war on Libya. For the record, contrary to the assertions in this piece, we ourselves doubt that capitalism can 'find solutions' for any serious noxiousness that it produces, but these comrades ask us harsh but necessary questions about possible recuperation of environmentalist-centred struggles, which after all capitalism and the state are by this point well-practiced at...]

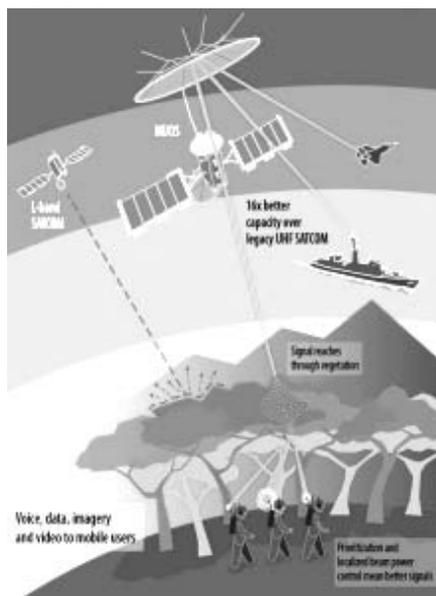
For months now we have been hearing about the MUOS and protests developing in the territory of Niscemi (Sicily) where there are already numerous antennas and one in particular under construction.

We have heard the diatribes of outraged politicians of every hue and the technicians and professors rushing to draw up reports and publish studies on the dangers of electromagnetic pollution and its impact on health and the environment, or on its absolute harmlessness. Words and speeches, sinister political commitments and populist deception.

Interventions by devious people are never lacking when there is a need to take the piss out of people or exploit their possible dissent.

If we venture into what the MUOS actually represents, we see right away how the views of politicians and scientists, authorities and institutions of all kinds and various hacks are aimed at recuperating any dissent concerning this project, which in reality is but one aspect of the problem of war and militarism.

The MUOS (Mobile User Objective System) is a modern system of satellite tele-communications of the US Navy, consisting of five very high frequency geostationary satellites (SATCOM) and four ground stations, including one in Niscemi with three huge satellite dishes 18 metres in diameter and two antennas 149 metres high. **Its intended functioning is to comprehensively co-ordinate the US military systems located all over the world, in particular drones, unmanned aircraft also stationed at Sigonella.**



The MUOS program, managed by the United States Department of Defence, is still in its development stage. Three of the four ground stations have been completed, while that of Niscemi is currently under construction and, it seems, in the completion phase. Of the five satellites, only the first was put into orbit in February 2012. It is expected that the latest satellite will be launched by 2015. Then the system will be fully functional [ed. – actually, the fifth and final satellite is expected to join it in orbit in July 2016, and the constellation is expected to be fully operational in 2017].

The MUOS system will integrate naval, air and land forces on the move anywhere in the world. Intended mainly for mobile users, the MUOS will transmit the voices of the users, data and video communications operating in the UHF frequency band, a frequency band lower than that used by traditional mobile networks. The MUOS will allow the military to communicate in disadvantaged environments, such as woods or forests.

Apart from the project in act, there are 41 operational antennas at the US military base at Niscemi whose aim is transmitting with military submarines since 1991.

The US military bases and antennas that have been functioning for years are an old problem. The MUOS project is a new one. These problems intertwine within the broader bleak horizon of

militarism and war, showing how technological development is moving towards the honing of military techniques, making the tools of war more functional



and incomprehensible. Looking at a huge antenna, you cannot imagine what is going on behind that mass of concrete, iron and metal wires: communications between soldiers juggled around by vile military strategists and used to bomb and subject millions of people, drones in action, piloted and guided battleships, helicopters and military aircraft. In a word, *silent and constant war.*

The complexity of strategic equilibrium, the vast range of the arms market today, the interpenetration of political and military dynamics at the supranational level, technology at a high level of development and acceptance, mean that war, aside from the gory images sporadically and pathetically formulated by the media, is meandering subtly through every aspect of our existence, taking shape under our noses, above our heads, all around us.

Let's ask ourselves why, despite the apparent scope of repression of a project like the MUOS globally, what is being pointed to is its impact on the landscape, the effects of electromagnetic waves on health, the business interests revolving around the project. Environmental destruction, disease, pollution are certainly not things that we like, but they are only some of the aspects of the machine's oppressive rule.

These are issues for which capital itself can find solutions: disguise the antennas, move them into the asphalt jungles rather than nature reserves, develop scientific methods to diminish the damage caused by electromagnetic waves, bring out laws to make the passage of money in

construction projects transparent, or even to ensure that the people themselves can gain something in financial terms! Here's how fear of getting ill, or seeing one's land destroyed or rendered unproductive are fears that are recuperable. Recuperable, like all fears. What is the point then in joining the chorus of those who raise the spectre of the environmental Holocaust, joining the already dense ranks of "terror"? This would result in being forced to entrust one's hopes to the tools made available by the enemy.

We believe that talking about MUOS means to speak of war, the problem is not disconnected from the overall social situation, but definitely connected with the "normal" conditions of oppression that we deal with on a daily basis. **War is the vital condition, the normal existence of power, as well as social control.** The problem of MUOS then – war and militarism – needs to be seen in a certain light. We intend to make a precise discourse.



We do not want to limit ourselves to highlighting the atrocities of war, the dynamics and the interests of economic, political and military colonialism. We intend to say more. We believe that in a perspective of struggle against militarism, war and the technological development that supports them, it is necessary to make a careful and detailed study of the various types of military presence in the area and their function in the sense of repression (barracks, prisons, military institutions and structures, war industries or those linked to this sector, war propaganda apparatus, companies related to the development of military projects etc.), set out the correct analysis and indicate the means and objectives. We believe it is essential to project ourselves towards a perspective of attack against humans and structures that make war possible.

BRINGING THE BATTLEFIELD HOME TO THE MILITARY & THEIR COLLABORATORS

18.01.16, Porto Alegre, Brazil: "[T]he rule of the machine is not ours..." *Wild Anti-Authoritarian Vandals' place an incendiary device against a tank stationed outside an army barracks. It is attacked again shortly after, and is withdrawn.* "We are definitely unsuitable for the functioning of the society based on the rule over all, over the earth, over all beings. [...] This action is not an isolated case, we are brothers in this action and intention with a flurry of actions around the world"; *mentioned are the occupations and blockades against a Monsanto plant in Argentina, Andean indigenous struggles, etc.*

13.12.15, Rethymno, Greece: *Anarchists carry out an incendiary attack against the Military Officers Club, to point out that "the role of the army is none other than repressing (we are aware that the army plays a decisive role in repressing migrants and refugees at Evros and the islands), cultivating a national esprit among executioners-citizens who are eager to swallow any nationalistic propaganda, and making sure the Greek military staff have excellent cooperation with their colleagues at NATO. For all the above and even more reasons, we chose to bring the fire there where they peacefully sleep and eat."*

24.10.15, Pont-de-Buis, France: *Report-back from the day, during a mobilisation against police weaponry that contextualised this demonstration at the NobelSport weapons factory: "Three hundred people descend slowly toward the gates. The crowd stops as it arrives at the entrance to the bridge, with some folks sitting on the ground, others pointing green lasers at the cops' eyes. [W]e release fireworks, rockets, rain down on them with railroad ties, bolts and stones, as if attempting to shatter the screen put in place for us. In the end, Molotov cocktails send it up in flames. As we slowly return, clamps and grappling hooks are passed through the crowd, which at this point is proceeding directly alongside the outer perimeter of the factory. Pieces of fence are ripped down, others carefully cut from top to bottom. A portable angle grinder goes to work on a gated entrance to the factory. Tear gas begins to rain down, half of it bouncing off the inner fence, before falling back toward the bewildered cops. Rocks and torn-up concrete again showers the police, with the occasional burst of flames. Finally, the demonstrators come together at the intersection of the street leading back to the camp, with a common élan: we arrive together, we leave together."*

06.10.15, Santiago, Chile: "[D]irect attacks against the institutions and representatives of power continue to propagate the need for individual and collective revolt for the destruction of the existent social order as our search for freedom continues. Armed with these ideas transformed into a few grams of gunpowder, a few liters of gasoline and a trigger mechanism that allowed us time to make a safe exit, we launched an incendiary attack [in the early hours] against the Chilean Air Force Personnel Command Religious Service building located on Cienfuegos street..." *Informal Anarchist Federation / International Revolutionary Front (F.A.I./F.R.I.) 'Fire & Consciousness'*

23.02.15, Kent, U.S.A.: *Two passenger vans of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (college-based program for training commissioned*

officers) burn on the Kent State University campus. The Lieutenant Colonel orders all Armed Forces cadets to wear civilian clothing while on campus afterwards.

05.11.14, Valparaíso, Chile: *Masked fighters attack the Naval Telecommunications Subcentre with rocks and molotovs, injuring a Marine. Naval Guard open fire as the assailants escape, but without reports of anyone being wounded.*

27.08.14, Bristol, U.K.: *In the build up to the NATO summit in South Wales (allegedly to be the most important since the fall of the Berlin Wall, with the world facing an unprecedented number of security crises), anarchists set fire to a minibus and car of the army and air force cadets. "In recent years, Schools Commissioner Elizabeth Sidewell suggested that every school should have a combined Cadet force "to increase the armed forces everyday contact and influence with young people" in order to ensure the continued support of the population. The presence of the military even in schools is presented as just a natural part of 'community' and that competition, discipline and top down obedience are necessary characteristics."*

28.11.13, Tokyo, Japan: *Yokota U.S. Air Force base, part of the long running occupation of Japan, is attacked with an improvised twin rocket launcher. The weapon consists of two metal tubes dug into the ground, with their upper ends pointing towards the base, connected to a simple timing device. There are no injuries when the rockets strike the base.*

04.11.13, Teramo, Italy: *Before a presentation of a new book about the 'heroes of war' in the town hall, locks are glued and tags left in hostility to the military and in remembrance of Augusto Masetti. (The latter, conscripted into the army to take part in the colonial expedition in Libya, with the cry of "Long live anarchy!" shot a Colonel who was addressing Bologna barracks in 1911.)*

23.09.13, Bandung, West Java: *An 'Indonesian Fraction' of the Earth Liberation Front (E.L.F.) use two incendiaries to torch a factory for bulletproof vests for military and police. "For their loyal services as guard dogs for the domestication of life, they are equipped with combat equipment that is used against free will and the aspirations of wild life [in] the face of the war that is addressed to their masters."*

10.03.13, Brussels, Belgium: *Considerable fire damage to an officeblock occupied by Siemens, as well as by Fujitsu and Cytec. Comrades of the area remind us that "Siemens is a big player on the international market of industrial technologies destroying the planet (from weaponry to nuclear, from factory technologies over train transport to household appliances); Fujitsu excels in the technological development and telecommunication transforming the world into a mega-machine with the human being as an accessory, while Cytes is a chemical plant producing high quality plastic like you can find everywhere on the fields, beaches, in the rivers and in the middle of the oceans."*

15.07.12, Toribio, Colombia: *About 400 indigenous people destroy communication towers of the military base after the president announced that they will not demilitarize an inch of the region, and fill in all the trenches in the area (supposedly a nature reserve) to restore ecological balance. This, despite pledges of the an 'indigenous leader' that the people wouldn't attack the army or steal their equipment.*

'TORN FROM OURSELVES'

06.06.12, Hannover, Germany: *A few weeks after European Union troops in the German-led mission to Somalia are permitted to fire on so-called 'pirate positions' on land, antagonists cut a hole in the fence to access the supply centre of the German Army, setting a large fire. Of the vehicle fleet, six big transport vans, three smaller vans and four cars are destroyed. "[W]e still see ourselves confronted with a German army which wages wars also starting from Hannover, in order to secure resources and to command trading routes, an army which trains assiduously in order to repress revolts and insurrections. [...] An army [which] is going to be deployed against the inner enemy. The deployment of Tornados against the demonstration in Heiligendamm [ed. – against the G8 summit of world leaders] has been a mere spectacular opening. [T]he German army strengthens its recruitment attempts in schools, universities and jobcentres. Everywhere the military pushes itself into the middle of society, resistance is possible."*

11.06.11, Butovskiy forest, Russia: *Arson of an underground service booth containing electrical measuring and control devices providing utilities to a military intelligence site. Ten days prior, two more military service booths had been burned. "[M]ore than 800 trees were cut during earthworks for this [supply line] to even appear in the forest. To hamper service brigades further, we also spiked the road they use for maintaining the system." All actions by F.A.I./E.L.F. 'International Network of Action and Solidarity'.*

31.03.11, Livorno, Italy: *A package bomb from the Informal Anarchist Federation is delivered to the Ruspoli barracks of the Parachutist Brigade Commando, which serves in Afghanistan. The blast injures the Lieutenant Colonel, chief of general staff of the Brigade, leaving injuries to his face and legs and leading to the amputation of three fingers of his hand.*

31.10.10, Trento, Italy: *Five hooded anarchists disrupt a conference being held at the Faculty of Sociology on security and the role of Italy in 'peacekeeping' missions ("the twenty-one theatres of war in which – from the Middle East to Africa – Italian troops are currently engaged") in the presence of two officers of the Carabinieri national military police, throwing red paint and smoke bombs. The professor of the Faculty of Law and one of the officers are taken to the hospital. "War needs a wide complicity of weapons factories, military bases, research centres (also universities, including Povo), lies in the mass media, conferences of propaganda. We do not want to be complicit with the massacres of democracy. That's all. We will not leave those who live in war in peace."*

23.10.10, Dhaka, Bangladesh: *Around ten thousand people of forty villages torched an army camp in Rupganj, at the outskirts of the capital, against the land-grabbing efforts of the army to build quarters for their officers. Some ruling party leaders along with several high police officials were beaten. The army evacuated their members from four camps by helicopters.*



[W]e must come to a place where we can say that we do not know for certain what gendered existence was like before civilization. And yet this revelation in no way alters our certainty that gender as we know it begins with civilization. If we invoke an orientation to an outside of civilized gender, then we are actually invoking another mystery, an ineffable which evades definition and capture. What would it mean to participate in life or death struggle against gender without knowing what existed before it? This would mean pursuing an outside which presents itself to us as shadows and chaos. It would mean fighting for the *wild*, without recourse to the *natural*.

[...] What we've elsewhere called queer desire is a tendency toward this primordial chaos. The task is to live it.

The journals of countless missionaries, explorers and anthropologists show that their accounts are tainted by their civilized attitudes toward gender and sexuality, but also that one of their primary operations is to force those attitudes upon the people they study. In *Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture* [ed. – see **'To Create & Maintain Their Wealth' / 'Sensuality, Magic & Anarchist Violence'**], Arthur Evans points to several of these, including a rather humorous example of the Greek historian Diodorus Siculus' disgust at the behavior of Celtic men in the 1st century BC: *"Although they have good-looking women, they pay very little attention to them, but are really crazy about having sex with men. They are accustomed to sleep on the ground on animal skins and roll around with male bed-mates on both sides. Heedless of their own dignity, they*

abandon without a qualm the bloom of their bodies to others. And the most incredible thing is that they don't think this is shameful."

All of this points to the great flaw of anthropology in regard to the question of gender. As the existence and universality of gendered categories is taken for granted, their accounts (and often their actions) will always function to enact a violence upon a wild range of human experience, severing it from its whole context and recounting that experience as an amputated and gendered one. **This isn't to say that we shouldn't read these stories. Instead it instructs us on how to read them.** If we can glean any useful direction from them, it is by reading these scientists as we would read any other enemy; critically, and with attention to the secrets hidden between the lines. And even when we can distill this or that, we still only have one story, from one culture, in one moment. To universalize these stories as representations and truths about all of humanity, as is often done by primitivist anthropology, is to falsify our understanding and erase an infinity of other possibilities and stories of people beyond civilization's snares. It is a reverence for this infinity which sets our inquiry apart from a *scientific* one. Science, after all, is also one myth among many. It is different only in that it refuses all stories but its own.

Some interpret these stories to mean that Patriarchy is one of the first pillars of civilization to emerge from domestication. Others glean that the gender division is the first duality, which makes domestication possible. Both versions draw circles around a third possibility:

Gender *is* domestication.

The two supposedly distinct phenomena appear as mutually constituting because they are one and the same phenomenon. Earlier we said that domestication is the capture of living things by something non-living. It is also the process where capture is internalized by living beings who are then shaped into pre-determined roles.

"When a path seems familiar to us we should go off it and look for the unknown, the wild, the free one. We must glance at the horizon and say: 'I am coming to you even if we never meet!'"

– Giannis Naxakis
[see *Return Fire* vol.2 pg74]





The non-living thing is immortal and continues long after its captives are dead, and that it is constantly accumulating new lives in order to reproduce itself. **Gender is precisely this non-living institution which tears individuals away from themselves and reconstitutes them as a pre-determined role.** Gender would be an empty husk if it wasn't for its constant capture of new bodies; bodies which in turn give it life. Isn't the first incursion of Civilization into the life of a wild newborn always to proclaim its gender? It is the first separation which gives rise to all others. Gender is the cipher through which Leviathan categorizes and understands each and every one of the beings trapped in its entrails. A whole destiny of experience is inscribed on our bodies from it.

We should also remember that we previously identified a theme where domesticated people invoke the image of those they are not and never were to justify their own machinations and violence. In gender, we see all the ways that the gender binary is naturalized as sex and projected into pre-history as a way of explaining and rationalizing (essentializing) all of these experiences of violence. We are told those assigned female are meant to be mothers, and therefore it is in their nature to endure pain, to be caretakers, to submit to external authority. Those assigned male are virile hunters and warriors, violence and rape are supposedly intrinsic to their nature. Homosexuals are aberrations in nature, and thus they are fated for exile in their short, brutal and diseased lives. Every mask of the natural is only ever a lie told by Leviathan to justify its own activity.

An understanding of *gender as domestication* is supported by the inquiries of a handful of anti-colonial theorists of gender such as María Lugones, Andrea Smith and Oyèrónké Oyèwùmí. Smith, for example, horrifyingly illustrates the use of sexual violence as strategy of Leviathan's conquest of the Americas. More so, she argues that colonialism is itself structured

by sexual violence. Lugones, as another example, argues that gender itself is violently introduced by colonial civilization. She says it is consistently and contemporarily used to destroy peoples, cosmologies and communities in order to form the building ground of the 'civilized West.' She argues that the colonial system produces different racialized genders, but more importantly *institutes gender itself* as a way of organizing relations, knowledges and cosmic understanding. This is useful because it refuses a universal or natural understanding of Patriarchy that lacks a critique of racial and heteronormative colonialism. Instead, her argument helps us to describe gender as something that spreads, consumes and destroys. She describes this process as the Colonial/Modern Gender System. This system entails the naturalization of the sexual binary, the demonization of a racial and hermaphroditic other, and the violent eradication of everything outside civilization: third genders, homosexuality, gynocentric knowledges and non-gendered existence, etc. Oyèrónké Oyèwùmí in *The Invention of Women* describes how gender was not an organizing principle in Yoruba society prior to colonization. She says that patriarchy only emerges when Yoruba society is "translated into english to fit the western pattern of body reasoning." She locates the dominance of civilization's gender system in its *documentation and interpretation* of the world. "Researchers always find gender when they look for it."

Within [ed. – specifically European] colonialism, new subject categories were created by western Civilization and were racialized and engendered as the foundation of the new colonial state. **This creation process is composed of several operations: the introduction and entrenchment of gender roles, the imposition of Male gods, the formation of Patriarchal colonial government, the displacement of people from their traditional means of subsistence and the violent institution of the Family.** These operations serve as a revision which recasts and genders tribal life and spirituality. **This engendering does more than create the victimized category of women, but also constructs men as collaborators in domestication.** Lugones cites the British strategy of bringing indigenous men to English schools where they would be instructed in the ways of civilized gender. These men would work within the colonial state to deprive women of their previous power to declare war, bear arms and determine their own relationships. She also cites the Spanish

strategy of criminalizing sodomy among colonized populations, intertwining it with racialized hatred of the Moors [ed. – *Muslim colonists of the majority of the Iberian peninsula between the 8th century until Christian re-conquest eight hundred years later*] and other 'primitive' people.

These theorists employ stories and examples of 'third genders' not as a literal description of a three gendered system, but instead as a place holder for the infinite range of bodily possibility which exists outside the colonial system. They argue that domestication has to be imposed as gender in order to disintegrate all the communal and free relationships, rituals and overlapping means of survival. **And as the civilized ideal of racial gender is naturalized, everything outside of itself is fair game for capture, domination and reshaping. Colonialism itself is often described through the racial and sexual metaphor of the white male explorer uncovering and pillaging the dark female continents, forcing her to submit and planting the seed of civilization.**

From this perspective, we can recognize all the incidents of gendered and racial violence in our lives as *repetitions of this first capture*. Sex work, abusive relationships, body dysmorphia, marriage, sexual abuse, familial constraint, date rape, gang rape, queer bashing, psychiatry, electroshock therapy, eating disorders, domestic labor, unwanted pregnancy, fetishization, emotional labor, street harassment, pornography: **each instance is a moment where we are torn from ourselves, taken by another, captured and determined as a brutal repetition of the primary rupture which denied us a life lived by and for ourselves.** In this schema, the assimilation and medicalization of queer and transgendered people can be understood as a re-capture of rebellious bodies. Police murder and racist vigilantism can likewise be understood as functions of this capture.

It is worth noting here that to understand *gender as domestication* is crucially different from understanding *patriarchy as a consequence of domestication*, in that the former is a break from the trap of essentialism. None of the above is limited to one subject of the gendered world. Rape, for example, is not solely the experience of women (as is often claimed by various regurgitations of second wave feminism), but is a disgustingly widespread experience among people of all genders. The assertion that any form of gender violence is the exclusive property of one category of people would be laughable if it weren't for the litany of horrors which serve to disprove it. More sinisterly, these type of essentialist assertions obscure and shame those who experience an entire range of

very real experiences of gender violence. **Situating gender as domestication is a way to understand gender violence outside of an essentialist and white framework.** Without this understanding, all theories which attribute some natural dimension to sex/gender (from eco-feminist to Marxist feminist) are structurally unable to account for the violence, capture, and exclusion experienced by anyone who deviates from the gender binary or the heterosexual matrix. These ideologies will expand to pay lip-service to queer and transpeople, but they never alter the structure of their theory. This amounts to little more than the liberal politics of inclusion. If, however, we understand gender as something which captures us, rather than something natural to us (or extracted from our biological existence), we can begin to analyze all the methods of domination experienced by queer or transgender people. Brutality and exclusion come to be recognized as the policing methods by which individuals remain captured; assimilation and exploitation represent a more sophisticated capture. From here I can see the line which binds together the boys who called me *faggot* as a teenager and the gay men who would pay me for sex a few years later. Everything about the refusal of gender follows from this. The criticism of identity, assimilation, medicalization or any technique of the self becomes meaningful once it is placed in this continuum.

[...] In the same way that gender splits bodies and marks them for circulation, race further elaborates this separation. Those captured as black women, for example, were circulated within the slave system and marked as hyper-sexual, perverse, and strong; justifying their rape, hard labor and forced reproduction. The children they produced were taken from them and circulated, while they themselves were forced to wet nurse the white children of their masters. **The racist figures of the mammy and the sexually aggressive woman were (and still are) put to use to justify the circulation and domination of the bodies of black women.**

[...] It is up to us to locate this dynamic of bodily and spiritual domestication as being the foundation of all gendered violence, and not simply of the violence against women. We've already said that no gendered violence belongs to any one category, but it bears repeating. This dynamic is at much at play in the systematic abuse of young boys by priests as it is in the gang rape in military barracks and fraternities, as it is in sex slavery in prisons. **The circulation of bodies is obvious in these extreme instances, but it is also more subtle: in advertising and pornography (gay and straight), in dating (of the monogamous or polyamorous varieties), in sex work and**



Air past its sell-by date
 expired soil
 not swimming
 dead in the water
 stuck in limbo
 lying in-state
 lay-by breakfast
 fast-food vomit
 open-air concert
 paying through the nose
 a bird's-eye view
 of a clearfelled landscape
 dead-end job
 suspended in time
 crash-course in love
 marriage in outerspace real-estate
 double-yolker battery-egg
 to free-range twins
 with restricted living

solar-powered electric chair
 eco-friendly execution
 greenwash propaganda
 cardboard funeral
 for an ethical death
 wind-powered hearse
 is the direction forward

a readily complying crimestopper
 in the age of speed-dialing
 your fingers are only millimetres
 away from the SatNav
 to help you locate your grave
 they say every screen opens up
 yet another window of
 opportunity
 (all eyes fixed)
 another nail in the coffin
 that seals/steals
 your imagination.

service work, in the technophilic ways we cruise, and in the ways we learn. It is present in the 'my' which always corresponds to boyfriend, wife, daughter, partner. It is what remains unspoken in initiatory rites of secret orders of husbands, rapists and jailers. All of it – from the most abominable to the most minute – is the unending dynamic of bodily capture, spiritual submission, and circulation.



Windows broken, slogans painted at Haliç University in Istanbul, Turkey, 01.05.14

A FLOURISHING MOVEMENT & A LABORATORY OF REPRESSION

– Interview with a Mexican Comrade

Translated from the French-language anarchist journal *Des Ruins* #1

1. Can you introduce yourself?

I align myself with an anarchism of revolt, of rage and action that leaves full scope for individual autonomy that, in general, [organised] structures know how to stifle so well. I have many doubts about organised anarchism and difficult relationships with it. In theory, I think that an organisation with clear anarchist principles (like the Spanish CNT [ed. – *National Confederation of Labour, anarcho-syndicalist trade union*]) can be a good tool. In practice, it's obviously more complicated. In any case, it's an eternal debate and there have always been points of contact between tendencies, more than we usually say.

In any case, I think that the existing organisations offer an anarchism that's dusty, distant from action. As for me, I therefore remain committed to evolving, according to affinities with groups or conscious individuals, in maintaining an affirmed libertarian position, within social movements if there should be this work. Generally speaking, I consider that many current professions of anarchist radicalism are often smokescreens allowing them to make surprising leaps from the basic principles, and to display a beautiful demagoguery in the discourse and historical interpretation of their own movement.

While the re-appropriation and critical reevaluation of anarchist history – the struggle against the demagogic discourses – are important issues, not in the aim of leaving people in total doubt (which is what so many professionals of pseudo-deconstruction do so well), but rather to clarify strong collective and individual perspectives, to struggle with more relevance and sharpen our weapons. These objectives can only be achieved through trusted libertarian relationships between individuals and by a discourse of rupture.

2. From here in France, we often hear more spoken about – and contacts are equally more numerous from – Chilean, Argentine or North American anarchism. Can you try to identify some specificities and similarities of the Mexican movement with these other countries?



After the Magonista's defeat^[1], the institutionalisation of the Mexican Revolution and the integration of the labor movement in the '20s, the Mexican anarchist movement of action had more or less disappeared. There was a certain libertarian revival from the '90s, particularly through the punk scene. The anarchist movement today consists of a fairly large number of collectives, mainly in a few big cities. Libertarian thought and practices are developing very rapidly and evoke a lot of interest.

As for the difference with other countries on the continent, the production of theory here is still very weak, without doubt due to anarchism oriented towards action being relatively new, the difficulty of getting a hold of materials, the absence of spaces to meet (they can be counted, for the country, on the fingers of one hand). There are many exchanges, discussion, and relationships between individuals and collectives of different tendencies (anarchist and anti-authoritarian): at the same time because the state of mind is very positive and open, and also, in my opinion, because the lines of these groups are still very vague. Relatively often, there are positions or actions that one could find to be very surprising in a country where an anarchist presence is more rooted, and sometimes very ambiguous things. In a country where the struggles are part of daily life, where the social movement is large and active, that knows a strong history of local resistance or guerrilla movements, there exists a real dynamism, of experience, a strong involvement of individuals on the ground. **It seems**

to me that the primary specificity of Mexican anarchism is to be in its ties to communitarian struggles, in particular the region's indigenous peoples. With the recent furthering of the process of indigenous autonomy in the majority of the regions of the country, these ties are strengthening. Which poses quite a few questions.

3. We can easily affirm with certainty, then, that the anarchist movement in Mexico is a young movement. I imagine that this implies both some qualities and some faults. We could, for instance, lament the lack of critical or theoretical analysis, which probably must be felt in practice. But on the other hand, Mexico being a particularly socially violent country, the level of violence that comes from the movement is very symptomatic of this. We could take as example the group *Individualidades Tendiendo a lo Salvaje (ITS)* which claimed several assassinations of scientists [ed. – actually to date there has only been one confirmed fatality from actions they've claimed; see *Return Fire vol.1 pg71*], or several attacks signed by the FAI [ed. – see *Return Fire vol.2 pg44*] or [the Mexican chapter of] the CCF [ed. – see *Return Fire vol.1 pg40*] of which the level of intensity is probably higher than in the rest of the world. Thus, we find ourselves with an inverse situation to many countries, where the practical experimentation is much more developed than the more theoretical and sometimes detached. Could you share your feelings on this with us, and try to describe the reception that armed-struggle-ist theories could have amongst comrades?

It is certain that the practices suffer from the lack of theoretical analyses. It seems to me to be a fundamental point, even if things evolve and improve. There remains, in Mexico, including in the anarchist movement, a certain admiration for the movements of armed struggle of the guerrilla variety. These movements were very strong in the '70s-80s, and continue to exist, several which are active in the country. We sometimes find, in certain



11.06.11: Thirteen capitalist stores destroyed in Ciudad Juarez at Las Torres shopping centre, after an arson by Conspiracy of Cells of Fire (Mexico) / Informal Anarchist Federation 'Chihuahua Section'

communiqués of activist groups, some pronounced militarist emphasis a bit problematic for some anarchists. But in the majority of cases, these communiqués more resemble those coming from [anarchists in] Greece or elsewhere. The case of ITS is a bit different: like they clearly say in a recent interview with Contra Info, they don't claim to be anarchist. And the possible comparisons stop there.

It doesn't seem to me that the social violence known to the country actually evolves the practices of the social movement or of the anarchist movement (taken as a whole) towards being more violent. These consequences are, however, important: infiltration, weakening or quasi-devastation of the centres of struggle in certain parts of the country. **The insurrectionalist practices have only recently known a certain popularity, in the poor neighbourhoods of Mexico City for instance. There are probably, at least in part, a very logical response to the military occupation these neighborhoods (and the country in its entirety) are known for, where it is practically impossible to go for a walk without finding yourself in front of units of diverse and varied armed forces. And perhaps also to the recent establishment of narco-traffickers from cartels, who enormously weaken social links, make difficult collective struggle and favour clandestinity.** The practice of violence is part of the Mexican social movement, and even more so indigenous communities. Armed communities are far from the exception. Their very solid 'formation' is born from diverse experiences (colonisation, the Mexican revolution, guerillas, etc) which makes their preparation and their capacity for action truly impressive. Which is why comrades frequently visit them and draw teachings from them.

4. In fact, in regards to the struggle of indigenous populations, they are rarely critical of nationalism, or the concepts of a "people", of "nation", of spiritual leaders or earthly leaders, who are however very often present in these communities. We know that numerous comrades, from South America to Canada, are implicated in their struggles, but don't always demonstrate a critical attitude towards these conceptions. Is this also the case in Mexico? And could you tell us more on this subject?

I think that there is a lack of critical reflection among many anarchists, of all tendencies, on what could be encompassed in certain community demands. It seems to me that it is too common, that this exists for a long time in the movement, and that it touches the fairly

taboo question of demagoguery: **the need to get closer, to be involved in the struggles, often meaning a casualness concerning our own conceptions, a lack of affirmation of what we are and what we want, under the argument of opening, of solidarity with the oppressed, to not shock people, etc.**

It is essential, in my mind, to refine our analyses and our positions on this theme: to know what

we support in the struggles and the demands, and what seems to be contrary to us to the idea of freedom, emancipation, etc. Indigenous communities make up perhaps the *avant-garde* of the Mexican social movement. The fact remains that numerous demands, conceptions and workings are problematic: identitarian demands, forms of traditional authority, idealisation of the community, internal inequalities, etc. Whether many hope to hide them or only mention them quickly to minimise the effects doesn't change much.

The virtual absence of critical texts on Zapatismo [ed. – *culture of acclaim around the Zapatistas*^[2]], for a movement of such a large scale, that many know from experience (the communities welcome many people), that in general publishes texts of weak theoretical and analytical content, says a lot about it. Or the European analyses of different indigenous struggles, often strongly tinged with essentialism, and which display schematic readings of the indigenous world. This is filled by many more contradictions and issues that don't give a hint of these texts. We only rarely mention the infiltration of ideologies in the communities (socialism, Marxism, etc), the relationships with "modernity" and the outside, their long tradition of organisation (and the phenomenon of bureaucratisation of their structures), the forms that take the universal tension between people and community (the important departure of youth towards the US, including in Zapatista communities, for instance, the aspirations, the forms, the "deviances", etc.)

I think that the demands focused on culture, costumes, traditions, very present in Zapatismo and in the struggles of the communities, often obscures ambiguous notions for those who are attached to individual freedom: religion, practices tainted by authoritarianism (concerning age, status, for example), detainment of people in frameworks and defined

practices. In Juchitán, in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, where a very strong struggle is taking place against the wind turbines, several demands of the Popular Assembly of the Juchitán People are very conservative: strengthening (Catholic)

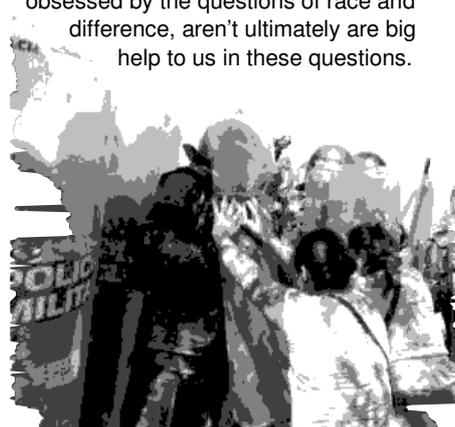
religious practices, wearing traditional Zapotec clothing. And their seeing in the *Muxes* (trans people) the testimony of an astounding freedom of morals, that reveals a very limited

analysis of Zapotec society to us. I don't believe that the objective is to leave out indigenous struggles or to denounce, with a very intellectual venom, the peculiarities of communities.

Its necessary to know them, to understand them. The processes that unfold are interesting, like many practices, activities, understandings. Many comrades who struggle there demonstrate an impressive courage and persistence. **But more of a critical perspective (that we invoke everywhere else) is essential. At least we don't want to continue to visit communities where it happens that we, anarchists, are quietly served by women, where we kindly assist elder's councils (which in the demagogic language transforms into "assemblies") or in traditional marriages, and keep quiet about our differences and reject them as secondary seems to us fitting, appropriate and coherent. All this implies a confrontation of ideas, the preparation, the rejection of the idealisation of other societies (of which many of us have a penchant for). It's much more difficult that the outrageous simplifications which we are used to on minority societies.** And the "anarchist anthropologists", the university thinkers and the new libertarian "currents", obsessed by the questions of race and difference, aren't ultimately are big help to us in these questions.



Volcanes city bus torched by anarchists, in solidarity with the fight against wind-power megaprojects in Istmo de Tehuantepec and the "artificialized life that arises from 'civilized progress'..."



5. It's very interesting... This "demagoguery" that you speak of, we find it over here especially in the struggles on the side of migrants or homeless people, or any other "category" of which the struggle is generally related to the immediate needs rather than to more general aspirations. But even if we could believe that the inspiration of these struggles today is uniquely the Left, we would be mistaken, since the autonomous movement of the '70s and after generally centered its struggles on the issues of needs too (through rent or electricity strikes, auto-reductions [ed. – public collective shoplifting] inspired by humanitarianism, etc.), a tradition which we, anarchists, are a few of those trying to take apart today. But it's a tradition that doesn't exist in Mexico, for instance. One wonders a bit, as a result, what are the most prominent tendencies in the radical milieu in Mexico? Do the anarchists have lots of theoretical space to move and create, or is the terrain already, as it is here in France, undermined by tendencies barely critical of authoritarianism?

It's a difficult topic. What you say is true, and at the same time the problem of the relevance to participate in movements and those of methods of intervention is always posed to anarchists. What is quite embarrassing, in my mind, is rather that which currently occurs a bit everywhere in the world: a barely critical active participation, the lack of highlighting of our practices and clear aims. It seems to me that Mexican anarchists have a fair bit of room to move: organisations that have long ambiguous history, are authoritarian and alienating don't exist here. Authoritarianism comes rather from the substantial number of Marxist organisations. In certain cases, this can come also from anarchist groups or collectives more or less juvenile, lacking



Mexico City clashes during 31.08.13 demonstration after the opening-up of the oil market to big business; see Return Fire vol.2 pg58

the experience and with vague principles. It seems to me that the main problem remains the lack of assertion mentioned above. Many anarchists, for example, participated in recent school teacher's movement, without this participation being translated by an important theoretical or practical contribution: or a distancing regarding the strategies and reformist functions of the CNTE^[39].



There exists an enormous difference between the aim of the "democratisation" of structure, very strong the Mexican social movement (tied to their verticality and control from above), and anarchist aims. This can create confusion, and anarchists have

the largest interest in distinguishing themselves from it. In a general way, the small "self-managed" projects, cooperatives, and "socialising" activities occupy a very important place in the movement. Of course, it poses the same questions and has the same limits as in France, even if one can't bring them all together under the same banner, or reject them all entirely. But it is certain that many conditions seem gathered in order for anarchist to be able to develop in an important way in Mexico. What remains to be seen is how.

6. Exactly! There is the Mexican state who in this moment appears to have understood that anarchism is in process of quickly developing, and one saw quite a few instances of anti-anarchist repression pile up on each other these last months. Could you give us several clarifications and briefly summarise all these matters? We speak of the climate that this repression establishes among the comrades? And especially, do you think that this repression affects the growth of the movement, or the opposite?

There were so many cases in 2013 that it would be long to list them. Mexico is a true laboratory of repression, and the state has a long experience of infiltration and co-optation of movements.

For some time now, it particularly puts emphasis on the repression of anarchists: there are arrests during all the demonstrations,

movements and important events (in addition to more targeted arrests), and often convictions. It is important to specify that the media regularly insist on the danger that the encapuchadxs (hooded ones) in the demonstrations represent, and one saw many times over different tendencies of the Left reproach them by their own account.

The result of these politics is a certain stigmatisation of anarchists for their "violence"... There are several tensions between groups around the question of violent actions, a bit like elsewhere. And the same sectarian arguments are sometimes used against those who carry them out. It's true that the anarchist milieu, just as the rest of the social movement, is quite infiltrated. This doesn't justify the accusations of certain anarchists against the comrades, even if they may make errors or lack experience.

The most recent news to date is the extended detentions (despite the absence of proof against them and the legal limit of detention) of Mario "El Tripa" López and of Carlos, Fallon, and Amélie (accused of terrorism) [ed. – for more recent info, see *'Towards the Unknown'*]. Mario González was sentenced in January to five years and nine months of mandatory imprisonment for "attacks on the public order" [ed. – i.e. rioting; he is now free]. Eight [other] comrades arrested during the commemorative march of October 2nd^[4] are awaiting their sentencing. It's clearly a matter of making examples. These cases add to the already very numerous cases of militants from diverse tendencies that are regularly imprisoned or assassinated.

Nothing indicates a priori that this repression affects the growth of the movement, even if it can weaken certain groups. The country is used to a high level of repression, and individuals who frequent the revolutionary milieus understand these risks. On the whole, despite their disagreements (and the accusations mentioned above), the anarchists, thankfully, show much solidarity with prisoners.

7. To stay on a shitty subject, could you recount what happened when a false communique was issued about the so-called death of a comrade in Mexico? This non-event, a serious thing for me, provoked quite a few lively polemics, here and probably elsewhere as well. Also, a bit of time has passed, do you have more info today on the why and how (and who) of this somber story?

The matter remains very shady, and the members of the collective responsible for the diffusion of this false info rejected responsibility... without having clearly established what happened and explained their error. What this betrays, is above all a

lack of experience and of principles in the internal workings of certain collectives, which manifests through, among other things, an unrestrained poorly controlled use of social networks. One imagines that this could contribute to other levels... The lack of responsibility of certain individuals unfortunately leaves the way to all speculations, especially knowing the degree of infiltration of anarchist milieu in Mexico.

8. Could you also tell us some thoughts on the Che Guevara occupation where international and informal anarchist gatherings took place some time ago?

There is a long history of battles between the university, Leftist organisations, and more-or-less self-managed and anarchist collectives for the management of this occupied space of UNAM, the largest university of the country, in Mexico City. This has manifested in the past, and again more recently, by very violent events (in February the anarchists there were attacked by a very well armed Leftist group). If it is evidently necessary to denounce these attacks (which was done), it seems to me equally necessary that the anarchist presence in such a large space poses numerous questions for us: it is situated in the university, implies a permanent presence (notably during the night), to permanently be on the lookout faced with the administration and its strategies of co-optation and infiltration or faced with other organisations, a working relationship with self-proclaimed self-managed groups who aren't necessarily clear on their practices and aims. What are the issues? On what basis? It seems to me that the defense of the space against the elements that would want to seize it often prevents that the question is asked on the basis of strategy. It's necessary to do this as to have a critical analysis of the organisation of the Informal Anarchic Days of December 2013^[5].

9. What are, in your view, the most important objectives that anarchists in Mexico must give themselves?

Developing a critical analysis of the existent and some clearer anarchist positions in relation to the questions asked in the radical milieu: social movements (Zapatismo, autonomies, syndicalist struggles, self-defense groups^[6], etc.), strong influence of the university milieu or "counter-cultures", technology, commerce, cooperatives and "self-managed projects", management of collective spaces like the Che occupation. Because for the most part of these questions, the positions and practices of anarchists separate

themselves still too little from the influence of the milieu of Leftists, reformists, etc. and occasionally leads to certain ambiguities. To strengthen the contacts and regular exchanges with the comrades of Spanish speaking countries. To leave the university milieu to which all the tendencies of anarchism still remain very confined and to continue on the direction of presence in the neighborhoods. To continue to communicate around the forms that the strategies of repression of the Mexican state take, of its current harassment against anarchists, and on the support of imprisoned comrades.



1. ed. – Reference to a series of insurrections for 'Land & Liberty' leading into the Mexican Revolution, of which the part-indigenous (Zapotec) anarchist Ricardo Flores Magon was an instigator and intellectual contributor. The rebellions were betrayed by reformists, and Magon died in prison in the U.S.A.

2. ed. – E.Z.L.N. is the Zapatista Army of National Liberation. (Zapatismo was originally an early-twentieth century peasants movement inspired by Emiliano Zapata Salazar, the main



leader in the state of Chiapas during the Mexican Revolution.) Here are some thoughts by Carlos López (see 'Towards the Unknown') on the matter. "An example of these inconsistencies is the EZLN where a clear contradiction is shown in that many anarchists, or anarcho-zapatistas, of alleged anti-authoritarian posture, support and identify with this army, of communist tendency and authoritarian structure. These anarcho-zapatistas are influenced by slogans such as "command by obeying", and we say that command always

generates power and therefore there will always be someone to obey, despite the Zapatistas saying that "it is the people who command and the government that obeys". It is goes without saying that I do not refuse to acknowledge the worthy struggle undertaken in 1994 by the EZLN against the State, earning hundreds of supporters all over the world for their cause; and it happened that many anarchists were captivated by the "Sixth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle", but the disappointment of realising that an authoritarian practice continued to exist, despite the alleged libertarian discourse, soon arrived."

3. Coordination built by "democratic" unions of the SNTE (Unique Union of Education Workers), a corrupt and bureaucratic organisation. There develops all the tendencies of Leftism of Mexico.

4. In reference to the massacre of students on October 2th, 1968 in Tlatelolco in Mexico City. [ed. – An estimated 300 shot down by military and police during a demonstration 10 days before the opening of the Olympic Games, in a country wracked by rising social tensions. The event is considered part of the Mexican Dirty War, when the government used its forces to outright suppress political opposition.]

5. ed. – Comrades from as far away as Greece, England, U.S.A., Italy, and Chile attended the event, during which Cuban anarchist Gustavo Rodriguez was kidnapped by federal agents, tortured, interrogated and deported to the U.S.A.

6. A complex "popular" movement recently emerged in the narco-state of Michoacán to struggle against the presence of several cartels.. with quite an unclear articulation, the strong influence of landowners who arm their agricultural workers... in which we certainly see an attempt at capitalist recomposition of the regions, although the movement isn't limited to this.



Police guard the wrecked property of the Italian Embassy, bombed 13.12.11 in solidarity with Italy's anarchist prisoners, by 'Autonomous Cells for Immediate Revolution - Praxedis G. Guerrero' (see Return Fire vol.2 pg61)

'TOWARDS THE UNKNOWN'



[ed. – Some background; on January 5th of 2014, two groups of coordinated people in Mexico City attacked the Ministry of Transport & Communications (who had instituted a violently-opposed fare hike for the city metro the month before) with rocks and molotovs, while torching several vehicles of the adjoining Nissan car dealership. The anarchists Carlos, Fallon and Amélie were arrested in the streets nearby. **The next year consisted of imprisonment, court cases and, in the case of Carlos, hunger strike along with other Mexican anarchist prisoners.** Solidarity was felt across the world, from attacks on Mexican consulate and banking institution property in North America, benefit events like skill-sharing and alternative therapies in Italy or punk gigs in Canada, to banner-drops and car-burning in England, France and beyond.

Fallon and Amélie wrote after their initial trials, where the judge "handed down a sentence of seven and a half years' prison on charges of "Arson to a public building with people inside," this for the damage caused to the "Mexican communication and transport offices". The "people inside" are the two federal pigs that were in charge of the security of the place. [Then] we received the second sentence for the common court charges of "damage to private property in a group" and "breach of the peace". These charges relate to the attack that occurred at the car dealership of Nissan. It being on the corner [of the Ministry] where we burned the cars. [W]e carry on, with strength in our hearts and shitting on justice and the State. We do not expect anything from the law, even if we really want to get out of here. [...] Fire to civilization, war on society. Until freedom and beyond!"

Finally however, their conviction for the Nissan damages was upheld, but they were acquitted on appeal for the other part of the action, and bailed out of jail. Fallon and Amélie were deported from the country fairly swiftly. **In numerous letters from inside, the 5E3 (three-of-the-5th-of-January, the date of the action and arrest) and Fallon and Amélie in particular made clear that they should not be confused with Leftist so-called 'political prisoners', and rejected the approach of "presismo" (described as pejoratively referring to "a form of victimisation and idealisation of "political" prisoners, and of making anti-prison**

struggle a specific, partial one and in which the main activities are characterised as assistance to "political" prisoners and prison reformism").

Following their release, the Cruz Negra Anarquista México (Anarchist Black Cross of Mexico) wrote some thoughts. "The fact of having been acquitted of one of the charges, rather than speaking of innocence and guilt, it indicates that the State did not construct its repressive theatre very well and that is why it has ended up collapsing, as happened with the accusations of terrorism that [the 5E3] faced for the first 40 days of their arrest when they were held in the National Centro de Arraigos. **We think it is likely that the State is sharpening its sights for the next repressive blow and therefore invite you to constantly think well about our security practices and at the same time remain prepared, because we are sure that the anti-anarchist campaign of the Mexican State will continue.** It fills us with joy to know that our comrades are in the street again! Yet we miss other prisoners!"

Indeed, not long afterwards, another anarchist prisoner who had recently been released, 'Tripa' (see **Return Fire vol.1 pg98**), was re-arrested and threatened with more jail-time. **He chose to avoid the judicial controls and go into clandestinity;** and Carlos followed suit not long after. What follows is his letter on this decision.

We also follow it up with a translated text which was written by Mexican comrades before any of the 5E3 released a letter (you can find a booklet online of more of their own words compiled by the counter-information site Act For Freedom Now!) regarding the assault on the Ministry of Transport & Communications. **We respect the stance presented in such a situation, to extend the attack by furthering the discourse around the target. Strength to Carlos, and importantly also his courageous accomplices who together thwart the authorities** (and are often forgotten when we honour those roaming as illegals – an amnesia in which we see a reproduction of the patriarchal neglect of the relationships which truly nourish and enable our struggles; as Carlos reminds us below, "taking care of our own is also an insurrectionary act".) Love and courage for the other comrades we feel close to, who aid and abet their own.]

"When we decide to turn our lives into propaganda by the deed and not only through words, fighting to the death against power complicates our existence to the point of reality where the enemy wants to see us annihilated and/or behind bars. [...] For this reason, we think it's necessary to reflect on clandestinity from our anti-authoritarian perspective, which is not static, but is constantly enriching and developing as praxis (theory-by-action) freed from all ideological limitations. [T]here have existed and exist today anti-authoritarian comrades who at some time in their lives decided to go into clandestinity, not because it is a superior form of struggle (in fact, for us it is not), but for the need to escape the enemy's claws and continue the practice of anti-authoritarian propaganda with their lives in permanent fugitivity. Having overlooked these experiences or having not glimpsed them as a possibility, we see the counter-productive state which results from taking up a position only when something affects us in the flesh, having had to hand the experiences of others. That's why we want to rescue, share and reflect on them, tightening them with our own practices and perspectives of struggle." – *Lying in Wait*

Comrades, I am writing these few lines to let you know about my present condition of life, which I have decided upon from a very particular perspective following a series of situations that have arisen in the recent context of individual and/or social struggle and the repression against it.

There is a long list of comrades who have been harassed and investigated for anarchist activity recently in this country, more specifically in the centre and the south, putting them under surveillance to observe their movements and the people with whom they organise, sending vile bastard informers to gather information, accusing foreign comrades of financing struggles and so on. Also at the time of the arrest that led me to prison with my comrades in affinity Amélie and Fallon, there was an attempt to link many people of the libertarian/anarchist milieu with our case (5E), upturning some houses to find "evidence" (without success) and thereby have more arguments to mount a serious blow within the anarchist scene.

This resulted in the subsequent [re-]arrest of comrade 'Tripa' (and the persecution of other comrades who also had to move away). Fortunately he was able to count on

the timely response of the comrades of GASPA ⁽¹⁾ to get him away immediately because the prosecution was not clear, and after his quick decision to go on the run there was not much choice since he was accused on the basis of his "criminal" history and linked to the investigation of terrorism, sabotage and other bullshit that they wanted to pin on us, so he did not have many alternatives.

For similar reasons and being able to choose freely, I decided to take the road of going on the run, mainly for my own safety and that of other comrades, due to the tracking that had been put in act. **I am not the first nor will I be the last to do so, choosing a path of struggle that consists partly of taking back my own life, but which also carries the violent, frontal and refractory side against all authority.** You don't need to be a scholar to realise that you will be targeted by the investigators and prosecutors trying to connect to you/implicate you in any question of direct action generated in the battlefield. And in my case, on bail and signing in, it is certain that they would have me at their mercy to take me in whenever they felt like it, **a pleasure that I was not prepared to give them**, at least as far as I could.

Besides not having the least intention of collaborating with that fucking little legal theatre that would have continued after my release I decided from the first moment of my physical release not to become their prey by being controlled through periodic visits to the place I was supposed to present myself to display my horrendous signature for a further year and a half. So I decided not to present myself before the judges the next day, to break with this thing that I see as tracking.

This does not mean that I am walking away from the struggle or regret what I will have to live in order to carry it out. On the contrary, it will continue to be the main personal factor pushing me in this insurrectional position towards *the*



unknown of freedom. From "outside" it is also possible to continue the daily life of permanent attack in its extensive forms and content, seek to continue my projects from elsewhere but with the same vision, **being clear that it is not my intention to take my struggle to voluntary**

clandestinity or to seek a specialised or higher form of attack, but just to know that these are some of the consequences we face and undertake to move along

these paths of conflict, to do things by what we believe and how to make this possible and necessary.

I always knew that fiercely opposing the forms of subordination and ideological content that the technicians of the democratic lie employ to maintain their privileges and status quo, would bring with it circumstances adverse to what any "normal" person would wish for their life. But as I do not want to be that kind of normal person and accept being another slave, I indulged in doing it this way, as would any irreducible seeking life from his *[sic]* way of seeing things.

From the point of view of comfort it would be much easier for me, after getting out of prison and walking in the street, to see my family and friends and be with my darling daughter; as well as being with comrades and affinities of various tendencies to continue to act together. But realising that this is not a game and that the struggle must be to the end, it is necessary to give it the seriousness it requires because sometimes we must make decisions that can be painful due to the physical distance from those we love. That is why I do not consider going on the run to be the only solution, but the one closest to how I see

things. I have seen fit to do so, among other things, as I said, to avoid monitoring and attempts to connect me with future violent acts similar to those for which I was imprisoned, and these being linked with other comrades and whoever I could have contact with. Because we know how the State and its minions use the law, but all this is not in terms of fear, but starts from the fact that **taking care of our own is also an insurrectionary act.**

Part of my individual insurrection consists of

breaking with any form of attachment, and a large part is the constant destruction of any personal/social relationship emanating from the hated enemy State/Capital and any authority, against which I declare myself at war within the range of my ability. Such



relationships as are reflected in the alienated society that reproduces what it learns in its educational and religious institutions, its media and

economic/technological production, and its ways of behaving in various aspects of everyday life that all lead to domination. Hence my need to not participate in the legal game or be a "good citizen" who can demonstrate that the punishment imposed by the laws and their mentors works. To hell with all that!

That's why I'd rather die than seek any concessions, mediation, assistance or pact with the very enemy I wish to destroy, understanding that everyone has their perspectives and ways of doing things, respecting what each one does in their struggles, and supporting those with whom I feel an affinity or at least show some hostility towards the enemy; but this is my choice and I stand by it.

Without saying anything more, a big hug to those who come to read me, especially my friends, comrades in struggle, members of my family and all those who identify with the struggle against power in each of its facets. The struggle continues, not seeing the situation as a premise of the end, but only the **continuation of acting freely.**

FREEDOM TO ALL PRISONERS IN THE WORLD!

SOLIDARITY WITH THE COMRADES ON THE RUN; MAY THE WIND BLOW AWAY THEIR TRACKS!

FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF POWER IN ALL ITS MANIFESTATIONS!

SOLIDARITY WITH THE COMRADES ON HUNGER STRIKE!

SOCIAL WAR EVERYWHERE!

LONG LIVE ANARCHY!

– Carlos 'Chivo' López

From some corner of the world

April 5th, 2015

**WHY ATTACK THE MINISTRY
OF COMMUNICATION &
TRANSPORTATION?
– The SCT, Anarchists & the
Struggle for Land**

**5E: About our imprisoned
anarchist comrades**

On January 5th 2014 anarchists *compañerxs* [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.2 pg34**] Carlos 'El Chivo' López Marín (Mexican), Fallon Poisson and Amélie Pelletier (Canadian) were arrested in Mexico City under suspicion of being responsible for the attack on an office of the Secretary of Communication and Transportation (SCT). Carlos was placed in the East Prison and Amélie and Fallon were brought to the Prison of Santa Martha after being held for 40 days during special investigation that failed to incriminate the three on terrorism charges. It was then that our *compañerxs* were faced with two separate criminal proceedings; one local charge for attacking the public peace and aggravated damages (for an attack on a Nissan dealership) and for not reaching bail, and another federal charge for Damages to Another's Property (for the attack on the Secretary of Communication and Transportation).

Whether they are guilty or innocent matters little to us. We have always maintained this as our irreducible stance against jails and all psychological and social influence that their existence can generate. Solidarity with those who defend their thoughts and actions, confronting the system of death and domination – even with wind and tide against them – this is what interests us, and we therefore want those we support to feel our sincere complicity and sisterhood [*sic*], to know that their cause is ours as well. We proudly acknowledge their steadfastness in cooperating as little as possible with the authorities and maintaining above all their dignity as anarchists.

There has always existed a debate regarding whether or not to claim responsibility for actions of attack and sabotage. Many actions are claimed through the use of communiques explaining the motives behind the attack. Many [other] *compañerxs* have asserted, in alignment with the idea of "propaganda of the deed", that actions should speak for themselves and that the responsibility rests on the movement to look to grant explanatory objectivity through reflection and analysis of said actions. **Knowing there isn't a communique for the action against the SCT, we would like to approach the why of an act like this, attempting to give projectuality to our struggle for liberation.**

Why attack the SCT?

Without a doubt no state institution deserves any respect whatsoever. All form part of this complete social-artificial system of domination, but it would be worth analysing what this institution is responsible for so that one can decide to give way to action against it.

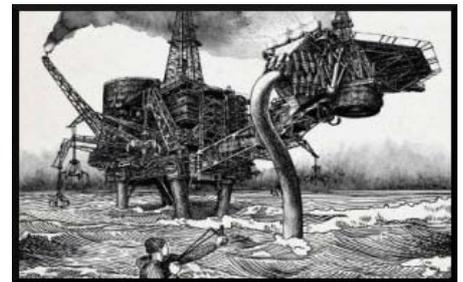
In accordance with the organic law of the Federal Public Administration, under article 36, the SCT is responsible for the following functions:

- To form and conduct the politics and programs in furtherance of the development of transportation and the according communications necessary for the country.
- To regulate, inspect, and protect public services including mail, telegraph and their diverse services; conduct the administration of federal electric and electronic communications and their connection to similar public services provided by private telephone, telegraph and wireless services state and foreign, as well as public remote data processing services.
- To grant allowances and permission prior opinion of the Interior Minister (Mexico), in order to establish and maintain telegraph and telephone systems and services, systems and services of wireless communication for telecommunications and satellites, of public remote data processing services, experimental radio stations (amateur and cultural) and broadcasting stations (commercial and cultural), as well as monitoring the technical aspect of the functioning of such systems, services and stations.
- To regulate and guard the administration of national airports, grant permissions for the construction of private airports and watch over their operations. To construct federal railways, platforms and terminals for the establishment and function of rail systems, and to maintain technical surveillance of their functions and operations. To grant allowances and permissions for the work of auto-transport services on federal highways and to maintain technical surveillance of their functions and operation as well as assure their compliance with respective provisions of the law.
- To construct, rebuild, and maintain marine works, ports; to dredge, install maritime signs, and supply the service of information and security for maritime navigation.
- To build and maintain federal roads and bridges, including those running internationally; as well as the stations and centers of federal auto transportation.
- To build federal airports and cooperate with state governments and municipal authorities in the construction and maintenance of works of this type.

– To regulate the construction of work in the republic. Among others.

Translating the legal into the language of dispossession and destruction

Given the above points, we can figure out how this institution functions on the capitalist stage in Mexico, fostering technological and industrial "progress". The SCT is the state institutional link that is working to advance the communication infrastructure both in urban and rural areas, as well as other natural areas in order to maintain the flow of production and goods. In other words it is directly responsible for the destruction of natural places and the consolidation of new webs of power and slavery.



The brutal logging of trees, the displacement and murder of animals and communities is a consequent part of their activities in the construction and application of highways, whereby moving their dirty goods with the intention of generating fruitful political and economic results. These have always been the primordial motive of these highway projects and which in many cases are built with the firm finality of ensuring the advancement of so-called "mega projects" that are nothing more and nothing less than those industrial undertakings – dams, hydroelectrics, thermoelectrics, mining, wind farms, etc. – that the system continues needing in order to give energetic support to its vast and irrational mechanism of production and consumption, that due to the brutal harm of their extractive advance, left to nature, will need more sources to exploit.

Knowing that the facts have been repeated, not only in the length and breadth Mexican geography but throughout the whole world, we highlight some cases.

– In Tepoztlán, Morelos, there is a project for the application of the Pera-Cuautla freeway in order to facilitate the works for the construction of the "Morelos Integral Project" that consists of two thermoelectric plants and one [gas] pipeline in the

community of Huexca, municipality of Yecapixtla, that has been assigned to the Spanish businesses Abegnoa and Elencor. Carrying out this plan will affect 50,400 hectares of land and diverse types of regional plants and animals, in addition to making a cut at the base of the hills of Chalchiteptl, Cematzin, Yohualtepetl. The construction of the thermoelectric plant is aimed to be build on 45 hectares surrounding the indigeous town of Huexca and is calculated to consume 24 million litres of water a day and return 50% of this water to the Cuautla river contaminated with bleach and sulfuric acid.

– Another case is the expansion of the Toluca-Naucalpan freeway to accelerate the flow of goods between industrial sectors, that will level a large part of the forest of Agua Otomí-Mexica. It will also dispossess the communities of ñaňhú ñuhú, Otomí, that covers the land from Tequixquiac to Villa de Carbón and will bring with it the annihilation and destruction of hundreds of species of animals, vegetation, and wetlands that are already in danger of extinction. All this to make way for rights of construction for the company Autopistas Vanguardia S.A of C.V.

– The construction of airports that, like all urban projects, carry with them destruction and dispossession of the earth, such as those that have generated the conflicts of Atenco^[1], which at this moment are being reactivated.

Internet, community radio, mail: interpersonal communication in the hands of repression

We understand well that the means of communication and information like the internet, e-mail, cellphones, etc. do not guarantee total security due to political intervention as much national as foreign – it's worth noting the recent addition of internet spying programs coming sanctioned by the Attorney General of the Republic^[2] – with the passing of the "Telecom Law", the SCT returns to the stage as responsible for furthering repression and dislocation of movements through spying – now without judicial order – on inconvenient or subversive individuals and groups, through the internet and telephone companies such as Telmex, accessing their personal information and using geolocation surveillance tools, as well as suspending the flow of communication and information to conflict zones and areas of resistance. This directly affects community and pirate radios, free means of counter information that serve as nodes of communication between diverse struggles that arise in the country^[3].

The motives abound, the problem is the system

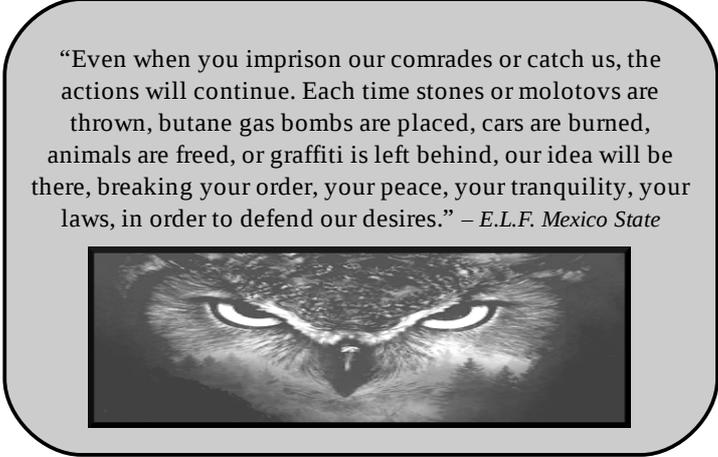
We have described only a few facts that unmask what to uncritical eyes are just buildings with people doing administrative work. Of course we don't want to make a reductionist call, that the SCT is the only state institution that participates in the growth of domination. **Each and every one of the component state sectors functions as a distinct and specialised part working in conjunction and cooperation to advance the**

system of capitalism. In turn, these institutions are inevitably controlled by a group of people at the top of the social class pyramid increasing their cravings for money and power. It is worth mentioning the "flaco favor" (disservice) that contributes to a majority democratic citizen population – with their respective exceptions – who live uncritical lives, without questioning the depths of the consequence of the system, or who simply lack an interest in nature and freedom, who look only to participate in a logic-based life in the recurring cycle of the current order: birth-obedience-work-consumption-death.

To spread direct action and solidarity in defense of the earth

Therefore, as with our *compas* Carlos, Amélie and Fallon, we continue thinking that direct action brings results, not only to combat the advancement of capitalism but also to make explicit to our imprisoned *compañerxs* that the struggle continues with strength and solidarity. For sure we can wonder about errors made, or the form or timing of the action [*ed. – the SCT was attacked in evening hours with molotovs*], but what remains clear in the unfolding of this action is that legal avenues are the

trap of the state, in order to co-opt and divert our struggles towards a path of reform and passivity. While the administrative shackles and legal meditations make fools of us, the companies destroying the earth continue to advance in the functioning of their task.



We take advantage of this new space to send warm brotherly/sisterly greetings to Carlos, Amélie and Fallon, hoping as well that this will be a contribution to the struggle. We put out an open call to anti-authoritarian projects of communities in resistance to find accomplices, to spread direct action and self determination throughout the struggles in defense of the land: against machinery, institutions, tools of repression, jails and all of the infrastrucutre that the SCT and all state apparatus are deploying under our noses, those which are always vulnerable to attack.

Destroy prisons!

Mexico, June 20th 2014

1. ed. – Mass resistance against a planned multi-billion-dollar airport (to 'modernise' the country) near Mexico City, on Nahau indigenous land. Police and government officials were ejected from the region in 2002, police vehicles burnt and 19 government officials and police taken hostage in exchange for prisoners of the struggle. A 3-day army-backed siege followed.

2. The PGR acquired software called Finfisher to intercept information that passes between internet and computer as well as other devices such as mobile phones. This software has been utilised to disrupt resistance in Pakistan and repress revolts in Egypt.

3. With this we do not wish to say that before this law the government wasn't carrying out this type of action, neither do we attach a reformist vision that desires to return to the way things were or make up for state violence. Rather we see well that the advancement of this type of law as another step in the constitution of a military-police state, that made its first moves by putting the military on the street and militarising the police. This puts at risk any and all projects of liberation.



The graffiti reads; "You wanted fire?"

PORTRAIT OF THE INVISIBLE WOMAN IN FRONT OF HER MIRROR

As a child, I dreamed of being the Invisible Woman. I told myself that invisibility would be the only wish that I'd ever be making if one day I would get a rub of the magic lamp. No need to get dressed in the morning to go to school – no need to even go to school! – no need to go to the hairdresser, to be clean and cute, to please and be polite... Sitting at my desk in the classroom, I told myself that as Invisible Woman I'd be profiting to the maximum from my gift, to satisfy all my desires. I fantasied about serving myself with impunity from the candy shelves at the grocery store, going to see all the films at the movie theater and visit all those mysterious places forbidden to little girls, like my mom's room or the boys dressing rooms.

Growing up, I realised the hard way that not only does invisibility not exist, but to be visible is a curse. Being seen, named, it is to have your life stolen.

First, I had been constrained to be a "girl", this inferior and weak being that has the right to only exist in relation with others, that must seduce at all costs and take care of everybody while continuously smiling, that must be *proper*, not saying dirty words, not getting her dress dirty, being perfect in all aspects while above all not being too clever, because nobody likes a girl who is too cunning.

Then, I learned with stupefaction that I was "Chinese", an object of curiosity, exoticism or mistrust, that is asked continuously where she is from, if she likes eating cats, if she has a bad eyesight because of her funny slanting eyes, if she knows how to say dirty words in "Chinese", when one does not pull her ponytail, or not approach her only to disown her

"Systems of oppression based on gender, race, and so on are sociologically real, but ultimately rest on other people imposing a particular spectre - treating another person not as a unique one, but as an instance of femininity, or "just another X." Such systems entail valuing a particular category to the exclusion of others, leading to violence against those excluded. However, the subordination of one spectre to another is not the base level of the problem; the problem is that spectres do not liberate or empower those who belong to the category they value, because those belonging to the category are valued only as instances of the category, not in their full, unrepresentable being." – *Against Identity Politics*



afterwards, so to detect an eventual smoke plume of foulness or *chow mein*; if not to be considered, straightforwardly, as an incarnation of the Yellow Menace that threatens the survival of the White and Christian nation.

Later I became, to my great despair, a "lesbo", a "pussy-licker", an object of sexual fantasy within the scope where such a condition serves to excite the carrier of the phallus (since every lesbian is so only because she was mis-fucked and really wishes secretly to experience the true ecstasy that a dick may provide), when she is not a perverted being who threatens the very foundations of the family and civilisation with her vice. When, later, I was seen in the arms of a man, I immediately switched to another camp, that of the undecided "bi", flighty, unattached, couple-breakers, HIV propagators, unable to admit their homosexuality therefore strictly unworthy of any trust.

All this is only a prelude to what was waiting for me when the time came to ensure my survival. I first became a "human resource", a despicable being, by definition unproductive and selfish for they demand to be paid sufficiently as to be able to survive, a being who's continuously suspected to be a shoplifter, fraud, that we can downgrade to the rank of subhuman by dictating how she should be busying herself, selecting who she'd have the right to be with, and by demanding obedience and marks of servility in regards to her superiors and clients.

In a clumsy attempt at escaping the hell of Work, I quickly ended up as a "whore" and a "pornographer", so to say, either a threat to public health, order and manners, or a victim (often too alienated and idiotic to be aware of it) of patriarchy and the centuries-old male oppression, who purportedly maintains the system's exploitation by refusing to be a nice victim and letting herself be saved by the great charitable souls who know better than herself what is good for her.

At last, I ended up learning with stupefaction that I was an "intellectual", which, in the corner of the planet where I'm living, means that I am a contemptible being who has lost contact with reality and whose parasitic activities are a pest to the competitiveness and prosperity of the nation.

This is why I have become "anarchist", in a more or less conscious effort to throw back to the face of those who were looking at me an image that is was more fitting to what I considered to be the real me. To my damning; for as "anarchist", I thus became a terrorist, an apostle of violence, a window breaker, doubled with a bomber, all the while being a pathetic and naive dreamer, unaware of historical laws, some immature and not at all serious rebel - if not some ignoramus of limited intellectual capacities who will never change anything to society and only harm public debate.

At that point, I had no other choice than to yell "fuck that" and turn back to my childhood dream by becoming "Anabraxas", the invisible man/woman.^[1]



Never will you see Anabraxas on the telly. Never will you hear her voice on the radio. That's because she is neither on civil registers, nor at the revenue service, nor on electoral lists, as her name isn't engraved either on some plastic ID card, or on a tombstone. Anabraxas is no-one to the eyes of the Leviathan. It is a child dead at birth, the bride of the unknown soldier, a spectre, an empty shell, a jacket with holes which lets the air penetrate. If the one who's hidden behind Anabraxas is so mysterious, if she insists on remaining invisible and out of reach, it is because that is the price to pay to remain at a good distance from the flesh-shredding cogs and wheels of society.

Anabraxas focuses on one sole task: to create my life and build my relation with the world and others accordingly with my own terms – in other words, to reappropriate my existence here and now, to the extent of my own capacities. Anabraxas is a tool allowing me to challenge all the identities they are attempting to enforce upon me since I was born. I have only one cause: my own. Evidently, I wish with all my heart that anyone does the same, for when individuals are revolting and uprising against their own oppression, the produce of it is called "insurrection".

If Anabraxas is invisible, it is because I have made the tactic of insurrection mine, that is one of vanishing. **Insurrection is the liberation of a space, a time, by individuals refusing their exploitation, their servitude and the institutions that exert it.** It can strategically take several forms, such as the temporary autonomous zone, nomadism, the lines of evasion. It can be tiny or large scale, last only a few minutes or an entire life. **It is both the blow struck against the institutions and the direct experimentation of a life as it should be lived, so to say, without constraints and without hinders.**

Insurrection is the opposite of sacrifice and morality. The insurgent does not act for *the common good*, for *the liberation of all*, for *the building of a better world*, but to give ourselves the means to go from survival to

life, to taste, be it only for a few seconds, what it is to truly be alive before being thrown into the cold hands of death. **The time and space of insurrection is lived like a sexual intercourse - no exchange, only giving; a temporary**

association to collaborate towards a common and precise goal; no purpose, no meaning in the activity other than the pleasure taken from taking part in it; the construction of desire and the realiation of ourselves through the *egoist lust for the other*. And it is through the multiplication and accumulation of the insurrectional experiences that devices of power will be eventually brought down.

Insurrection eludes public space, the places of mediation and reification, the spaces conceded to liberty by power. The individual taking part in it takes on the devices of power, lives, lusts, then returns to the invisible. In a society striving to *expose everything*, where being seen equates with being recognized, integrated and controlled, where the summit of social success is stardom – which means, continuous mediation, without any other object than the transformation of the individual into merchandise – there is no escape other than elusion, vanishing into invisibility.

Until the time when, finally, it is possible to be living, wholesome and free, in broad daylight.

1. – *The entity was originally named in this text as its author, Anne Archet, who is not me, the translator, but given that her amazing works are all in (Quebecquer) French, I thought it to be more proper to a more global, non-French readership to use my nickname "Anabraxas", for I also identify with most of the context and reasons that led her to take a facetious identity. She fully consented to this name change.*



"I have a horror of not being misunderstood." – Oscar Wilde

"Arthur Cravan said that genius needs horns to protect itself. No doubt, though, he was completely unaware of the invention that two policemen bumped up against on January 8th, 1910. They were trying to arrest a thin young man who, on the say-so of a snitch, had been talking at the "Caves moderne" about "knocking off a cop." As the bells of Saint-Merri rang out at 8:30, thinking they recognised in the shadows the individual they sought, the policemen tackled him, only to let him go immediately while they screamed in pain, their hands covered with blood.

Underneath his cape, on his biceps and forearms, the young anarchist Jean-Jaques Liaboef wore leather armbands studded with long, spark spikes.

Thinkers of any intensity must be equipped with devices of this kind in order to *avoid apprehension*. [...]

Priding myself on not occupying any easily locatable position on the desolate horizon that people shamelessly call the "intellectual landscape," I know I have little chance of being heard, and even less likelihood of being understood. Furthermore, my natural repulsion for any kind of affiliation keeps me at a distance from the countless pressure groups that our era urges everyone to join. It seems that the single great requirement of life today is that we indiscriminately identify ourselves as something – as a woman, a Breton, a sportsman, or even a paedophile – just as long as we renounce all claim to being *an individual*. But I have neither self-interest nor party to defend. I do not

have the slightest concern about protecting my intellectual authority, something I have never even wished to possess. I have never been in any real danger of falling into this trap, because I have been truly impressed only by the magnificent invention of a revolt waged by a few select individuals against the "unacceptable human condition." These

individuals have always been too dedicated to their dreams to waste any effort trying to play a role in the world, unless doing so would completely change the cards dealt there. To my eyes, though, their intractable refusal – conscious or not – to stick to the status quo is the only thing that can still give meaning to an existence apparently condemned to having less and less."

– Annie Le Brun

THE BURNING OF A TRANSMISSION MAST, BERLIN, & POLICING VEHICLES UP IN FLAMES, KEYNSHAM

[ed. – 2013 was the year that the scandal broke over the scale of extensive and international digital surveillance, following revelations by renegade CIA employee-turned-whistleblower Edward Snowden. Despite the initial media scrum over the topic, it feels like popular dissent over the intrusions has melted into mute acceptance of the price for our electronic narcotics, and many lasting fears have been quelled under the rubric of an unending terrorist alert. **Meanwhile, as in other European nations, by now the drama has assumed an almost entirely cynical tone as the U.K. government currently moves to grant itself even more significant data gathering capacities (such as the long-awaited 'Snooper's Charter') as Britain becomes the most spied-upon population in the world, the vanguard of the surveillance State.** Here, we first present a communique from that time, for what is to our knowledge one of the only 'offline' actions to be claimed in the context of #Anonymous (the well-known informal anti-capitalist hacking network with some anarchic offshoots), in this case in Berlin.

The action in question formed part of a wave of autonomous attacks in the German capital which aimed to block the flows and circuits of everyday life in the metropolis. While some of the discourse which accompanied these acts didn't inspire us so much, we see a great worth in such blockages themselves. Later, a post "on sabotage and accuracy" was sent to the U.K. Indymedia website: "In Germany, there have been some attacks on infrastructure: mobility, transport and distribution logistics and communication systems. We are fans of such acts of infrastructure sabotage ourselves and we would like to open a discussion, not least because there is some critique regarding accuracy of such actions and explaining them to the public. [...] In capitalist metropolis no inside or outside exists; we do not stand outside and declare who is the right enemy inside. **The enemy is everywhere and nowhere. Instead of searching for the headquarters, we have to start to stop playing the whole game of normality.** [...] We are happy that there have been similar actions, e.g. in Bristol [England], Belgium, France, and we would welcome a transnational discussion. The global chains of production and exploitation begin and end in our capitalist cities (from design, copyrights, patents etc. to consuming, profits, managing the cash flows etc.). We can attack the infrastructure which is necessary to connect the chain links. For example, the attack of the 'Magma Action Group' on the Hamburg Harbour hit the goods transport logistics. We are looking forward to continuing and expanding these actions. Broadly. On a massive scale. Uncontrolled. Well considered. Without borders."

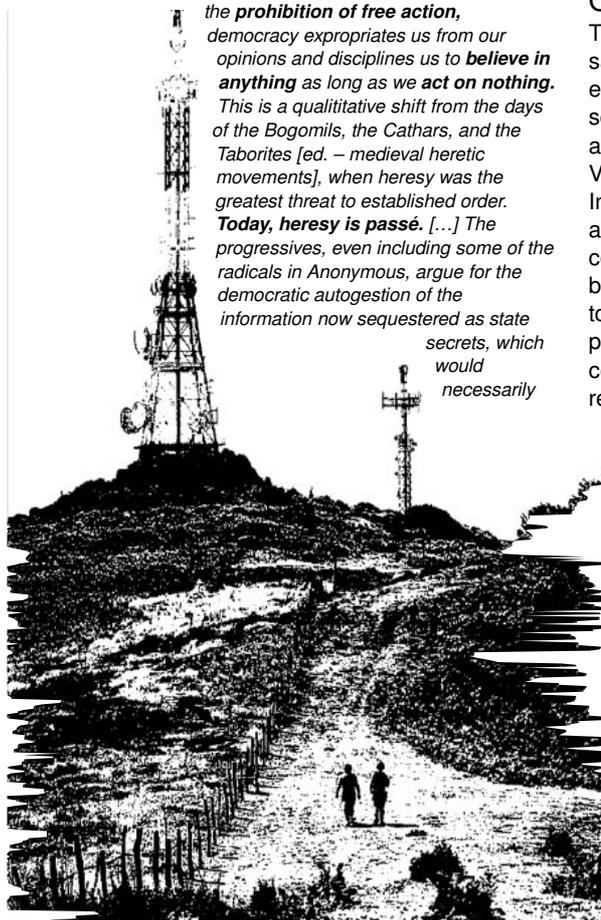
Some months after that particular sabotage in Berlin, the terrorism circus was once again the full swing in the U.K., with the threat level raised from 'substantial' to 'severe' during the summer for the first time in years (it has remained at this level since). In addition to the abilities to prevent targeted individuals from travelling, other measures introduced included emergency legislation to make communications data available to police

and security services, and raising the numbers of armed police and visible patrols. It was in this atmosphere, and while the south-west was heavily securitised due to the NATO summit in Newport, that anarchists struck in Keynsham outside Bristol against the surveillance apparatus, detailed below.

We must say that we do not publish the following uncritically. While we are encouraged by the tentative – if incomplete – steps into a critique of digital technologies (not a common feature in publishing from Germany), we share neither the enthusiasm for whistleblowers contained in the first communique, nor their suggestions for "open" (i.e. "nicer") borders when we want them destroyed, or some naïve "decentralization" (or even "nationalization"!) of telecommunications... **The unquestionable fact that the digital networks, social media etc. furnish the State with unprecedented powers cannot be where our analysis ends of the cultural, cognitive and ecological impoverishment they entail.** Once again, the ghost of the Left seems to be strongly present in these illusions, like so often before in 'radical' discourses (not limited to Germany, naturally). Specifically on the topic of whistleblowers, it smacks of the liberal framing of 'revolution' as an act of revealing conspiracy, whereby once 'the people' realise the truth, the old structures will fall. Yet this is clearly not what we have seen happening. Alex Gorrión noted the same; that "the inability of knowledge of the government leads to provoke substantive resistance reveals a particular relationship to knowledge within democratic society. Through the device of free speech, democracy has already accomplished the alienation of beliefs from actions. By allowing

freedom of expression in exchange for the **prohibition of free action**, democracy expropriates us from our opinions and disciplines us to **believe in anything** as long as we **act on nothing**. This is a qualitative shift from the days of the Bogomils, the Cathars, and the Taborites [ed. – medieval heretic movements], when heresy was the greatest threat to established order. **Today, heresy is passé.** [...] The progressives, even including some of the radicals in Anonymous, argue for the democratic autogestion of the information now sequestered as state

secrets, which would necessarily



be accompanied by a further humanization of state methods. The psychological underpinnings of the new question reveal that, in a way, everyone already knew that the military was running death squads, that every government everywhere is conniving and petty, that Israel was up to no good, and so on and so forth. And they knew only so far as this knowledge already belonged to the hive mind of society. When Wikileaks released the cables [ed. – supplied by whistleblowing U.S. soldier Chelsea Manning], hardly anyone acted surprised. Rather, there was a spontaneous transition from the debate (which admittedly had faded into the background years ago) about whether the US military is torturing people to a debate about whether we should know[...] No double-take, no stuttering, no process of transition, but a smooth replacement of one argument with another, despite the contradictory bases of those arguments. [T]he conspiracy itself is not the framework for the evil authority, simply its alibi. Unmasking it can only be a beginning.]

A Pause in the Surveillance: Vodafone Radio Tower Sabotaged

Vodafone connecting people.
Linked to everyone – allied with no one.
300 friends and yet friendless.
Instead, a Big Brother.
He looks after you.
Except for when we disrupt his infrastructure...
It's time to band together!
Like or dislike?

On Wednesday night and into Thursday (September 27th–28th 2013) we sabotaged a node in the network of electronic communication. We set fires seven meters up two of the larger cables of a transmitting and receiving system of the Vodafone Company in Adlershof (Berlin). In addition, we deposited multiple delayed-action incendiary devices in two connecting shafts between associated buildings and the radio and mobile phone tower. We ruled out endangering any people. There was severe damage to the cellular tower. Supposedly the corporation reacted to our damage of their important infrastructure junction by rerouting data streams. However, two weeks ago the transection of the fibre-optic cable in Adlershof (Berlin) caused a network-wide loss of service for several hours that potentially affected 50,000 costumers.

Our sabotage was directed against the total surveillance by governments, secret services, and corporations as well as against the smooth functioning of the metropolis.

Since Edward Snowden made public to what extent the intelligence

apparatus spies on people – all people – we have understood that we are witnessing a sea change. It's about the comprehensive attempt to control every person, every society, to make them steerable; every day, every minute, every millisecond of all human expression is to be seized – every opinion, all feelings, every story, all experience, all mourning, and every joy. They can even check how full our refrigerators are. No dictatorship could so deeply and comprehensively intrude into the lives of everyone like it is possible today through the “democratic” control of digital communication channels. The openly emerging tendency toward total surveillance stems from the misanthropic fantasy of the total controllability of society.

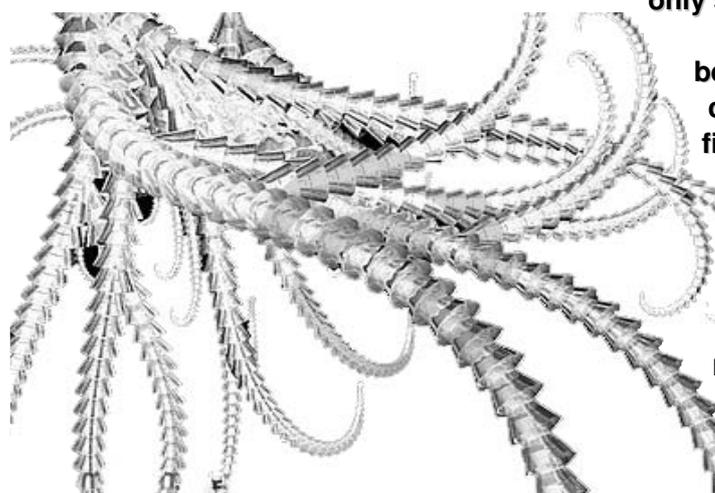
We see a new era in the intelligence apparatus' paranoid anticipation of the coming global uprisings, refugee flows, and food riots and their resulting desire for control over all associated communication and movement. They have already initiated the attack: the German foreign intelligence agency (BND) supplies data that helps the US to slaughter people with drones, and the American surveillance operations [at the army bases] in Wiesbaden and Bad Aibling continue to function smoothly despite the diplomatic crisis [ed. – after the extent of U.S. spying even on its European allies was revealed]. **From there and elsewhere they monitor the social consequences of their policies: poverty, war, and water and resource struggles on an unprecedented scale. By analysing all Internet traffic and telecommunication, they want to identify what they conceive of as a threat even before it arises.** Threatening for their rule, that is, because total surveillance will be of little help to deal with issues such as water shortages.

The intelligence agencies calculate normal action patterns and compare them to people's real actions in order to see if you could have plans to do something deviant, even before you know it yourself. They aim to preemptively recognize the threats to their rule and exploitation so that they can meet political movements and acts of resistance early on and with any necessary means. There are hundreds of varieties of securing power between integration and military destruction; as for what is the most promising, that is to be derived from the relevant data.

But it is not that total surveillance is forced upon us. [It comes into our lives] on the grounds of subjectively experienced everyday necessity or convenience, boredom or fun as the case may be. All calls, use of the Internet, emailing, posting, chatting, like-ing, tweeting, letter writing, paying by credit card, strolling through the forest of cameras... and, of course, the

smartphone is always there. **It is the ubiquitous bug, the self-imposed tracking device, the surveillance camera from below.** Every expression of life flows digitally into the hands of the secret power. We trade our social structures for membership in networks that have the “social” element: where you can click to make “friends” and then click them away again.

Can anyone today resist being ensnared and engulfed in this perverse Big Brother reality? Communicating is only human, but we must not join in every fucking thing that makes us even more controllable, predictable, and tame in which self-censorship is a requirement if you do not want someone to find you suspicious or for the automatic pattern matching to make a note. We don't need the state or telecommunication and internet companies to communicate with each other; they only organise our communication in order to evaluate and resell the arising information patterns and profiles. They want to be more attractive to their advertising clients that in turn can try to palm off more crap on us that we already do not need. The comprehensive control works so smoothly only because companies like Vodafone participate.



We chose Vodafone because this group works especially willingly with the British intelligence agency GCHQ, the NSA, and the BND. The cooperation of companies with governments and intelligence agencies is inevitable because of their common interests: intelligence corporations and consolidated intelligence

agencies secure each other's profit maximization strategies and conditions for control. Everyone is involved. Snowden's first revelations showed what happens when corporations are not in accordance with the specifications of the secret service: two smaller Internet service providers were forced to close because they didn't want to make all of their data available to the NSA.



The destruction of an infrastructure node was not enough: a technology that is to produce omniscience under the conditions of secrecy and uncontrollability of that capacity for omniscience is a fundamental problem. For that reason, this technology must be fundamentally criticized. Under prevailing conditions, electronic media can only offer a very limited emancipatory potential. Control of media and communications prevents the use of electronic media for any effective resistance of the status quo. The fact that we send this text electronically is only superficially a contradiction because we are constrained to finding gaps in the surveillance system.

The contradiction between spatially and temporally unbounded communication on the one hand and the

constraints placed by the surveillance system on genuinely open communication on the other cannot be solved within this system. The copious use of the Internet, the billion smart phones, and the endless computerizing are only currently possible through exploitative and predatory

relationships. We do not know whether or not social conditions can be freed from systems of domination and profit maximization and if electronic communications networks can be supplied and used outside of this paradigm. Currently this can at best be the subject of debates about utopia.

But we are aware of current contentions: could the nationalization of the telecommunications and Internet companies, the radical decentralization of network infrastructure, and the use of open source technologies lead to communication conditions that are non-hierarchical and more difficult to monitor – even within existing society? Could it be possible to turn that into a global network of networks in which the nodes are not operated and monitored by capitalist corporations nor institutions of bourgeois states, but rather all those who just want to communicate with nonhierarchical terms and aims? Relics of such structures from the less commercialized age of the Internet still exist. We are thus left unsure.

Basic critiques of technology and those of social relations are inseparable. Technology shapes reality and is in turn shaped by it. Society's artificial, inhumane ends ingrain themselves in technological advances. There is no technology that has developed free from the influence of its surrounding society and that persists without these social implications. **In short: there is no neutral technology.** We do not know what advances in communication technology would look like in an emancipated context, but we are convinced that somehow this freed form of communication would be very different.

Thus we are looking for new ways to see, to talk with, and to meet each other – without the NSA, the Federal Intelligence Service, the protections offered by the constitution, GCHQ, Vodafone, Telekom, Microsoft, Apple, Google... and we are sure that we are not alone. Our strength is not enough to abolish domestic surveillance that watched a racist killing spree take place^[1] and that finances Nazis, to crush the foreign intelligence services and the military, to sink Frontex at the sea off Lampedusa [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.2 pg87**], or to deal with the communication companies... But we can begin to sabotage vulnerable points on the grid! Ultimately, it is through that grid that they manage to have complete access to our lives.

Some people are in the position to temporarily cripple infrastructure and technical facilities. Others are in the position to hack and thus attack surveillance personnel's technical equipment from within. Still others leave

their positions and as whistle-blowers and can drive these omniscient secret actors into a corner. Still others can offer diverse support to whistleblowers and other deserters. And still other people can undermine current surveillance and self-exploitative technologies by refusing or hindering them in their everyday life. There are lots of opportunities to throw sand in the gears of the rising global dictatorship. In doing so, the grinding will be all the more violent and skillfully-executed the more we bring together our various interventions and build relationships in solidarity.

We encourage using sabotage to block and ultimately paralyze infrastructure – an act against the everyday stream of monitoring and exploitation. Our action could only burn a hole in the net, but many actions can tear apart whole networks. In the end, it is all about the resistance against the "business as usual" of a society based on a form of life characterized by destruction and exploitation. Purposfully, constantly, in many places, with different means and forms we have acted in accordance with previous actions and their objectives: the groups 'The Rumble of Eyjafjallajökull'^[2], 'Hekla Reception Committee'^[3], and 'Grims Vötn' made Berlin's infrastructure their goal, with an emphasis on transportation. The group "Eyjafjallajökull" succeeded even beyond bringing about a temporary loss of network connection for Vodafone. We see both communication and transportation infrastructure as crucial elements for continued exploitation and domination throughout the metropolis.

Onward for the sabotage of surveillance, extraction, and exploitation infrastructure!

Blind the intelligence apparatus!

Freedom of movement and asylum for Edward Snowden and all people worldwide – open the borders for everyone!

Many Volcanoes!



– Anonymous / Volcano Group Kalta^[4]

“You ask me: “What should we do? How can we stand against all this heteronomy, control, repression, violence, which is called normality? What can we raise against all the bureaucracy, the uniforms and weapons, the monsters of technology, their laws and their morality based on compulsions, guilt and fear?” I answer you: “I don't know the solution, the right way or the perfect strategy and I don't think it exists. But I do know that it's mutual aid, respect, love and solidarity which will make our relations dangerous, rebellious once more. I know that the only thing stronger than our urge for freedom is the hate for those who take it from us! I know that it doesn't need any justification for the insurrection and there is not a minute to wait! I know that back then and now there are thousands of reasons for the revolt!” ”

– Solidarity is the Tenderness of Revolutionary Subversion!

Police Wagons Burn In Keynsham



From the midst of the terror-fervor, the advance of the surveillance state, and display of force by the law.

This is to report incendiary action bringing life to our hatred for the police, inkeeping with our wider effort for the eradication of authority and it's civilisation and with not a step back before repression which fails to inhibit us...

It took place in Keynsham (on 3rd September) at the police-station where a fleet of support group vans and other marked force vehicles are kept close to the ring-road which skirts Bristol. **We rigged all three mobile-CCTV vans at their charging station inside the perimeter to the side of the cop-den with short fuses, then more fuel in containers was primed to incinerate an extra riot squad minibus parked to the front after we'd left the area.** When the fires were detected, the riot bus and at least one of the camera vans were already burnt. According to the media an individual was arrested shortly after, who they are probably even now dimly realising they have no evidence to charge because we

alone are responsible for the blaze under their snouts.

The police-station is situated close to the massive Keynsham Police Centre due to now open which is also to assimilate the functions of the old Bath and Radstock stations as part of a newly-constructed series of the force's multi-purpose detention suites, crime investigation centres, an operations base and the tri-force firearms facility which was burned down by the hands of anarchists one year ago [ed. – see *Return Fire vol.2 pg58*]. Remember, the police state has still been found vulnerable.

Now is the time the government choose to escalate electronic monitoring and travel restrictions, and to roll out more obvious than ever occupation of several cities by the security forces, some against the backdrop of citizens herded through metal detectors and surrounded by fencing in open public places. Though enraged we're neither shocked or indignant. The supposed 'state of exception' is the eternal trump card of democracy's totalitarianism - this is a war, and why leave escalation in the opponents' hands alone?

When police tell us increased presence in the latest terror-scare and heightened powers thereafter is for our own safety, we know they mean increased control and forcing obedience through fear, with renewed social license to kill (often young non-white men with the media's blessing), so we attack them regardless.

Confronting our fears was easier than we once imagined. They too can feel some insecurity and risk, just like the precarious masses they subject to the orders of the state and the whims of the economy and social norms as our lives are taken out of our hands piece by piece. Tension against payed-up bullies of the law constantly boils to the surface in class society - they're an obstacle to any kind of freedom and self-determination, out to pacify and neutralize those who in whatever way won't fit the social cage.

This choice of target brings us to the sentences read out against Juan Aliste, Marcelo Villarroel and Freddy Fuentevilla in Santiago for numerous actions against wage-slavery and a parting confrontation with the security forces which left a corporal dead and another officer wounded^[5]. Also, Carlos Gutierrez Quiduleo of the Temucucui community is finally once again in the grasp of the same colonial state too over related charges^[6], and we support the Mapuche people's fight for land, the ones of them who've clearly refused capitalist life as spiritual death and

maintain their claim as ancestral defenders of their home, that is, the Earth. We won't stay spectators while our companions in Chilean prisons and beyond are facing long jail-terms without wavering, tarnishing the wretched social tranquility of the bankers and cops. While our hands still fashion the materials for destruction, aggressions of the type raised by the British state against unnamed individuals they suspect/ed of incendiary actions in Bath and Bristol by anarchists^[7] (take heart...) won't pass without repercussions either as we forge ahead to recover our denied autonomy.



Before the terrorism of the law these are no days for silence. Anybody can join the fray in their own manner by wielding the idea of unconditional freedom for each and all of us to claim. A long time ago, we learned to dispel the myth – peddled by the Hollywood movies – of the rebels throwing themselves against the most unbelievable strongholds of their overlords, in a full-frontal military battle with no thought of living to fight another day. History is portrayed as a straight line with no corners or bends to deviate from this tale, so as to hold the spectator in a simple and romantic fantasy world, where the attainable skills for successful acts of vengeance remain a mystery behind the special effects and silver-screen stunts. **When the credits roll the viewer is left doubting their own chances against the agents of power and their increasing technological capabilities, and the context is lost of an insurgent war of attrition reaching far back through the ages, chipping away at the establishment's morale, image of invincibility, and resources.**

We learned not to see just what was conveniently put before us, but to study possible chinks in the armour of normality and to think the unthinkable. As some Czech anarchists in struggle pointed out not long ago (and burned out a CCTV station to make themselves clear), the vast array of surveillance apparatus works primarily by lodging defeatism in the minds of otherwise-aspiring conspirators. Yet as has been revealed by many before us, individual and collective insurrection is not

only possible but visible, enlivening and essential to break away from a life-long civil lobotomy, **as a way (amongst others) to live wholeheartedly and unapologetically.** It could be an assault which lays waste to state property before their very station, or an officer stabbed or battered carrying out their wretched duties, cutting the wires of a surveillance camera or smashing a patrol-car windscreen in the area under cover of darkness. It could be us, it could be you, it could be the person next to you. The first cop to kill is the one in your head. But only the first...

We learned that authority has done it's best to quell the anarchist rebellion over the centuries but to this day we stand uncaptured and undefeated, side by side with our comrades here and across the globe. Side by side doesn't always need to mean physically close enough to link arms, solidarity has no fixed shape or set line, but looks to open reciprocal dialogue on a common direction through the avenues of mutual aid

and direct action. For one day somebody might choose a letter exchange with a prisoner or spreading subversive street art with the other disquieted, sometimes a critical encounter and heated exchanges or the tenderness of a loving caress, and at others materialise in the embers of the oppressor.

By this communique we reignite the memory of the Santiago anarchist poet, dancer and fighter Claudia Lopez who fell to police bullets while on the barricades 16 years ago this September. Her unquenchable determination has not stopped accompanying the comrades who take to the street with their weapons.

Our regards to everybody out there who is joyously causing their own ruptures with normality in the daily contest against control and exploitation. Keep reclaiming your life in the many vital ways...

INSURRECTION, SUBVERSION, ANARCHY

– Uncivil Disobedients / Informal Anarchist Federation



Clashes outside the Ministry of Justice, London, during the Million Mask March called globally by #Anonymous, 05.11.15

1. ed. – Apparently a reference to the xenophobic murders between 2000-2007 throughout Germany by the Nationalist Socialist Underground, primarily of Turkish shopkeepers.

2. ed. – Responsible for burning a cable intersection which joined the Berlin city railway system, electric circuits and telecommunication network, causing problems for a few days and bringing part of the city to a halt, in May 2011. Eyjafjallajökull is an Icelandic volcano, whose last eruption grounded air traffic in 20 countries, as ash covered north Europe for weeks of 2010.

3. ed. – In October 2011, the group 'Hekla Reception Committee – Initiative for More Eruptions in Society' claimed the placement of an incendiary device (which was discovered and defused) in a service tunnel in the vicinity of Berlin's central train station. This followed an arson attack on signalling equipment along a line heading towards Hamburg which caused severe delays to the mainline service between the two cities. The international media decried the attempt, and spoke of a resurgence of the 'left-wing terrorism' of West Germany in the 70's, as well as the fact that so far that year alone "600 expensive cars have been torched in the city by anarchists". Hekla is the neighbouring volcano to Eyjafjallajökull, who previously visited the aforementioned havoc on the world economy.

4. ed. – Katla, east of Eyjafjallajökull, is one of the largest Icelandic volcanoes, and very active.

5. ed. – The sentences (delivered 'in absence' to a heavily-militarised court as they refused to assist the judicial show, after an alleged escape plot was foiled by guards): 42 years for Juan, 15 years for Freddy, 14 years for Marcelo. See **Return Fire vol.1 pg72** for details on their case.

6. ed. – Carlos, the final fugitive from the above case, was trapped by the cops in the city of Angol after six years on the run. When paraded before the assembled press, his only words were "Long live the Mapuche resistance, long live the anarchist resistance!". Reflecting on his time in clandestinity: "To me, they were six years of secrecy, of insubordination, active and vital; in which Alen my son (now 4 years), faithful witness of the tenderness and strength of resistance, was born. [...] And with that strength I will continue to resist, since I come from the ancient forests, I come from the beautiful smile of my daughter Ayelen; I come too from cold and inequality, I come from suffering and hunger under dictatorship [ed. – under which he had been imprisoned for many years for guerrilla struggle], I come from where children cry as their communities are paved over, I come from the teardrop of a mother mourning her murdered son, I come from Araucanía and the reclaimed land [ed. – see **The Intensification of Independence in Wallmapu**], I come from the heart of the poorest..." In an abbreviated trial he claimed responsibility for the actions they were accused of, and after some months of prison struggle and hunger strikes is now released.

7. ed. – Two arrests had occurred in July, respectively relating to the high-profile blackout of radio and TV following a transmission mast arson near Bath (see **Return Fire vol.1 pg66**) and the coordinated torching of private security, telecommunications utility, luxury and fox-hunting supporter vehicles one night in inner-city Bristol. Eventually both charges got dropped.

THE "WILD" AS WILL & REPRESENTATION

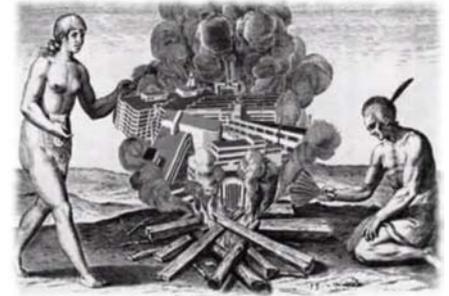
The activities of forest and mountain, *the outdoors* as their enthusiasts say, have been experiencing a kind of boom for some time it seems. So many people in the mountains, the woods, in courses ranging from climbing to hiking, from camping to "survival" (that terrible word from a TV show...) are blooming.

At the same time we hear a lot of talk about the ethics of going to the woods and mountains, what is right and what is wrong, springing up from the custodians of truth (and those guys are everywhere) and new-agers in climbing boots. However, following this "rediscovery" of the "wild", problems have been created in relation to overcrowding of the mountains and woods on the one hand, with all that that entails, and on the other the development of a dangerous tendency to transform the "wild" and make it more accessible and appealing to the nomadic masses moving from the city for longer or shorter periods, weekends or holidays, to breathe "fresh air".

So more and more places are springing up that are tending to transpose the city environment – measured and calculated – into environments that had perhaps instead maintained its particular characteristics unchanged for a long time, to a different degree from place to place. And so the "wild" becomes a domesticated offshoot of the city, which in the case of mountain villages means a distortion of the place to spots of wild renovations or new construction at the limit of (and beyond) the eco-devastation monstrosity.

The plaudits that one hears from many quarters about the repopulation of some mountain areas [*using the example of Italy*] are just the delighted cries of those who manage to get some extra money in their pocket (directors, house owners and building speculators in boots), **but the mountain is still dying, just like the countryside of the plains.**

Knowledge and skills, local traditions and dialects are being lost, sacrificed on the altar of usability and saleability. Obviously I don't want to throw the baby out with the bathwater, there are some interesting situations that attempt to recover a more direct relationship with the environment around them, but the mass trend, unintelligent and brute, is to seek to extend city life to the countryside, mountains, forests...



Organisational food for thought

For those who decide to break with the metropolis-centric system that society is increasingly imposing, to move permanently to "depressed" areas like the countryside or the mountains, problems are certainly not lacking.

If abandoned houses can be occupied – and that is desirable – and the same goes for land for cultivation, one of the points remains how to recover the resources that we cannot self-produce, like fuel for possible means of transport (individual or in common), a dental visit, a purchase (where you cannot make do otherwise...), of shoes, or clothes, etc...

One way to address the relationship that, like it or not, exists with capital and the market could be to organize with those in solidarity, sharing skills and tasks, thus creating a strictly horizontal and self-managed network of micro production which invest part of their time and their skills using exchange where possible and if entry into the market is partly necessary, dividing earnings from any sale in the local markets of products and artifacts with all those participating in the group.

Groups of recycling and reuse^[1] that lengthen the life of products, both for their own use and for any exchange or sale, self-production groups, etc... which obviously should not have rigid forms but interchangeability among themselves, thereby socializing skills and dexterity. Obviously that cited above can only be food for thought, at best useful to the debate and certainly not exhaustive compared to the complex problem of the organization of existence outside the metropolis and commercial circuits.

Environmental devastation, indifferent beneficiaries

As we said it looks as though the "wild" has entered the daily lot of many, touching various sensitivities that they have been squabbling over in public debates, websites and forums, ethical issues and methods of how to frequent the natural environment or not, rumour upon rumour

“In the urban centres of the industrialised North may be observed a curious mass behaviour from time to time. Those who apparently consider urban culture and lifestyle as the pinnacle of progress and modernity, for whom the cities are centres of 'Life', of freedom, of culture, rush away from these very cities whenever they can. A flight into 'Nature', the 'wilderness', 'underdeveloped'[...] Since the eighteenth century *nature*, the rural areas around cities, the land of the peasants has been increasingly transformed into a mere Hinterland for the cities, or perceived as an aesthetic experience: the romantic landscape. Like the external colonies, the land, where the food for the urban population is grown, is not only ruthlessly exploited and destroyed by industrialised agriculture, it is also devalued as backward and unprofitable, like a colony. But paradoxically, this land is also the object of urban longing. [...] What are people seeking? It seems obvious that what is sought is exactly the opposite of what the myth of modernity has promised as sees as positive: the total control of nature and natural processes by science and technology, the 'civilizing', that is, taming of all 'wild' forces[...] Also the search for adventure is a reaction to modern society with its many technical novelties. Obviously, people's basic curiosity is not satisfied with ever newer technical inventions. On the contrary, industrial society, in spite of its affluence and its leisure and entertainment industry, is permeated by a deep sense of boredom and apathy. The modern lifestyle leaves little to people's own creativity and work, everything is preplanned and organized, there are no more adventures. We are entertained, animated, fed, stimulated by professional experts. [...] Industrial capitalist-patriarchal society is based on fundamental dichotomies between Man and Nature, Man and Woman, City and Village, Metropolises and Colony, Work and Life, Nature and Culture and so on. I call these dichotomies *colonisations*. The desires analysed are all directed towards that part of these dichotomies which as been amputated, externalized, colonised, submerged, repressed and/or destroyed. This is one reason why the longing for these colonised parts can only be sentimentalized; they must be romanticized and added on to the existing modern paradigm. [...] The beautiful illusion of Nature, the simulation of originality and spontaneity, the aesthetic and symbolic representation of Nature makes this world of machines more tolerable. The market opportunities for selling these symbolic representations of Nature grow in proportion to people's growing frustrations with the hollow benefits of modern civilisation. As we have noted, however, even these illusions cannot be bought unless the symbioses, the living relationships between humans and other natural beings, are disrupted. Progress, since the time of Enlightenment, means precisely this disruption and separation of the modern human ego, the modern subject, from all such symbioses.” – Maria Mies

about those who shout their dedication to the forests and mountains the loudest (anathema for those who drop litter on the path – something actually execrable – or take wood for their campfire), all devoted body and soul to their dear nature, so you'll never hear these new Thoreau's^[2] say a word about the environmental devastation that is truly crippling the countryside, woods and mountains.

To listen to interventions, or read pages and pages on forums about the incivility of those who dirty part of the forest, and not hear a word or read a line about the destruction coming from the biomass [power plant] in Pollino, quarrying the Apuan Alps^[3] or the high-speed train [ed. – see **'The Maximum That Our Abilities Allow'**] for example, is delirious, all the more as to talk about it means to attract the antipathy of many, where at best you are accused of fanaticism. Imagine then if you decide to point out that there is an abyss between a paper towel on a bush (which personally makes me very angry) and thousands of cubic metres of concrete, just as there is between a couple of cut branches and a biomass power plant that will eat quite a few more trees...

Obviously this kind of attitude is not surprising, and is ascribed in all respects to the habits of

behaviour that we have seen above with respect to the way of living the mountain as *an extension of the city, and by city I mean not only the physical space that it occupies, but also the ideological system underlying it and the mental structures and cognitive consequences deriving from it.*

The scope of the defence of territory, for the "citizen", is always ascribed to the private channel of opinion (and this is obvious if you compare the number of those who complain about a littered path and then how many actually deal with it and go tidy up), opinion which moreover submits itself to a whole series of situations that lead to chatter either remaining such, or at least never putting in question the system as the crux of the matter.

If it is true that the wild is set to become an offshoot of the town, domesticated, raped, then the "love" of the "citizen" will be no more than the use of a "service", which as such can be replaced when it is no longer available.

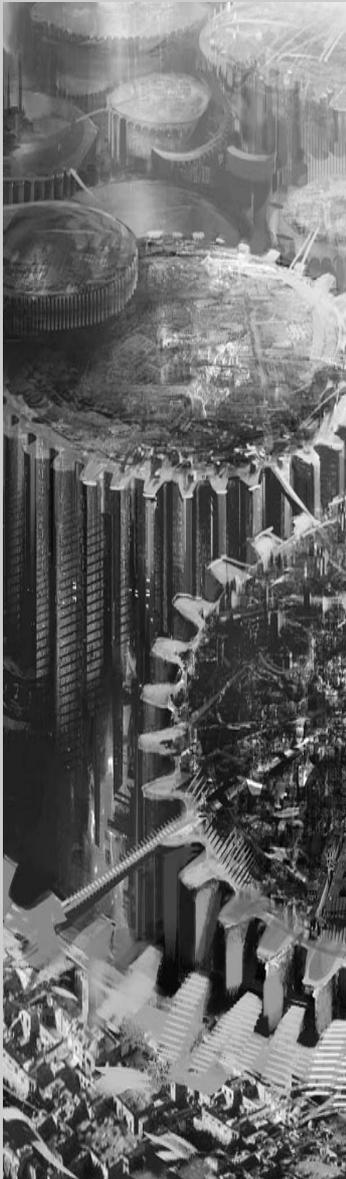


In this optic, defence of the wild simply becomes a request for a better service, adapted to the expectations of those who benefit from it, like the many others who come and go, maybe substituted by other urgencies of the moment.

Alongside this we must then place the habit of never questioning the assumptions of so-called "progress", convinced that any "innovation" is functional to the improvement of our living conditions, all helped by our domestication to accept, substantially, (and often without even realising, head down and as a natural condition,) the imposition of those "in charge".

The defence of opinion of the wild is therefore something *private*, at least as long as the "public" is not putting its hands on it.

Then there are those who do not accept the choices of power passively (for various reasons, not least individual economic interest), but still without questioning the general structure of dominion and decide to struggle by entering into dialogue with



“Points of view are for those who decide for others, those who are delegated and appointed by society, the citizens; wild drives don’t need political/cultural explanations. We can see and feel directly what they are doing to the Earth, to the animals, to anti-authoritarians, and this is sufficient to give a reason to our attacks, every time with more determination and strength... forward anarchists, let’s sabotage and destroy the present!

– F.A.I./F.R.I. 'Subversive Anti-Civilisation Individualities'

the managerial authorities, so deploy all that is "legally" possible to stop – for example – the construction of 'x' power plant... resulting, in the vast majority of cases, in spending years and money in an endless dispute that brings nothing but frustration and a lovely new installation.

Individuals who resist, the importance of a defence that is also attack

Fortunately, there are also individuals who, freed from the shackles of compliance, rebel against the presumed inevitability of the choices of power and oppose themselves to devastation in a direct unmediated way that there cannot but be when the stakes are the destruction of the world around us (be it a forest, a mountain or whatever). Refusing to submit to the dictates of capital, whoever opposes the devastation to some extent also plays a hand in attack, showing that you can fight, that the famous grain of sand *really can jam the machine*, and that if you consider something important, *you carry it through to the end*.

The repression of dissent in defence of the interests of power is obviously strong in such cases, and as I write, I can only think of Remi [ed. – see *Radical Scavengers Come Out of the Woodwork*], the French fighter killed by the police of the transalpine government while he was opposing the construction of a mega dam at Testet, which was to serve to feed crops of GM maize, but military repression is not the only one where whoever does not bow down faces massacre.

In addition to the social rejection created around the "violent" ones that protect trees there is also often the open hostility of the drawing room environmentalists who, in those meagre defences, see on the one hand their chatter render sterile and outdated, displayed in all their superficial useless by concrete acts of resistance (to paraphrase an old song, the truth hurts...); and on the other, being, as written above, only users of power, see most of the assumptions on which they base their certainties being challenged: certainties of slaves, that's true, but certainties nevertheless and therefore to be defended.

The tragedy of the battle, the impossibility of mediation between the two parties, means that the fighters of the earth are hopelessly alone with those in affinity with them, except in rare cases where their paths and actions meet and establish a dialectic with other realities that, at that moment, decide (more or less instrumentally) to embrace some type of practices.

But the radical defence of the wild not only runs the risk of being crushed by military

repression, in some cases it also runs the more devious one of being reabsorbed into the concertive logic of power when its action binds itself to that of other actors who may share the stage with them but have substantially different objectives and not only: the loss of autonomy, and therefore radicality, is a danger that also lurks behind concepts like the *quantitative* myth of the struggle, that is the mythicization of *the mass* as an insurgent/revolutionary actor.

Where the battle for the earth becomes a search for consensus, the revolt against devastation becomes *politics*, and politics is nothing but conciliation and compromise, concepts that should burn along with the machinery with which they want to devastate the earth, not go out the door and come back through the window of hysteria of participation.

We certainly do not want to relegate those fighting for the earth to cosmic solitude, but also we do not want such important issues to be substantially sacrificed or even watered down by bourgeois concepts like mass and majority, moreover – if we really want to think in such terms – we cannot know, as if it were evident, whether a bulldozer that burns has less impact than the "popular" struggle than a march of 60,000 people that takes place while the trees fall... In this perspective, the best thing would be to continue straight along the road of direct defence of the wild, not disdaining also to reason with others on the basis of affinity (which is much more dynamic and interesting than speeches aimed at creating movements of "a thousand souls"), in which, it having become less to their sensitivity to swallow their frustration, are generally precisely those who from the barricades glimpse a radically new world.

1. Capital has realised the potential of these practices, so that the same corporations recover their own products to be "thrown away" and then readjust them – the term used is "recondition them" – and sell them at "second hand" prices.

2. ed. – Henry David Thoreau, influential early (Euro-)American naturalist. In his later years, he moved away from his earlier pacifism with his statements in support of a group of slavery-abolitionists (Thoreau himself participated in the 'Underground Railroad' for fugitive slaves) who seized a federal armoury in 1859 to arm a slave revolt before being overwhelmed in battle 36 hours later, preceding the American Civil War.

3. ed. – A 'protected' national park in northwestern Tuscany, where the mountains are blown apart for marble quarrying for industrial manufacturing – ending up in household abrasives, soap, and tubes of toothpaste – polluting the air and waterways.

'THE ADVANCE OF URBANISATION'



In Europe, across the centuries, human influence over the wilderness defined a substantial modification of many geographic areas. Deforestation,

reclaiming grounds from swamps, draining of rivers and lakes, diversion of water courses, terracing, are just a few from many other methods of intervention that became necessary, during the pre-industrial period, under the pressure of demographic growth. **Since the first industrial revolution, the advance of urbanisation triggered the abandonment of areas from the countryside and the low mountainside – more evidently in the last fifty years – inducing the decay of "rural society" in favour of mass society; many lands,**

once used for farming and cattle, have been abandoned, while many towns and settlements became inhabited. Due to this process (typical in advanced capitalistic countries), many areas have turned back into wilderness, growing new woods and biodiversity. In Italy, an example of this transformation is the ridge of the Appennini mountain chain; a natural corridor that connects the Strait of Sicily to the the Alps, a spinal column with great faculties of mobility and connectivity [*ed. – in a biological sense*] which, for now, doesn't seem of interest to the techno-industrial appetite.

'THE MAXIMUM THAT OUR ABILITIES ALLOW'

Nobody can deny that the correspondence between thought and action should be the fundamental characteristic of being an anarchist. If we think that the destruction of this world is necessary, we must act accordingly. We cannot resort to friendly and harmless tricks that are easy to silence, deceiving our minds that are hungry for freedom.

[...] It is not enough that those to come remember that the insurrection is not the result of the arithmetic sum of attacks by anarchists; I'm talking about something else entirely. Our lives are too short to be worn down with hundreds of happenings designed to awaken the slumbering masses so that they come forward punctually at the appointed magical day. Only when we have specifically attacked that what exists have we managed to tear off pieces of freedom; if only for a few moments, we free ourselves from the shackles imposed by daily routine and the law.

[...] **But, as always happens in reality, things are a bit more complicated.** Unfortunately, this sole action is not a panacea for all of the ills of our movement. **Even if you are absolutely convinced that no act of rebellion is useless or harmful, I think it is crucial to ask oneself about the projectuality that it generates and, above all, about the meaning the actions give to those who realize them.** The act itself may assume very different meanings if it is conceived from the position of *attack* or *defense*. I'll try to give a practical example. Last year in the Susa Valley we witnessed an increase in the practice of sabotage in the fight against the TAV [*ed. – see Return Fire vol.1 pg70*]. This is perfect if the intentions of those who have made such actions are an attempt to state clearly that it is not only a simple construction of a railway line that is at stake, but rather the need to attack and destroy all of the techno-industrial system that designs it. But the meaning that you can read in several communiqués of the No TAV movement or, even more disconcertingly, in No. 5 of Lavanda sheet written by some comrades involved in this fight is another thing entirely. Such actions could be interpreted as the last resort of a people who have already used all possible means of

pressure (even peaceful means...) without getting the attention of those who govern. I am convinced that such an interpretation trivializes any positive revolutionary aspect of such acts. In fact, it suggests that if power were more "reasonable", and if it were more open to dialogue, the possibility would exist to "convince" it to mitigate its most terrible aspects.

[...] We do not strike at the enemy because our disgust at the latest wrongdoing is unbearable, but because we want to be free here and now. We do not need justifications to strike, we simply cannot accept living life devoid of meaning as mere cogs in this deadly system. We should be the ones who dictate the moments of the fight; there is a world to be demolished and the chances of defeating the technological monster become smaller in proportion to its development.

[...] Naturally, this entails a more profound commitment, and I hope that there is a way to return to a serious discussion about this. What I want to call for today, and what we should always aspire to do, is to accomplish the *maximum that our abilities allow*. When we act, we should do it primarily for ourselves and in the most resolute manner. We are no different from those who the undeniably authoritarian call "ordinary people". Whatever we do could be replicated by any person provided that it feed their own desire to destroy authority. We should not seek to convince the masses of the virtue of our contention, but should instead seek accomplices who wish to participate in the work of demolition. **We need not be afraid of our hatred, but rather launch into action with the awareness that the enemy does not hesitate for a second in the war against freedom. [...]** **Let us free ourselves from politics, even in its antagonistic decline.** It should be clear that we do not fight for a bright future, but rather for a life here and now. Anarchy should be first and foremost an individual act that *affects all our lives*: we must plot and feed each small fire that can send the world up in flames, attempting by all means to oppose the ruling order, civilisation...

In the Appennini, you don't have to go particularly high to find places that came back to a state of wilderness, between high meadows, scree slopes, peaks. Either in the mid areas of the mountain, or even in the hill belts, depopulation left free space for woods to advance and for wild animals to return. *Nature surges forward like a tide, swallowing the marks left by centuries of rural life, assimilating old trails, terraces, and old, abandoned villages. Chestnut woods, now left unsupervised, become impenetrable forests.*

The return to wilderness, as – probably – thrills the "urban ecologist" who would save wild animal and vegetable species within an abstract contemplation of the Earth which is free from his/her personal subsistence/existence (that being completely mediated by industrial processes), is a cause of distress for those who still populate these residual areas.

Mountaineers, farmers, or artisans, who still live along rural traditions, in a self-sustaining rather than industrial way, perceive the "return to wilderness" as a threat to their autonomous survival; for instance, the re-introduction of wild fauna (wolves, bears, deer, etc.) is seen as an imposition by the central government in contrast with the self-government that their isolated communities are

accustomed to. If it's clear how the protection of some endangered species is guaranteed (or not) by the system, it is as much blatant how a strengthened forest, a wolf or a bear, do not represent a significant threat to the survival of mountain/rural communities if compared to the effects of the global capitalistic processes. By any point of view, the enemy to fight is the forced acceptance of this model which tends, irreversibly, to replace a free existence in harmony with nature with "nature reserves" and techno-industrial megalopolis.



Cantabrian brown bear, of the uplands of Galicia, Asturias, Castilla and Leon, Spain

It's not one side against the other; it's not about an economical system directly bound to local resources (and less harmful for the ecosystems due to its technological limits) against a global "sustainable" economy, unavoidably sustained by complex technologies; it's not about considering Earth as a source for an autonomous subsistence or a fetish to preserve. **Nature's regain of some areas, temporarily escaped techno-industrial totalitarianism, is just a "side effect" of the advance made by capitalism and the urbanisation/industrialisation of life.** As of 2007, more than a half of the world population was packed into metropolitan areas; as claimed by IBM, which predicts an exponential growth of urban surface over all the continents: during the next fifteen years, urbanized areas should increase by 1.2 million square kilometers; in Africa, for instance, urban territories will be 590% more than in the year 2000.

Those megalopolis will expand their suburbs too; ex-agricultural lands will be invaded by industrial and commercial compounds, by mines, dumps and roads; hills and mountains will become further depopulated, invaded by "touristic development" centers and whatever that implies. The alternation of factory-cities, of gatherings around commercial focal points, and of abandoned lands returned to a wild state, linked by strips of concrete. The "western" process that returns once-human-populated areas to wildness, is strictly bound to the global colonisation carried out by the capitalistic techno-industrial model, to the progressive and relentless impoverishment of the biosphere in not-yet-civilised areas.

This process, however long it could last or expand, is doomed to succumb to the destructive power of the expanding

civilisation, which threatens the very conditions of any free and wild existence (if the nuclear poisoning of earth, air and water wasn't enough, genetically modified chimeras and the frontiers of nanotechnology will do the job).

What nature is temporarily "reconquering" in Europe, is nothing compared to what is being lost in the rest of the world. And what we are losing too: the chance of living, in many different ways, without being subject to the techno-industrial mega-machine; in other words, the ultimate completion of our total, irreversible domestication.

The progressive abandon of vast areas, not yet covered by urban ramifications, could soon benefit the strategies of exploitation and oppression. Beyond the absorption of every different kind of human community, the abandonment offers new chances of uncontested settlement for noxious projects (for instance hydroelectric power plants, wind farms, open air labs, etc), and their own "human kind": the soldier, the worker, the manager, the technician, the bureaucrat, the tourist, etc. We have many examples of local struggles, born against the imposition of similar projects. Would the twenty-year struggle in the Susa Valley against the high speed railway (No TAV) be so strongly felt and fought if that valley was long since abandoned?

To fight against something which is not just tangibly noxious, but against the very distortion of traditional lifeways too, has always been an explosive mix – as the inexhaustible struggles of tribal peoples teach us. To defend ourselves, we are always ready to attack. **But why are we willing to truly fight, without compromises and with our life at stake, only when we have (or believe to have) something tangible to protect?** Is the very free existence of the whole of life on the planet, threatened by the techno-industrial devastation, not enough?

To directly and closely perceive a threat seems to be a kind of "radicality ratio", especially where the opposition against and people's interconnection of domination's dynamics seems feeble. If, on the one hand, our wild sensitivity pushes us to feel complicity with struggles that aim to defend even just a square-inch of earth, on the other we are not so naïve as to perceive it as a real liberatory perspective.

To have no "immediate gain" in the struggle, to have "nothing to defend", doesn't mean that everything is lost, it cannot mean resignation to inaction; on the contrary, it must tell us that, having no will to maintain and defend anything of what we have been given, we have to attack, always and everywhere, trying to strike where it hurts most.

If it is true that the precious and visceral bond with the land where you live is something that mercantile culture, pre- and post-industrial, has always tried to sever to replace with a relationship of subjugation and dependency upon itself, the only way to defend it is to undermine the very foundations of civilisation.

ANTI-DEVELOPMENT ANGER

11.04.15, U.K.: *Sabotage on a construction site in the centre of a Scottish city: cables cut on a site vehicle, against "the absolute domestication and acceptance of this systematized undead life inside society, state, civilization."*

07.04.14, Santiago, Chile: *Fire engulfs part of the worksite for the metro expansion, set by 'Kapybara Group' of the Informal Anarchist Federation / International Revolutionary Front (F.A.I./F.R.I.)* "The harmful consequences of the techno-industrial expansion will not be tolerated without the necessary response, we walk keeping a close watch on your warehouses, supermarkets, areas of urban expansion, [we] attack in the fields and your cities, we will defend tooth and claw what remains to be defended..."

16.03.15, Bristol, U.K.: *Slingshot fire takes out windows of construction company Balfour Beatty, who are destroying a wildlife corridor and allotment projects for a new bus route to "cart people to and from their daily boredom".*

22.02.14, Atlanta, U.S.A.: "[W]e poured a mixture of sand and water into the fuel tanks of two tractors used in the construction of a new Atlanta streetcar", *one of the major downtown development projects.* "[Our action] did not take long to plan or to enact and we found all of the materials on the side of the road."

17.02.15, Athens, Greece: *Three excavators torched by 'Nomads from the Opposite Side.'* "We refuse to spend our days among concrete walls, breathing and consuming the shit of civilisation, enduring the constant noise of the social factory's restless machines, crowded by millions like rats, in an environment of plastic aesthetics, knowing the wild world and its creatures only from books and screens..."

09.01.12, Buscate, Italy: *Quarry attacked by the Earth Liberation Front (E.L.F.),* "leaving several incendiary bottles under two excavators, a truck, the circuit panel of the main processing machine and in an office, on the control panel. The woods are razed and the earth eviscerated to produce concrete[...] We don't want to improve urbanisation or to make it more "green"..."

23.06.11, Reboredo & Boiro, Spain: *A backhoe, bulldozer, tanker truck, and cement mixer burn for hours on the AVE (high-speed railway) construction site. Elsewhere in the A Coruña province, two Coca-Cola bottles filled*

with nitric acid and aluminum foil pellets explode in front of the home of the owner of the same construction company. They had previously been regionally targeted by 'Anti-Authoritarian Commandos Against Capital & the State', when they blew up a tanker truck on a luxury flats construction site against "the extremes of non-life that capitalism drags us to".

18.06.11, Eastern Townships, Canada: Hostile graffiti left in sensitive locations as part of "an ongoing string of small "defacing" actions carried out [in] one of the main cornerstones for the invasive suburban developments in the region", by E.L.F./F.A.I. 'Appalachian Hydra'. "We believe that the "face value" is the most sensitive part in this industry[...] Savagery is the only answer to the hypocrisy of civilization."

07.04.11, Rome, Italy: Anonymous saboteurs enter a construction site "destroying any space that is still wild to construct department stores, malls and parking lots. [...] We approached the seven machines (bulldozers and others) that were present; with wire cutters we cut oil tubes, cables and wires, and then we poured gravel and sugar in the tanks and we disappeared..."

28.08.10, Los Dinamos forest, Mexico: E.L.F. sabotage against a worksite. "This project, still at an early stage, consists of deep wells that would take water from the river to allow the expansion of the city and anthropocentric progress." Stones, bricks and rubble are used to block the pits, 'Civilisation out from the wild' etc. left on building materials, three machines burn.



"Comrades, we would like to think that you too have the blazing desire, not to *take the streets back*, but to *make them unusable*. The streets are not ours, they never were and never will be, and we do not want them to be, they are part of this world of concrete and cement which keeps us locked up, keeps us from having our feet in the earth, and to see beyond. Any day, anywhere there are streets, a few loved ones suffice to find the cracks in the street from where to pull out pieces to throw back to those it belongs to."

– In Response to 'Comrades in the Streets'

THE PRISON CITY

[ed. – A leaflet distributed in London, U.K., during the 2015 occupation on the Aylesbury housing estate (one of the largest in Europe) which was being cleared. The combative mixture of squatters, tenants, radicals and others at points held off eviction attempts of riot cops by the hundred, and ripped down metres of council security fencing designed to isolate the occupation in the face of security guards, while a crew going by the moniker 'A.C.A.T.' (All Cops Are Targets) smashed out the glass of an attendant riot van. As asserted by the (former) counter-information space In the Belly of the Beast, "[t]he unabated 'social cleansing' that is occurring in London against those who do not fit into authority's image of the perfect city, must be answered with a violence that signals the breakout, instigated by those [who] taint the glass palaces that rise in the urban nightmare, those caught in the prison being built around us. The city has never been for those who refuse to obey! It must burn instead, not negotiated with, we do not fit within their plan[...] their regimented excuse for life!"]

Our experience of the city is limited and subjective. Each day we cover the same paths, heads down, almost without seeing a thing. Somewhere in the back of our minds we carry a vague image of where we are in space and time: **massive anonymous buildings, cultural containers, churches, palaces, shopping centres.** Linked by reassuring tube maps, symbolized in picture postcards, they combine in creating – with courts, prisons, cop stations, army barracks lurking in the background – a sense of stability and permanence.

Over time we can even feel attached to this – imaginary – place because it is here that we have passed years of our existence, almost without noticing, illuding ourselves that we are alive and happy or at least convincing others through our public face. Just as the prisoner can muster a few fond memories of his time behind bars – because it was years of his life, the only one he [sic] has – we can end up loving and needing our incessant processing through the ruthless metropolitan meat grinder. Everybody, even the homeless staking out a few inches for a night in the doorway of one of the temples of consumerism – forbidden territory in hours of daylight – has a role to play.

But the London of our illusions, be they dreams or nightmares, *does not exist*. **What we see and experience is only an infinitesimal part of what is really a militarised territory within which masses of people remain corralled inside their designated places.** With all its specificities this territory is no different to any other square inch of the planet, ruled by a system based on domination and exploitation that leaves not a single blade of grass uncontaminated and free.

The forms that this domination takes are constantly adapting, developing and inventing new ways to better exploit the earth and control its inhabitants for goals of

profit and power. While terror and despotism are still the norm in many parts of the world,

advanced democracies such as Britain prefer to rule using the soft weapon of consensus. This involves the eager collaboration of their subjects under the banner of free speech and participation.

Indispensable to this project are the media in all their forms: newspapers, television, 'social' media, etc. Through these, the structures and values that we are expected to adhere and contribute to (and kill and die for when ordered) are reinforced. These include *patriotism, monarchy, democracy, progress, work* (not just to survive but as a value in itself), *belief in and obedience to the law, belief in and obedience to supernatural beings.* And *fear*. Fear of the 'terrorist'. Fear of the stranger. Fear of the young. Fear of retribution. Fear of those who say *No!*

So seemingly contradictory, all of the above have one thing in common – THEY ALL CONTINUE TO EXIST BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN THEM, because we do not question them in our minds or in the way we act...

The prison city of London is not a theatre of open war waged by riot cops, armoured vehicles and commandos flaunting automatic rifles (always at the ready in the wings). It is an ordered territory that works to perfection, all of us going through the green lights, stopping at the red. It is a mediaeval castle in cybernetic form, whose self-controlled inhabitants move around their designated routes. As long as they adopt one of the identities available in the supermarket of alienation. As long as they are adequately supplied with the *passe-partout* – cash or credit – that opens all doors. **As long as they carry the key to their cell in their pocket, apprehensively turning it each night before putting their head on the pillow and falling asleep. Leaving the rich to slumber in peace. Leaving the gold to remain in the vaults. Leaving the prisoners to suffer in their cages.**

Unless.... Unless....

It's time to wake up! It's time to act!

It's time for our dreams to become their nightmares!



RADICAL SCAVENGERS COME OUT OF THE WOODWORK



form of language the guarantee of the incorruptibility of meaning. It is not immune against the dangers of communication. Expressing it on the lands of domination is enough to erode its significance or even to reverse it."

The Mirror of Illusions, Notes of *La Bonne Descente* discussion (Paris), 1996

Intervening in the media with the old Leninist argument (about parliament) to use it as a platform, not only reinforces the legitimacy of these instruments of domination, but also endorse the democratic game of dialogue rather than confrontation. **"You do not argue with the enemy, you battle"** is certainly an old saying from the revolutionary experience, but it concerns only those who really intend to remove all authority. For others – like to start with the politicians of "the movement" – it is certain that one day one may use tact, manage sensibilities and work strange "alliances", "composing with what is where it is", meaning to adapt to the existing order rather than subvert it. To accept the rules of the game rather than blow up the game itself. We have seen the resurgence of this dynamic in recent years in Val Susa [ed. – see *Return Fire vol.1 pg70*], Valognes^[1] or Notre-Dame-des-Landes [ed. – see *Return Fire vol.1 pg81*] after the clashes that pushed out the cops. **It has long been known that all politicians do not sit in Parliaments but also emerge from struggles, and the conquest of power (or hegemony) sometimes borrows byways.**

To refuse the mechanism of politics – of which recuperation and representation are full parts – is not a question of principle, it's a condition of real experimentation of autonomy and self-organisation. **Only dialog of the revolted, among themselves in a space of anti-authoritarian struggle where words and their meanings are not mutilated by means of control and consensus imposed by power, can possibly overgrow organised confusion.** It's there, away from all representation, that ideas without masters or owners that drive us will, at last, belong to all those who recognise themselves in them.

1. ed. – There in Normandy (northern France), there is resistance to passing 'Castor' nuclear waste trains from The Hague to be stored in Gorleben, Germany.

[ed. – This text concerns the aftermath of police killing Rémi Fraise in 2014, a young fighter fatally struck with a concussion grenade during the 26th October assault on the police-defended construction site of a much-protested dam destroying woods and wetlands (a Z.A.D., or zone to be defended, had been raised in the area of Testet by opponents). Many cities in France exploded in revolt, while the French embassy in London and consulate in Barcelona were both splattered with red paint, construction machinery in a gentrifying part of Brussels burned, etc. Amidst the riotous demonstrations and night-time attacks, the media as ever were keen to find 'spokespersons' who they could bring into the spectacle of representation and dialogue, and unfortunately they found them once again in the commune of Tarnac. Tarnac was the site of a police raid in 2008, and residents were accused of sabotage on the international high-speed rail network and also authorship of 'The Coming Insurrection', by the Invisible Committee. That particular text, and others by the 'Tiqqun' tendency, has seduced radicals (including some anarchists) in many places as well as being lauded by academic scavengers and the literary world, as a 'cultural' appropriation and mystification of more readily-understandable insurrectionary and anarchic tendencies. It's not the place to critique the ideas and (truthfully, rather few) proposals of the Invisible Committee here, but the following text tackles how they carry out their ideas of 'building power' in practice; by collaboration with the media.]

"Our strength won't come from our naming of the enemy, but from the effort made to enter one another's geography."

Comité invisible, To Our Friends

Mathieu Burnel, co-accused in the case of Tarnac, chattered in good company Friday, October 31, on the Tonight Or Never show, broadcast by the official spokesman of state terrorism, Channel France 2. At a time when clashes occur daily in cities for almost a week following the police killing of a protester in the fight against the Sivens dam, an early dialogue between "a representative of the radicals" and representatives of power could finally be established. **Blessed, therefore, are all those citizens who scrupulously continue to pay their mite to the public service to fulfill its sacred duty to maintain order (including dialogue between dominated and dominant) when times are grim. For without representatives, no more represented, and therefore, hello anarchy!** To stock the shelves of supermarket with cathode opinions, Mathieu Burnel used his best round of effects to rival Juliette Meadel (national secretary of industrial policy for the Socialist Party), Corinne Lepage (European delegate of MoDem [*Democratic Movement*]), and Pascal Bruckner (reactionary philosopher).

On the theme "Ecology, a new battlefield?", he once again revealed to the blind the practical consequences of the words "grow our power" or "not to name the enemy but compose with him [*sic*]" [ed. – typical *Invisible Committee* phrases]. Facing potentially uncontrollable situations, power regularly needs interlocutors, including virulent ones, as we are reminded, in another style and time, by Daniel Cohn-Bendit's apparition at ORTF [*French state radio and TV*] on May 16th 1968, after the general strike début [ed. – *Cohn-Bendit was a self-appointed 'student leader' during the May '68 revolt in France; now a member of the European Parliament*]. And

if, as remarked an old bearded man [ed. – *Karl Marx*] dear to the authoritarians [ed. – and to the *Invisible Committee*], history often serves its old meals up again, this time as farce, it is also because **power has only the buffoons it deserves.**

October 2014 is obviously not in May 1968 ("*Fuck May 68, Fight now!*") said a tag on the walls of Athens in 2009), but not everyone has the lucidity to wait until after the uprising to rush to TV shows and try to take the lead. Unless the insurrection is already there, of course!

Speaking of course for all and for everyone – as "our generation", Rémi Fraise (who would have been of "those people who try to take minimally seriously the issue of their existence") or "today's youth" – the cheap opportunists now claim to embody this rage of a thousand faces. After radio and TV appearances with his colleagues Benjamin Rosoux (Municipal Councillor of Tarnac since March 2014) or Julien Coupat (who received nine journalists for four hours in an apartment to be interviewed in November 2012), he wasn't there this time to defend himself from police accusations, but to tout his wares about an "insurrection that came" [ed. – reference to the *Invisible Committee's 'The Coming Insurrection'*].

"The idea of using, to the advantage of the revolutionary, media niches that authority itself granted them is not only illusory. It is downright dangerous. Their presence on the sets is not enough to crack the straitjacket of ideology in the heads of spectators. Confusing **expressive power and transformative power**, and believing that the sense of what we express by the word, by the pen, by the image, etc. is given a priori, without having to worry about who has the power to do so; believing that there is content that may exist in various forms without being affected; old illusions of the reified world where activities appear as things detached from society by nature. But no more than other forms of expression is the subversive

THE INTENSIFICATION OF INDEPENDENCE IN WALLMAPU

– Critical Reflections on a Solidarity Trip to Generate Electricity in one Mapuche Community in Struggle

[ed. –The Mapuche, which means “people of the earth”, are Chile’s largest indigenous group. They resisted the Spanish conquistadors for more than 300 years, and ultimately won treaties with the Chilean state recognizing their right to everything south of the Bío Bío river, roughly the southern half of Chile. But in the late 19th century, a new wave of European settlers arrived, and the treaties were broken, with Mapuche lands seized in violent takeovers. Even with the return of some lands in recent decades, the Mapuche hold a small fraction of what they inhabited until the late 19th century. Revolt continues in these quarters, often joined by anarchists. Parts of Argentina are also Mapuche, where they also struggle for land and against the oil industry and similar. We found this text very insightful as to the nature of anarchist solidarity as a practice. However sceptical one might be of ‘independence’ as we know it, here are experiences of comrades navigating those tensions on the ground in a non-ideological manner.]

Glossary

Bío Bío — a river that runs west from the Andes and empties into the Pacific at the modern day site of Concepción. For hundreds of years, this was the treaty-guaranteed northern boundary of the Mapuche territories.
che — person or people
gringo — European or North American
lamuen — sister or compañera
latifundistas — major landowners, a holdover from the colonial system of production
lof — a Mapuche village community
longko — the closest translation is chief, although not a coercive figure and only one of several vocational authorities at the community level
machi — medicine man, a spiritual leader and healer (can be man or woman)
mapu — land, earth, territory, or space
newen — force or strength, of the kind that flows from nature
peñi — brother or compañero
presismo — prisonerism, a dead-end practice of obsessively or ritualistically supporting prisoners, often in a fetishizing way
rewe — a voluntary aggrupation of lof in a contiguous local territory
Wallmapu — the Mapuche territories, or “all the lands”
weichafe — warrior
werken — literally a messenger, a community authority responsible for working on behalf of the community and maintaining connections with other communities
weupife — a person in a community responsible for maintaining and transmitting the collective historical memory
winka — literally “New Inca,” meaning white person or non-indigenous person

Introduction

In the last decade, an increasing number of Mapuche communities have carried out the “productive recovery” of their lands. Using direct action to take back their traditional territory from whomever has usurped it – usually logging companies or *latifundistas* – they take this land out of the capitalist market and put it to a traditional use for local needs, either through farming, grazing, or forest commoning. While this line of struggle has been hugely successful, inspiring other communities to begin forcefully taking back their own lands, those that have ejected the usurpers and asserted their claims to the land have often faced new problems.

After a community successfully reclaims its lands, repression usually decreases and quality of living improves, leading to a different atmosphere in which the struggle is less conflictive. **In this new, more comfortable atmosphere of struggle, certain recuperative ideas can sneak in.** One of these is the temptation to put newly acquired lands to economically productive use, out of a desire to achieve a higher standard of living along Western lines.

Closely related to the infiltration of a capitalist worldview, principally seen in the desirability of jobs and money, is the influx of evangelical Christianity. Evangelical churches are recruiting aggressively in South America, and their presence is always accompanied by a decrease in solidarity, an extension of the capitalist worldview, and a greater vulnerability to resource extraction and other development projects. Specifically in Wallmapu, evangelicals often work as snitches and they aggressively demonize the Mapuche culture. Communities in which the Christians have not yet taken root have a

clear and effective solution – burn down the churches – but communities with an already significant Christian presence have lost their togetherness after the more conflictive moments of struggle passed and Christians could begin pushing for a successful reintegration into *winka* society or simply ignoring the earthly reality of social conflict.

Another major problem stems from the lack of access to electricity and water. Most Mapuche communities steal their electricity from existing power lines. But in the depths of the forestry plantations that occupy the greater part of Mapuche lands, there are no power lines to pilfer from. What’s more, the exotic, genetically modified pine and eucalyptus planted in straight rows in a nearly endless monoculture (the World Bank labels these as “forests” in its development statistics) dry up the water table. In other words, many Mapuche communities have successfully kicked out the logging companies or big landlords, only to find that they could not have electricity and water in their newly reclaimed lands. **Taking advantage of the vulnerable situation, logging companies and NGOs used charity to discourage resistance, building infrastructure projects to reward non-conflictive communities.**

To overcome this obstacle, some Mapuche communities in struggle have begun looking for ways to set up their own water and electricity infrastructure. In the furtherance of this goal, one community invited a handful of *gringo* anarchists with the necessary skills and resources to help them set up an electricity generation system that could subsequently be recreated in other communities. This article is about that collaborative project.



The Community

We can call the community where the project took place *Lof Pañgihue*. The people of *Lof Pañgihue* lost their lands, along with the rest of the Mapuche, in the 1880s during the surprise invasion by Chile and Argentina. As with other *lof*, many *che* were killed, and others became refugees, eventually moving to the cities. A few were able to remain in the *lof* and rebuild, though their herds and the best of their lands had been stolen from them. The *rewe*, *ayllu rewe*, and *fütal mapu* with which the Mapuche had traditionally come together for ceremonies or defensive warfare had disintegrated.

The Chilean government was giving away Mapuche lands, and many *gringos* came and set up large estates on which the Mapuche had to labor as peons. The struggle in the early years was focused on survival, retaining their language and spirituality, and resisting the landlords. In the days of Allende [ed. – *Socialist president of Chile in the 1970's*] and Pinochet [ed. – *the military dictator who overthrew him with the backing of U.S.*], the Mapuche linked their struggle with the leftist anticapitalist movement in force at the time, often joining armed struggle groups like MIR and Mapu-Lautaro. Around that time, several thousand people were living in *Lof Pañgihue* on just about a hundred acres of land. A large amount of land was nationalized by the Allende government as part of a program to eventually give it to poor people (Mapuche and *winka*) on an individualized commodity basis. The Pinochet government, however, gave this land to the logging companies, and *Lof Pañgihue* was soon surrounded by pine plantations.

In the early '90s, many Mapuche embarked on an autonomous line of struggle, increasingly rejecting the leftist mode of struggle that had utilized the Mapuche as footsoldiers, or the Marxist analysis that insisted on branding them as peasants who had to join the international proletariat in order advance and liberate themselves.

The people of *Lof Pañgihue* occupied about a thousand acres that had been usurped by various *latifundistas*, using sabotage, attacks on police guardians, and constant pressure to eventually get the landlords to give up their claims. They also built houses and began farming or grazing on the recovered land. More recently, they began recovering another thousand acres currently usurped by a logging company. They have been cutting down pine for use as firewood and replanting native trees. With the return of the native trees, mountain lions, native birds, and other

forms of life have also started to come back, including medicinal plants that the *machis* gather for traditional cures.

Multiple members of *Lof Pañgihue* have been imprisoned, and others face an array of minor and serious charges, in retaliation for their struggle. The police maintain a constant level of repression against the community, and they have also destroyed houses, stolen tools, tear gassed babies, shot rubber bullets at the elderly, and beaten, harassed, and arrested their *weichafe*, *werken*, and *longko*.

In the face of the repression, a neighboring community gave up on land recovery actions, even though many in the community still did not have any land. In another controversial decision, they also accepted a charity project from the logging company that brought water to the village. But after just a couple years, the pipes broke, and the community has neither the know-how to fix them, nor the money to pay for replacement parts. **That enforced dependence is a built-in part of charity. The logging company rewarded the community for giving up its struggle, but it was not so stupid as to hand out a reward that would permit any degree of independence.** They did not involve the community in building the infrastructure, nor did they use cheap local parts that could be easily replaced.

The major obstacle faced by *Lof Pañgihue* is the lack of water. Thanks to all the pine plantations, the middle of the valley where they and the other community are located goes bone dry in the summer. No water for drinking, no water for the animals, no water for the crops. There are year-round streams at the edge of the valley, but no power lines to steal electricity from. They don't need a lot of electricity, since they are not pursuing a Western model of development, but having radio and telephone is not only a major convenience, but a way that different communities stay in contact and spread the word about repression. And, let's not romanticize, the occasional washing machine is seen as a big plus.

If they can relocate their homes and gardens to the riparian side of the valley, leaving their current site for grazing, and if they find a way to generate power, then they will have land, electricity, water, their dignity, and a way forward in the struggle, whereas the community that accepted charity and made peace with the State will only have electricity and half the land they need.

The Anarchists

We got the invitation through a Mapuche friend we had worked with on our previous trip to Wallmapu. Having been their guest, and having collaborated on land recovery, translation and diffusion about their struggle, prisoner support, and other projects, we had a personal basis of trust, solidarity, and friendship. Without that, they never would have thought of contacting us when they learned that a nearby

community needed to find a way to generate its own electricity.

The next step was finding comrades who were interested in the project and had the needed skills. We prepared for

several months making arrangements, getting resources together, and practicing techniques for the fabrication of different generation systems.

We also talked about our expectations and desires for the trip.

A clear priority for everyone involved was a total rejection of charity. **We did not see ourselves as privileged people going to help underprivileged others, nor as allies to the Mapuche struggle. The only reason we considered going was because the Mapuche were struggling for their freedom, and we as anarchists were involved in a distinct but interconnected struggle for our own freedom.** This was, in a sense, the "community of freedoms" Fredy Perlman writes about.

The purpose of the project was to deepen the relationship of solidarity between different people in struggle. We were being invited because of specific skills some of us had, but we had no illusions about being unique in that regard. Only because the Mapuche had created such a potent, insightful struggle was this project even possible. It is no coincidence that none of us had ever set up an electricity generation system before; never before had doing so held revolutionary implications. We wanted learning on this trip to go both ways, and we knew that it would. Speaking for myself, the conversations and experiences I had on the previous trip to Wallmapu, the worldview and the vision of struggle I encountered, forever altered my own practice as an anarchist.

Because it was impossible to communicate directly with the people in the community until we arrived, when planning the trip we decided we should begin with a



conversation about our goals, motivations, and expectations. We would not get distracted by the technical details, as important as they were. We were not going to set up a generation system in a village, *we were going to deepen our relationships*. The material infrastructure was an anchor that would permit the intensification of anticapitalist relations, and a point of leverage for the liberated social relations to push back against the imposed capitalist social relations.

As such, success for the project could be defined as the following:

- 1: forming relationships that would enable mutual solidarity
- 2: working together with *peñi* and *lamuen* in a collective process to install one or several models of electricity generation using local materials, with an emphasis on passing on skills, such that the model could be recreated without external aid and set up in other communities in struggle.

In other words, if we effectively set up an electricity generation system in a community and left, and the people there did not know how to make another one on their own, the project would have been a failure for us.

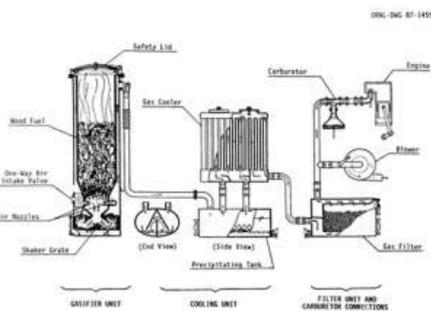


Fig. 1-2. Schematic view of the World War II, lubricant generator.

The Project

Solely on a technical level, the project was fairly complicated. The plan was to fabricate one system that would use wood chips to create power, and one or two run-of-river systems that would use pressurized water to turn a drive shaft and generate electricity.

Logistically, it became even more complicated. We needed to get a workshop space, an arc welder, a gas welder, an angle grinder, a drill, a metal lathe, a dozen hand tools, and a hundred other items that would constitute the primary materials. We had to get the materials as cheap as possible, in local stores and junkyards, so we could be sure that the *peñi* and *lamuen* could replicate everything after we had left. Then we had to build everything with Mapuche comrades so that they would learn the process. **And we had to do all this in a context of constant repression, with new arrests and raids happening every week, some of them directly impacting**

on the project. The possibility of being arrested, deported, and banned from Chile hung over us throughout the entire project, should the state decide to define what we were doing as a political activity. The Chilean constitution prohibits foreigners from participating in political activities, and the state's repression against the Mapuche specifically aims to isolate – one community from another, and all of Wallmapu from the outside world. To us, the project was not at all a “political activity,” in fact it went far deeper, and precisely for that reason we had to be extremely careful and low key.

A couple of friends took us out to *Lof Pañgihue* for the first time. The police seemed to know we were coming and controlled [ed. – *I.D. checked*] us near the entrance to the community, but that was hardly unexpected, given the level of surveillance they use against the Mapuche struggle.

The initial conversation between us and the *longko* and several *werken* and *lamuen* of the community went as well as we could have hoped. They explained their struggle to us, and the history of their community: the loss of their land with the Chilean invasion, further losses during the Pinochet dictatorship, the manipulations of their Marxist allies, the autonomous path of their struggle, the beginning of forceful land recoveries, the repression, the lack of water, the dependence on state electricity infrastructure.

Then we explained why we were there, that we were anarchists fighting against the State, that we respected the Mapuche struggle and wanted to create stronger connections of solidarity, that we came to help them set up a system for generating electricity but it was absolutely important for us not to create dynamics of charity. We recognized that we would be gaining a great deal from them, and learning things that would be helpful for our own struggle.

They thanked us for coming and asked us what models we were proposing to build. The only models for ecological electricity generation that they had had contact with were wind and solar, which in their region were only ever used by rich landlords.

We explained the two systems and their benefits. They were much better suited to the region, geographically and climatically, than wind or solar. They were more discreet, harder for the police to find and destroy during a raid, and cheaper to replace should they be broken. They would not hurt the land: the wood system only released as much carbon as the trees serving as fuel had taken out of the atmosphere, meaning as long as they weren't deforesting their land there would be no net pollution. The only other waste

product was charcoal which could serve as fertilizer. And the water system only required a small stream running down a slope. The stream would not have to be extensively dammed or diverted, and all the water taken from it would be returned to it. Both systems could be made with materials available in the stores and scrapyards of the nearest city.

We told them we had raised the money for all the costs of installing an electricity generation system, but to expand that system to meet the needs of the whole community, or to set one up in another community, they would have to meet those costs. However both models were designed to be highly economical and durable. The most expensive, inaccessible part was the alternator in the water system and the generator in the wood system, but the cost was not too great for a whole community to assume.

They liked the proposal, and they took us out to the site to make sure the geography and the available water supply were adequate. Then we had lunch together and talked a while about our respective struggles. In the evening we made ready to head back to the city, where other Mapuche comrades were looking for tools and a workshop. The *werken* from *Lof Pañgihue* said they would hold an assembly for the whole community to decide on our proposal, but he was sure everyone would be excited about it, as they had been talking about the need for such a project for some time. They would call us soon with confirmation and measurements from the site so we could start getting materials, and then they would arrange to send some people to the city to work alongside us and learn how to build these systems.

The day could hardly have been more fortuitous, but we encountered an early problem that would later create serious difficulties. Although we had been preparing on our end for months, because

of limited and insecure communication, preparations in Wallmapu had not been able to move forward. The community had been able to send out its request, but had not been able to get detailed information about the specific proposal in order to start preparing. The logistics on this project were far more complicated than on the project three years ago, requiring local knowledge and very specific skills, and we did not have the direct connections to begin organizing those logistics until we arrived in Wallmapu. But as they say, sometimes you need to do something before you can get the skills and resources you need to be able to do it. This was definitely the case with our project.

But initially, back in the city, things went fast. Other Mapuche comrades who were

friends of the friends we made last time helped us find the cheapest shops and the best junkyards. It helped immensely that several of them were welders, mechanics, or other technical workers, so they had all the necessary tools and knew where to get things we never could have found in a month.

Shortly, we got confirmation from the community that they wanted to work with us to realize this project, but they had to delay a bit before they could come to the city. So we waited. Days turned to a week before they told us they would not be able to come. Repression clearly played a role in this, but it also made us worry that the project would not be fully participatory, that it might slip across the line from solidarity to charity.

We had not wasted the entire week, since we continued getting to know the comrades in the city, sharing meals with them, learning the local histories of struggle, sharing stories about our own battles. But there was no way around the fact that our time there was limited, and with one week less, we were beginning to lose the chance at the nice leisurely pace we had originally envisioned.

Discussing it with everyone involved, we decided to start fabricating the systems with a couple *peñi* from the city who were already experienced welders or builders. They would then be able to show others how to make the systems.

Still, we had vastly different rhythms. The *peñi* worked full time, and sometimes on weekends too, and they also had a completely different concept of punctuality. It soon became clear that to get done in time, we would have to do a lot of the fabrication ourselves, and then on our relatively short time together focus on practicing vital techniques and explaining the overall process of fabrication.

It was far from ideal and all the delays and time alone made us entertain serious doubts. *Were we giving more importance to this project than our Mapuche comrades? Was the shared participation we were striving for a lie?* So we (this being the reduced group of *gringo* anarchists) talked it out and decided that if the promised participation was not forthcoming, we would leave the two generation systems half-finished and head for home. **It was neither an ultimatum nor a surrender, just the recognition that letting solidarity devolve into charity would be the worst possible outcome of the trip.** It was far better, from the perspective of anti-State struggle, to leave half-completed systems rather than fully completed systems, because that meant that the generation systems would only ever be more than semi-expensive

junk if the people they were intended for learned how to finish making and installing them.

Fortunately, we were able to have a heart-to-heart with a couple of the *peñi* in the city, both of whom helped set us straight. Having a heart-to-heart conversation about the possible failure of a major project is no easy matter, especially when there are huge cultural differences and the other people involved, while friends of friends, were total strangers until a few weeks earlier. **The outcome underscores the importance of good communication and solid relationships based on friendship.** The “dead time” we had spent waiting for the chance to get to work, and instead hanging out with new friends and getting to know one another, was more important in the end than the technical work on the systems, as the latter would have failed without the former, and the former – the good relationships – opens a whole world of possibilities and other projects.

The comrades we spoke with clarified for us how little detailed information had gotten through before our arrival, making it impossible to prepare in advance. They told us how enthusiastic many of them were about this project, and how such a project constituted an important and needed step forward in their struggle. They reiterated how they had limited time, and while they were fully committed, could not help out more than a few days a week, which just didn't mesh with our schedule of coming for a month and working every day. **And they clued us in that Mapuche from the countryside operated on a completely different calendar and there was absolutely no way around that. While those who lived in the city might say 8 and arrive at 10, the Mapuche from the countryside would say Monday and arrive on Wednesday.**

Being told that it was a question of different rhythms helped us understand the difficulties we had been having and feel good about the time that had gone by, since we had no desire to impose our pace. The local rhythm will always take precedence over whatever expectations of rhythm outsiders may bring with them. In short order we saw ample proof that the Mapuche comrades in no way lacked commitment, and it was in fact still their initiative.

But the fact that we so closely approached defeat, in my mind, was perfect. It forced us to draw a line, to define victory, and we decided it was better to accept failure than to declare a false victory.

Shortly thereafter, a couple *peñi* from the community arrived, helped us get a few

more materials that had so far eluded us, and took us and the equipment back to the *lof*. We worked feverishly the next few days, as we had pushed back our timeline considerably and our return dates were approaching. But the work in *Lof Pañgihue* was incredibly inspiring. We woke up every morning while the stars were still out, the *lamuen* set up a cooking fire, we discussed the day's work together, and some of us cooked or acquired materials while the rest of us labored together along the river bed, speaking in a mixture of Spanish, English, and Mapudungun, digging, building frames, reworking the turbine, and installing the electronics. When it got dark, we would stop, but the conversations about the project and about our larger struggles would go on over supper and until midnight.

At the end of it all, seeing the pulleys connected to the alternators begin to turn, that unassuming circular motion was one of the most beautiful sights.

Affinity and Difference

When working together with anarchists from another country, you typically find that you speak the same revolutionary idiom and share an overwhelming affinity which is put into sharp relief by certain cultural and historical differences, which often prove useful for self-reflection by the contrast they provide.

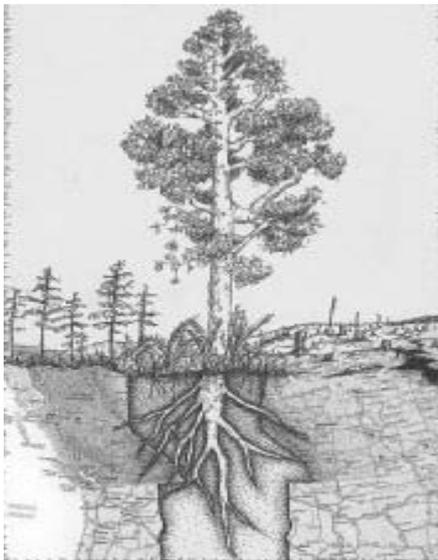
Working together with Mapuche who are struggling for full independence, the gulf is even wider. Our histories share few common reference points (though these are of extreme importance), our worldviews are different, and we communicate within distinct idioms of struggle. The strong points of affinity capable of bridging this difference have all the more meaning, and reflect on anarchist ideas about decentralized global struggle.

Neither the Mapuche nor their struggle are homogenous; however in general they have chosen to frame both of these as unified entities. Some Mapuche believe in political parties, in NGOs, or in Marxist dogma about economics. But one aspect of their shared framing of the struggle is a focus on the communities and the land. **This is the center of the Mapuche struggle, where communities are regaining their land, and it is precisely where leftists, NGOs, and political parties have the least hold. The former are all given a niche by the institutions of the State, whether the media, the universities, or the development funds, meaning they tend to only have a presence in the cities.**

Among the Mapuche in the communities, or those in the nearest cities who focus on aiding the rural struggle rather than leading it, there is a clear tendency to reject the

State, capitalism, Christianity, and the entire Western worldview, including the pernicious narrative of progress.

Many *peñi* and *lamuen* we met had a crystal clear view of what was going on in Bolivia and how much it represented what they wanted to avoid. The “plurinational state” of the indigenous [President] Evo Morales had recognized various indigenous peoples within Bolivian territory, putting their rights down on paper, and this had changed absolutely nothing. Legal recognition meant nothing as long as they did not have their land. **But “having their land” in the Western sense was also meaningless**, because it would only imply individualized title to a commodity that had to be put to productive use on the market in order to be maintained.



The Mapuche are the “people of the land.” In their idiom, as with many other indigenous peoples, “having land” is interchangeable with “belonging to land.” It cannot be just any land, divided into parcels. It must be the land with which they have a historical, spiritual, and economic connection. Mapuche land recovery is an assault on authority at the most fundamental level, because it destroys the very meaning of the capitalist idiom, denying the Western construction of the individual, and insisting on the inalienability of person and environment.

This is a more fleshed out, studied view of what anarchists were going for when they first took up the call, “land and freedom.” It is no coincidence that anarchists, open to the possibility of learning from other struggles rather than imposing a unifying dogma, adopted this slogan in part from indigenous people fighting in southern Mexico in the days of Zapata and Magon [ed. – see *A Flourishing Movement & a Laboratory of Repression*]. Marxists, meanwhile, declared such a posture to be

reactionary, believing that agriculture had to be industrialized and taking for granted, therefore, the alienation between person and land.

At a panel discussion about repression in the communities, the Mapuche youth organizing the event hung a banner over the speaker’s table that read: *Wallmapu liberado, sin cárcel ni estado.* “Wallmapu freed, without prison nor state.” They have living memory of a stateless, decentralized society, and with this memory as a lens, all coercive institutions, from prisons to schools, appear as building blocks of their colonization.

Given the importance of these affinities, along with the sincerity and dedication of the Mapuche I have met and the resilience of their struggle, I am inclined to pay attention to the differences. Not because I think we can or should copy the Mapuche struggle, nor out of a romanticized idea that their struggle has no failings. But it is a powerful, inspiring struggle, and the differences between their version of a stateless struggle and our own cannot help but aid us in reflecting on our own strategies.

A couple of the people we got to know in *Lof Pañgihue* were remarkably upfront with their criticisms, though they made it clear that those criticisms came from a place of respect. They praised Chilean anarchists for their consistent, disinterested solidarity with the Mapuche struggle, and noted that they were piqued when they saw that anarchists were fighting against the State, placing bombs, and going to prison; clearly these were committed enemies of the established order. However, they did not have a clear idea of what the anarchists were fighting for. Those who had spent time in the city had seen anarchist social centers and libraries, but what were the anarchists actually trying to create?

All the major leftist anticapitalist groups in earlier decades had used the Mapuche as footsoldiers and “the Mapuche conflict” as a mere source of discontent. **It became clear to many that should the Marxist guerrillas ever win, they would only impose a new Western order on Wallmapu, as had happened to every other indigenous nation when Marxists had taken over.** For them, independence specifically meant not being subordinated to a state.

The anarchists had only been around for a short time in Chile, eight years in their estimation. Because it was not clear what

the anarchists wanted, they were cautious that they might also be fighting for power. Should they ally with anarchists and win, would the anarchists accept that they did not have any say on what happened in the lands south of the *Bío Bío* river, or would they also try to impose on the Mapuche territories? Did the anarchists have an answer for the “Mapuche conflict” or would they respect Mapuche autonomy?

They did not understand why solidarity events at the anarchist social centers often turned into parties. What did the parties have to do with the struggles or prisoners they were supporting? Mapuche solidarity events often focus on letting people know why they are struggling, and the rightness of their struggle, or on holding a ceremony that would bring *newen* to their prisoners.

They also asked why so many anarchists were vegans, not seeing a connection between respecting animals and not eating them. Fortunately, most of the anarchists they had met, in addition to being vegans, held strong criticisms of civilization. I worry that, had their prior experience been with leftist anarchists who believed in the narrative of civilization and progress, they might never have reached out to us. As it was, none of us were vegan, and all of us were critical of civilization, so we got along just fine.

Then there were a couple specific grievances they had, both relating to Chilean anarchists. One was an occasional imposition of rhythms, as when a group of masked anarchists started smashing banks at a Mapuche solidarity demo in Santiago. The Mapuche were not opposed to smashing banks, quite the contrary, but they did object to what seemed like anarchists trying to speed up their struggle.

The other grievance related to a video they had seen on TV of a Santiago anarchist transporting a bomb which blew up prematurely. The surveillance video portrayed the anarchist catching on fire, and his comrade running away and leaving him there. The Mapuche would never abandon a comrade like that, they said. They attributed it to inexperience on the anarchists’ part^[1]. One question they asked us frequently was how long we had been involved in the struggle and what had made us become anarchists.

A Mapuche friend who was close enough to not have to worry about politeness chided us anarchists for not having *newen*. This will be an especially difficult difference to explain, especially since the closest analog to *newen* among North American anarchists is “woo” or “magic,” and the concepts seem completely different in practice. Suffice it to say that a comparison would be misleading. In my experience the

Mapuche are very matter-of-fact about *newen*. **Beyond simply rejecting a mechanical, scientific view of the world, as do many anarchists, the Mapuche live out a different worldview that is firmly anchored in the totality of their economic, spiritual, and physiological life, and therefore they do not relate to *newen* as a performance in an alienated spiritual sphere.**

I will point to a few other differences pertaining directly to the Mapuche vision of struggle that I think can be instructive for anarchists.

The Mapuche in struggle are far from pacifist. On the contrary, sabotage, direct action, self-defense, and the attack are assumed as an integral part of their struggle, and the topic of burning things down is a constant source of mirth and laughter, exactly as it is with anarchists (which is surprising, given that humor is often the first thing not to translate). The similarity ends there. Not every Mapuche is expected to be a *weichafe*, or warrior, and the *weichafe* are not the central participants in the struggle. The *weichafe* are not more important than the *machis*, the *werken*, or the *wepufe*. On the contrary, the *weichafe* are at the service of the community, and their activity is in a certain sense meant to complement and be guided by the activity of the rest of the community.

The Mapuche have a lot of prisoners, and they do an excellent job of supporting those prisoners. But they do not fall into *presismo*, or a detached focus on their prisoners, an activity that certain anarchist circles present as the most radical. On the contrary, their focus remains on the struggle that resulted in people falling prisoner in the first place. The assertion that a powerful struggle supports its prisoners can be taken in two directions, after all. Supporting prisoners so that the struggle will be stronger, or strengthening the struggle so that the prisoners will be supported.

Connected to the Mapuche success in supporting their prisoners and resisting heavy state repression, at least in my mind, is the long-term view that the Mapuche typically take. One can often hear the phrase, “We have been struggling for over 500 years, and we may have to struggle 500 more.”

This is interesting because the historical referent that frames this view – colonization – should be equally important to people of European descent and to anarchist theory itself. The State swelled exponentially with the early beginning of capitalism. What the Spanish state tried – and failed – to do to the Mapuche had already been done across Europe [ed. – see *Memory as a Weapon; The Witch's Child*]. The alienated worldview that anarchism has struggled with for its entire history, sometimes discarding it, sometimes reifying it, comes down to the separation of land and freedom which is the essence of colonization and all the political movements against colonization that have won *freedom* without *land* and *land* without *freedom*.

The same long view that could allow us to make historical sense of this alienation can also give us the patience to weather repression. As urgent as a particular case of repression may feel, we will not answer the broader questions of repression in our lifetimes, but we also do not face them alone: we have gone through all of this before.

A common criticism that anarchists might have of the Mapuche struggle has to do with gender. But this criticism should be put into perspective. As a friend in the project aptly put it, “*Our opinion about gender in Mapuche society doesn't matter.*” It would also be wrong to assume that our opinion is entirely external. In fact, it was a criticism shared by several Mapuche comrades, although they tended to frame it in a different way.

We were able to talk frankly about gender with several of the *lamuen* and *peñi* we were closer with. Many of them said that the machismo of Chilean society had rubbed off on the Mapuche, which was traditionally not a patriarchal society. **However, accepting that assertion requires allowing for a distinction between patriarchy and gender binary. In Western history, patriarchy and gender binary are largely inseparable.**

But are we willing to assert this as a global truth? Mapuche society is built around a traditional division of gender, but this division constitutes two autonomous spheres of activity, rather than a hierarchy. In practice, women are full participants in the Mapuche struggle. Some spaces of this struggle are mixed, others are separate, but none are made invisible or subordinate. The question that we as outsiders are unable to know is, *what happens to those Mapuche who do not accept their assigned role?*

Gender roles are gradually changing within the Mapuche struggle but, for better or for worse, the rhythm, form, and ends of that change are not necessarily recognizable to a feminist mode of struggle.

What Made This Project Possible

I hope comrades will take it as a matter of high standards and not self-congratulation if I describe this project as a great success that goes far beyond the complacency and repetition of most anarchist projects. It was not a success because those who made it happen are particularly successful anarchists; on the contrary, we probably aren't. It was a success because we were able to identify our weaknesses and find comrades with the skills necessary to shore up those gaps.

In order to encourage better anarchist projects, I wanted to identify the prerequisites for making it happen. Although the project was a joint affair with Mapuche comrades, I can only talk about our side of things.

The most vital element were relationships of friendship and solidarity. These could only form face to face, sharing moments of struggle and of daily life. This is an indictment of the superficial solidarity of communiques, or the abstract solidarity of NGOs, both of which commit to the idea of a distant struggle, and are therefore incapable of enabling a solidarity intense enough to challenge our practice. The relationships that enabled our project could only form in a healthy way if people on both ends were committed to their own

autonomous struggles, but willing to find points of contact and affinity between those struggles. **This is an indictment of ally politics.** Someone who is only an ally can never offer anything more than charity. **Those who believe they are so privileged that they do not have their own reasons for fighting have nothing to offer anyone else.** But we also had to recognize the fundamental difference of the Mapuche struggle, staying true to our beliefs but not trying to impose them.



Personal relationships created the possibility for a deeper solidarity, but technical skills were necessary for transforming that solidarity into an intensification of the struggle. Liberal arts education is a wasteland that imprisons North American anarchists. Without technical skills, we condemn ourselves to an anarchism of abstraction, incapable of rising above dependence on the structures of dominant society.

No one on this trip had the skills necessary to complete the project. But together, and with a lot of help from the *peñi* we worked with, we were able to pull it off by the skin of our teeth. This gave us the confidence and the experience to do something like this again. The rural Mapuche had the experience of building their own houses, and a couple of us had learned welding or at least a very basic familiarity with hand tools through squatting or an interest in tinkering. This might have barely been enough to construct one of the simpler water systems. But the more complex of the systems we were working on would have been entirely out of our reach had one of the comrades not had an attribute rare among anarchists these days: years of experience working in a factory. **These extensive technical skills, however, would have been inadequate without the aid of those practiced at adapting to chaotic situations and scarce materials. Working in a factory, in the end, is nothing like working in the field.** So the technical genius of the anarchist factory worker who participated on the project was completed by the practical genius of the Mapuche comrades who were used to making everything out of nothing. And finally, until all anarchists are polyglots, translation will be a necessary skill for international projects like these. However, translation alone can only enable projects centered on propaganda.

The skills we are talking about, in other words, go far beyond hobbies. We are talking about years of experience to acquire abilities that most of us lack, in order to overcome very immediate limitations to our struggle.

Finally, this project relied on a *strategic projectuality*. This means identifying our weaknesses and crafting projects that might overcome them, projecting ourselves into the breaches where our struggle might be overwhelmed in the near future. This is the opposite of doing for the sake of doing, or carrying out a predetermined and repetitive set of activities, which is how many anarchists spend their time.

The Mapuche had identified their lack of land, and they began to recover that land.

Only within the situation they had created were we able to work on such a project together and learn things that may be useful in addressing weaknesses we face on our own turf.

The original solidarity trip three years ago was an attempt to overcome an identified weakness in the international relationships of US anarchists. That trip made it possible for Mapuche comrades to suggest the present project to us, allowing our solidarity to advance to a new level. This is an indictment of those anarchists who either travel for mere personal pleasure, or those who use the contacts they cultivate as a form of social capital to hoard.

When the Line between Self-Sufficiency and Sabotage Becomes Fine

Why is it that in a context of total alienation, projects that focus on self-sufficiency or going back to the land almost invariably entail a cessation of hostilities with the State and a recuperation by Capital? The answer is probably equally related to the implications of buying the land or space for one's autonomy, and a spiritual acceptance of the *a priori* alienation between person and environment.

The Mapuche struggle involves the forceful recovery of land they uncompromisingly claim as theirs, and a way of being – by this I mean a seamlessly interlocked spirituality, economy, and social organization – that declares war on the alienation between person and environment. In this way of being, there is no dividing line between gardening, home-building, natural medicine, setting fire to logging trucks, clashing with cops, sabotaging construction equipment, or blocking highways.

Self-sufficiency signifies a contraction of one's relationships and an avoidance of the lines of social conflict. One who is self-sufficient need not form relationships with others. But the claiming of space and the inalienability of one's relationship to that space asserts an expansive web of relationships that we must defend in order to truly be alive.

In my free time in Wallmapu, I learned to harvest and thresh quinoa, to kill and gut a chicken, and to gather certain wild plants. In that particular context, these were not hobbies that might eventually be put to use in a strategy of avoidance. **Capitalism has been very deliberate in deskillling us, which is a way of robbing us of the possibility of intimately relating with the world around us. "Relating with the world around us" is not a leisure activity, as the bourgeois imagination would have us believe. It does not mean**

(only) walking barefoot and spending time with nature, or playing games and having picnics in the park. It also means feeding ourselves, healing ourselves, housing ourselves, and a hundred other activities. Doing things directly always requires relating with other living beings rather than relating with commodities. Feeding ourselves, within an offensive practice that seizes space from the State, is not at all a form of avoidance, but an intensification of our freedom and our war on the State.

The people in *Lof Pañihue* were very clear: being able to produce their own electricity would be a powerful form of sabotage against the State. Theirs was not a case of middle class people putting solar panels on their houses, selling the surplus back to the power company, and living with a cleaner conscience. *It is a war to recover their territory*, to kick out the State, the capitalists, and the Western way of life. If they end their dependence on the State's infrastructure, not only have they intensified their practice of independence, *they have also made that state infrastructure vulnerable to attack.*

It is often said that there is no outside to capitalism. This is certainly true as far as capitalist projectuality is concerned, but the statement does not truly define our counter-activity unless we accept alienation as a physical feature of reality. Where land is being retaken as a part of ourselves, building the tools and developing the lost skills that allow us to relate directly to that land and to live as a part of it constitute a practice of independence from and against capitalism.

Our freedom is not merely a blank slate or the lack of imposition by the State. Freedom must be articulated ever more intensively, through the tools, skills, worldview, medicine, historical memory, food culture, and material anchors that constitute the becoming or the embodiment of that freedom.

1. ed. – *We feel it important to mention the words of the comrade himself (Luciano Pitronello, known as 'el Tortuga' or Turtle) on this matter, addressed to his accomplice in his very first open letter from prison: "Hermanx [ed. – little sibling], I want you to know that although I could never imagine the horrible things that have played with your mind or your heart [...] I am never going to have to reproach you for anything, because that night it was my turn, just like in past times it had been your turn, if something happens the second person flees, so we had agreed and so it had to be, because although you might many times feel like a traitor, you are not, in this war that we decided to take on there are no words to understand us. I may never see you again, if so, good luck in everything that comes." He lost a hand, but is now finally free.*

FRAGMENTS OF A 500-YEAR-OLD RESISTANCE TO COLONISATION

15.11.15, Angostura de Colbún, Chile: *The office and three corporate vehicles belonging to Matte go up in flames at a dam installation. A banner is retrieved from the site, reading 'Matte, Colbún, Endesa and All Venture Capitalists: Get Out of Mapuche Pehuenche Territory'.*

27.08.15, Santiago, Chile: *Violent clashes between racists and (pro-)indigenous in front of the presidential palace as truck drivers towing vehicles that had been torched hundreds of miles away in the south reach the capital to protest against arson attacks by the Mapuche.*

14.05.15, northern Araucanía, Chile: *Unknown persons lit up a container of logging equipment at the Mariposas Estate, destroying a tractor and excavator, before a confrontation with guards and shots being fired. Meanwhile, close to twenty armed people go into another logging area in Mininco, forcing drivers from their cabs to complete the attack with three trucks and a look-out post blazing. Leaflets concerning the Mapuche conflict accompanied the actions.*

14.10.14, Santiago, Chile: *Rioting broke out as Chile commemorated the anniversary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas on October 12th, 1492. This follows the murder of José Mauricio Quintriqueo Huaiquimil on October 1st; run over multiple times by a tractor-riding farm worker during conflict between Mapuche and landowners in the Bío Bío Region, after which two cops got shot and badly injured.*

31.12.13, Angol, Chile: *Not far from the police station, two helicopters of the Mininco Forestry Inc. (one of the handful of forestry corporations who together own almost 30% of traditional Mapuche territory, as opposed to the 7% in indigenous hands) are put to the torch after the guarding cop is subdued. The government had just ordered reinforcements from various forces in the country to the region, including drones and surveillance planes with infrared and heat scanners etc. to protect the flows of commerce; which hadn't prevented actions such as a previous attack on a helicopter, via firearms.*

23.12.13, Lake Llieu-Llieu, Chile: *One of the last holiday homes on the shores of the lake burns down. Pamphlets in reference to the Mapuche struggle are found nearby. After a long struggle, practically the entire north shore of the lake gets rid of capitalist advances.*

05.11.13, Chile: *Explosion against bank ATMs claimed by 'Weichafe Bomber Cell Alex Lemún' (Alex was another weichafe killed by police in 2002 during the eviction of a land occupation). Greetings are sent to Mapuche resister Celestino Córdova awaiting trial (see **Return Fire vol.1 pg67**), anarchist and anti-civilisation prisoners. "Yesterday it was a bank branch; but remember that the goal should be refined with practice, that the city is large and uncertain, and that the night is as black as gunpowder. [...] For a hot summer... we are still here."*

30.04.13, Collipulli, Chile: *Eleven wagons of a freight train transporting cargo for the forestry industry are derailed after extensive sabotage of the railway; gunpersons open fire on the crew and attempt to burn the cargo. The crew claim to identify the assailants as Mapuche.*

13.04.13, Bristol, U.K.: *To commemorate the death of former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, a ruling party Conservative Club is smashed up, and a police 4x4 gets set on fire by the same anarchist team. The death of Thatcher, who propped up Chilean dictator Pinochet's rule in the country where Mapuche warriors "continue to be persecuted by the same fascist-era laws", had provoked a festive riot in the days before.*

18.02.13, Puerto Montt & Osorno & Valdivia, Chile: *Barricades are erected to block roads in Valdivia and Puerto Montt, while in Osorno the electronics cabin of a cellular antenna is torched, and sabotages are visited upon SAESA. "SAESA is the company that extracts energy from the Pilmaikén River Hydro [ed. - threatening to flood the ceremonial sites of Ngen Mapu Kintuante and devastate the river ecology], and therefore is enemy of the Mapuche[...] Hydroelectric plants out of Pilmaikén!"*

30.04.12, Cochabamba, Bolivia: *Bank ATM set ablaze by the Informal Anarchist Federation / International Revolutionary Front group 'Autonomous Fraction of Rebel Thieves'. "For the attack without truce against our enemies, [we are with] the Mapuche People..."*

30.04.12, international route 215, Chile: *A masked group, some armed, arson two containers used as warehouses, a truck and a forklift at the construction site of the Rucatayo hydroelectric project, then flee in a company truck which is set on fire three kilometers from the plant. In addition, a backhoe that was used for works on the Trehuac bridge is arsoned.*

25.01.12, Forrowe Mapu, Chile: *Mapuche in resistance repel an elite police unit. "This morning police special forces entered the XAPILWE community firing teargas and rubber bullets at the houses. [The strong contingent of militarized police] stormed the houses, breaking doors, furniture and objects, with no explanation of the reason for their violent actions, simply searching everything, surely "looking for" evidence incriminating the youth in the area. THEY WERE ABLE TO SEARCH THREE HOUSES, until the community weichafe, noticing the attack, came together to deal with the repression, producing heavy clashes for about half an hour, until they succeeded in expelling the repressive forces." The people attribute the aggression to their resistance to the construction of the new La Araucanía mega-airport; an even easier port of entry for the big transnationals.*

17.04.11, Toronto, Canada: *Five banks vandalised and 'redecorated' "as an act of Anarchist solidarity with the Mapuche struggle for land, autonomy and freedom..."*

01.10.10, Santiago, Chile: *Molotovs against a military police office, with a greeting to the Mapuche prisoners and others showing solidarity "in England, Spain, Mexico, Greece, Argentina, Canada, and elsewhere..."*

28.09.10, Bristol, U.K.: *Natwest bank attacked with bricks and paint-bombs, 'Destroy All Prisons' left on the facade, "in solidarity with the*

35 mapuche prisoners" (who were then on hunger strike). Natwest is owned by the Royal Bank of Scotland, "which is complicit in state repression in Chile, the pillaging of the earth, and the financing of the prison machine."

18.09.10, Santiago, Chile: *'Commando Alex Lemún' blow up a transformer and high voltage electrical line (causing cuts in the area), to intervene more than sixty days into the hunger strike by Mapuche prisoners.*

17.09.10, Ercilla, Chile: *Twenty masked individuals storm a landowner's estate and shoot up a sentry box occupied by police special forces and their bus, but without injury to their personnel. After a three-hour skirmish, the group (who police identify as Mapuche from the community of Temucuicui) retreat. No arrests.*

14.09.10, Concepción, Chile: *Thirty supporters of the Mapuche hunger strikers attack their prison guards while two are being transferred to the hospital. Unrest spread to the city University.*

13.06.10, Madrid, Spain: *Windows smashed out of a Benetton store, "Here the Mapuche people are exploited" left on the scene. (Benetton corporation is taking over large portions of Patagonia, the southern portion of Chile and Argentina, driving Mapuche off their land to raise sheep for wool, as well as granting mining rights, involvement in building roads, airports, railways, etc.) "We live in a society whose ideology is progress and development; whoever does not follow these doctrines is stopped, exploited, expelled or killed. This is what happens to the inhabitants of the Mapuche territory and many other rebels against this barbarism called civilisation, who for years, with sweat and blood, clash with the huge multinationals that have colonised their land, poisoning the rivers, evicting them, murdering them and what is worse, destroying their way of life, so that we of the so-called best of all possible worlds can continue to maintain "wellbeing". This world where the everyday actions of our lives have become disgustingly artificial, where the new gods to be worshiped are science, technology and money, in which social control is absolute, where minds, bodies, the land and sea are destroyed, where there is no place for naturalness, tranquility, clean air, cheerfulness, modesty, living with nothing... this world deserves to be destroyed."*

22.02.10, Lugo, Spain: *Several masked people enter the Benetton store in the city centre, under cover of a daytime carnival festivity. They break windows and the alarm system with clubs, damage computers, and throw the merchandise to the ground, and toss red paint around. The Mapudungun (Mapuche language) phrase 'marichiweu' ('we will win a hundred times over') is left painted over the wreckage. A similar action had occurred in nearby Gijón.*

03.02.10, Neuquen, Argentina: *The second bombing by 'International Insurreccionalist Rebel*

Brigade of Jacinto Aráuz' (allied with Mapuche fighters in the south of the country) on an Argentinian airline in seven months blasts the LAN group's travel agency. Police had already cleared the area after a warning call.



'WHERE STRUGGLE IS COMMODITY, ALLYSHIP IS CURRENCY'

[ed. – This is excerpted from 'Accomplices Not Allies', published by Indigenous Action Media. The document came out of Arizona, the currently American side of the Mexican border (since US expansion in 1854). On top of a hi-tech homicidal border regime and armed right-wing paramilitary patrols, those lands are the site of intense militarisation of indigenous lands, people of which are heavily surveilled (often required to present passports while simply crossing their homeland); a situation exacerbated by Leftists within the migrant rights campaigns who turn a blind eye when similar measures would fall within "comprehensive immigration reform" (while still coveting the liberal social capital of "ally to the oppressed"; including, nauseatingly, those same indigenous). Meanwhile native land defenders maintain their dignity and resoluteness, and oppose encroachments like coal mines and motorways, as well as authoring such texts as this (which the author described as "provocation is intended to intervene in some of the current tensions around solidarity/support work as the current trajectories are counter-liberatory from my perspective"). Many stand alongside anarchist accomplices in projects such as the 2013 'A Fire at the Mountain' anti-colonial and anarchist gathering, and have manifested in the DOA (Dineh, O'odham, Anarchist) bloc on the streets – stated as seeking to challenge "both the systems of control that seek to occupy and split our lands in two as well as the organized commodification of every day life that reduces the definition of freedom to what can be produced and sold where and to whom, and compels our social relations to bend to the very same pathetic formula of production and consumption", and have established the Táala Hooghan infoshop in Flagstaff, while acts of anti-authoritarian/anti-colonial sabotage in the night are not unknown. However little we otherwise know about their ways and objectives, clearly the text makes important further notes on solidarity in struggle.]

While the exploitation of solidarity and support is nothing new, the commodification and exploitation of allyship is a growing trend in the activism industry.

Anyone who concerns themselves with anti-oppression struggles and collective liberation has at some point either participated in workshops, read 'zines, or been parts of deep discussions on how to be a "good" ally. You can now pay hundreds of dollars to go to esoteric institutes for an allyship certificate in anti-oppression. You can go through workshops and receive an allyship badge. **In order to commodify struggle it must first be objectified.** This is exhibited in how "issues" are "framed" & "branded." Where struggle is commodity, allyship is currency. Ally has also become an identity, disembodied from any real mutual understanding of support. The

term ally has been rendered ineffective and meaningless.

Accomplices not allies.

ac·com·plice

noun: accomplice; plural noun:

accomplices

a person who helps another commit a crime.

There exists a fiercely unrelenting desire to achieve total liberation, with the land and, together. At some point there is a "we", and we most likely will have to work together. This means, at the least, formulating mutual understandings that are not entirely antagonistic, otherwise we may find ourselves, our desires, and our struggles, to be incompatible. There are certain understandings that may not be negotiable. There are contradictions that we must come to terms with and certainly we will do this on our own terms. But we need to know who has our backs, or more appropriately: who is with us, at our sides?

The risks of an ally who provides support or solidarity (usually on a temporary basis) in a fight are much different than that of an accomplice. When we fight back or forward, together, becoming complicit in a struggle towards liberation, we are accomplices. [...] The nonprofit establishment or non-profit industrial complex (NPIC) also seeks out "sexy" or "fundable" issues to co-opt and exploit as these are ripe for the grant funding that they covet. Too often, Indigenous liberation struggles for life and land, by nature, directly confront the entire framework to which this colonial & capitalist society is based on. This is threatening to potential capitalist funders so some groups are forced to compromise radical or liberatory work for funding, others become alienated and further invisibilized or subordinated to tokenism. Co-opters most often show up to the fight when the battle has already escalated and it's a little too late.

These entities almost always propose trainings, workshops, action camps, and offer other specialized expertise in acts of patronization. These folks are generally paid huge salaries for their "professional" activism, get over-inflated grants for logistics and "organizational capacity building", and struggles may become further exploited as "poster struggles" for their funders. Additionally, these skills most likely already exist within the communities or they are tendencies that need only be provoked into action.

These aren't just dynamics practiced by large so-called non-governmental organizations (NGOs), individuals are adept at this self-serving tactic as well. Co-optation also functions as a form of liberalism. Allyship can perpetuate a neutralizing dynamic by co-opting original liberatory intent into a reformist agenda. Certain folks in the struggles (usually movement "personalities") who don't upset the ally establishment status quo can be rewarded with inclusion in the ally industry. [...] The "navigating" ally is someone who is familiar or skilled in jargon and maneuvers through spaces or struggles yet doesn't have meaningful dialogue (by avoiding debates or remaining silent) or take meaningful action beyond their personal comfort zones (this exists with entire organizations too). They uphold their power and, by extension, the dominant power structures by not directly attacking them.

"Ally" here is more clearly defined as the act of making personal projects out of other folk's oppression. These are lifestyle allies who act like passively participating or simply using the right terminology is support. When shit goes down they are the first to bail. They don't stick around to take responsibility for their behavior. When confronted they often blame others and attempt to dismiss or delegitimize concerns.

Accomplices aren't afraid to engage in uncomfortable/unsettling/challenging debates or discussions. [...] You wouldn't find an accomplice resigning their agency, or capabilities as an act of "support." They would find creative ways to weaponize their privilege (or more clearly, their rewards of being part of an oppressor class) as an expression of social war. [...] **Accomplices aren't motivated by personal guilt or shame, they may have their own agenda but they are explicit.**

Accomplices are realized through mutual consent and build trust. They don't just have our backs, they are at our side, or in their own spaces confronting and unsettling colonialism. *As accomplices we are compelled to become accountable and responsible to each other, that is the nature of trust.*

Don't wait around for anyone to proclaim you to be an accomplice, you certainly cannot proclaim it yourself. You just are or you are not. The lines of oppression are already drawn. Direct action is really the best and may be the only way to learn what it is to be an accomplice. We're in a fight, so be ready for confrontation and consequence.

WILD PLANTS –

Birch Polypore & Old Man's Beard



During winter-time, our attention often shifts from the undergrowth to the trees for sustenance of one kind of another. Please note that these words should act as an introduction only; especially in the case of mushrooms, attending to a proper guide with good pictures (ideally, as well as an introduction via someone already acquainted with them) is necessary.

Birch Polypore

Sometimes, another species just reaches out and grabs you (take that as metaphorically as you want), and this winter so far it has been birch polypore. And a great ally for these months it is!

Also known in English as birch bracket, birch conk and razor strop, in the wild this mushroom grows exclusively on birch trees. It appears most often in cold climates (including



Europe, Asia and North America), like its host. It is a round to kidney-shaped fungus, growing from a single attachment point. It starts out white, and the cap becomes more beige with age, finally darkening or greying. The name polypore refers to its many pores, situated on the underside of the fruiting body.

You can eat it, but it is said to be very bitter so the uses that follow are mainly medicinal. However, it's also been used for firelighting (when dried it can hold a spark to carry from one campsite to another), cut into strips and used to sharpen knives and razors (hence the name 'razor strop'), and even making jewellery and much more!

Applied medicinally, it's properties can be broadly described as anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, anti-tumor and anti-viral. Used as a tea, it can clear parasites from the stomach and digestive system, acting as a laxative, or to soothe the nerves or treat fatigue. It gives an amazing boost to the immune system, and is a great wound herb; not just for its anti-inflammatory properties but because it is anti-septic, anti-bacterial and helps to stop bleeding (it can be used to make a perfect plaster by scoring a rectangle into the underside, then peeling it back slowly and carefully - users have said that not only does the mushroom heal the wound, but that it also leaves no scar even with deep wounds).

The birch bracket mushroom is anti-inflammatory. This means that it is capable of reducing or entirely numbing pain without touching on the Central System. Such natural products are in great demand because many ailments cause inflammation at some stage, and often synthetic medications trigger unwanted side effects. In other instances, medications themselves cause inflammation and products from this mushroom can be taken alongside such medications to neutralise inflammation.

For storage purposes you can roughly slice the mushrooms fairly thinly and allow to

dry, usually a pretty quick process, then store in a jar or brown paper bag out of direct light until ready to use. The dried (or fresh) mushroom should be added to a pan with the water and allowed to simmer gently for about an hour. If there is a

specific health concern then this dose could well be higher; also, making a tincture will extract other qualities not brought out by water.

Old Man's Beard

Also known as fishbone beard (again, due to the tentril-like growths in a fishbone pattern), or properly as Usnea, this lichen grows mostly on birch and conifers. It is grey-green (often when smaller) to yellow-green (in the larger hanging strands), and black at the base where it meets the tree. A good way to tell it from other lichens is that it has a slight elasticity when pulled, and when broken apart you can sometimes see the white inside part which gives it this feeling.

It has been used for so much across the world; as a general wound healer (Canary Islands), antiseptic (Argentina), antibacterial (Saudi Arabia), antitumor agent (Chile), delayed menstruation (Korea and other Asian countries), for uterine complaints and vaginal infections, as a mouth wash, herbal cancer therapy, and as



an inhibitory against strep and staph infections. In Chinese and ancient Greek medicine it has been documented as a respiratory antibiotic for thousands of years (modern studies rate it as more effective than penicillin against tuberculosis); similarly, in some North American indigenous traditions it is known to maintain and protect the trees, the lungs of the earth. The usnic acid which it contains is an anti-fungal; shepherds in Italy would put Usnea in their shoes to prevent and treat blistering. The same acid inhibits some causes of tooth decay. As an anti-inflammatory, it can treat both acute and chronic conditions.

You can boil Old Man's Beard into a tea (it's good with the birch polypore listed above, and often grows close by!), though the most effective extraction would be by tincture. It has anti-microbial properties that staves off infection when applied directly to a wound, as has been used as such across the world (in the case of the ex-Soviet countries, once powdered).

Because it is also absorbent it has been used for diaper material and menstrual applications, while Interior Salish peoples of the Pacific North-West of the Americas would weave clothing out of it for ponchos and footwear, sometimes interwoven with silverberry bark and other stronger fibres. Similar uses of Usnea were made by the Bhotia and Garhwali of India.

Apparently, it is best avoided during pregnancy. Also, Old Man's Beard easily absorbs heavy metals and other toxins, so don't gather it near roads, factories or other pollution. Lichens have shrunk all over the world in

the last decades. Pollution, climate change, and over-harvesting are among the indicted culprits.

POEMS FOR LOVE, LOSS & WAR

It is a Gift, This Grief

Grief.

Like a snake, twisted around my insides,
organs and bones,
ovaries,
and heart.

I was hoping that paying attention,
and letting it in,
would end it somehow,
set me free from an ancient sadness that I carry like a weight.

I was hoping that if I stopped avoiding it,
fed it, and gave it what it needs,
it would curl up
small and sweet,
or lay down and die,
happy.

But it's not.

This grief stays,
hungry and poised,
growing all the time,
seething.

I heard they want to mine the moon. That the Pacific Ocean is
radioactive and that California is being swallowed up by drought.

That Bison who leave Yellowstone are shot on sight.

Sometimes when I nurse my perfect, small son,

I'm afraid my grief is flowing right into him,
along with my breast milk.

A deep sadness,
borne of many mistakes,
millennia of madness.

My heart is broken in a thousand different ways.

But once we found a cat bone.

1 bone, from the leg of a feral cat,
amidst the skeleton strewn around by
scavengers.

Broken once,
badly,

set in an awkward angle,
with a thick sheath of bone around the break,
a ring of mending,
to hold it all together.

Healed.

A bone made stronger by a break.

And I think my heart too,
must be this way.

made stronger by each break,
each loss,
each extinction.

Every sorrow,
every slicing sadness,

requiring reinforcement.

Tissue and cells,
compassion, empathy and love
that weren't there before.

With each break,
my heart grows stronger,
beats harder.

Criss-crossed with scars,
reminders of all those who've left their mark.
And maybe that's what mourning does.

Tears you down,
so you can build back up again,
strong enough to go on,
fighting for those you have lost.

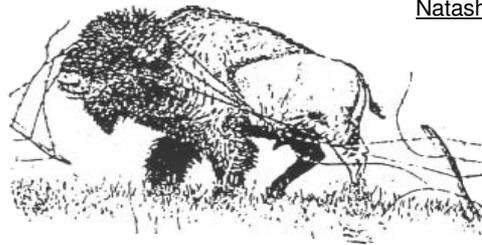
It is a gift,
this grief.

Given

so that I might lay next to my small son,
and my husband,
so much the same in sleep, soft,
And be happy.

Thank you for listening,
Love,

Natasha



A Chorus of Severed Pipes

When I was a kid, I threw a stone into the moon's reflection
and saw it break into a thousand sharp pieces.

It was dark, and the world sang to itself
to keep from being frightened.

Wheat stalks sighed under the thresher's blades,
a chorus of severed pipes
The crickets and frogs kept time with one another;
I wrapped my arms around nothing
and waltzed circles through the corn rows
adrift in the harvest's beaconless sea.

I kept all the pieces I found
in a sack in the barn
where the pigeons battered, frantic in my chest.

Sunrise flicked its laughing tongue
through the interstices between gap-toothed rafters
and I knew that I could never make it whole again;

all those tarnish-bright shards
carried away in the silt of stream beds
winking at nothing
from the thatch of magpies' nests.

That's why there are still dark patches on the moon.
That's why the animals still call out to each other in the dark,

bullfrogs' throats stretched fat like pearls
while the crickets rub their thighs and sing.

– Kelly Pflug-Back [ed. – see *Return Fire vol.2 pg55*]



Unconfined

Another night, one more day of feeling,
of talking with myself, again I go back to the case of "justice."

I could only look through the cloudy glass.
Seeing the streets, the people reduced to a plastic routine.
Somewhere, I remember someone,
I remember my companions,
remember who I am, what I live for, why I live.

I do not cling to life, because clinging to it
only makes you afraid of ceasing to live.
I do not cling to freedom, the freedom of being able to howl,
being able to howl in a forest of cement.
Sometimes hatred takes me over, I fall asleep hating.
When I wake up I know that love is the alloy of hatred
that makes me breathe deep so as to keep living.

In confinement I feel the collective hatred of society
hatred of the prison, the isolation.



'Dead Like Dolls'

we treat our dead like dolls
paint them with makeup, dress them up
we tuck them neatly in boxes six feet underground
preserved forever, or however long a body in a coffin will stay

annually we bring flowers to stones
leaving them to wither and die
because the flowers have no makeup

The cemetery trees eventually fall, left as they are
The gophers, squirrels, and birds die and decay, becoming earth
There is no right angled box to preserve them
For in death they breed life

Our lives have become tales and trails of lives taken
From factories to farms, gadgets and dinner plates
Acting as if it all ours
We cage everything around us, and ourselves

And as I look at what is now considered family dinner
I think of coffins and cages, faces and places
lives taken to sustain us
For we must progress, we must keep this going

And I am tired
And I can't return to the ground, I am full of toxins and poisons

So when I die, make me family dinner
Fuck a coffin, serve me up on a tray
Sear me, bake me fry me
Dress me up, cover me in makeup, and put me in the center of the table

Take out my insides, cook them
stuff them back inside me
Put an apple in my dry mouth and make a toast to me
I gave you all that I have

– Rydra Cosmo



It is dignified to dispel the gaze from the floor,
to better focus on the enemy,
the enemy that holds me prisoner of its greed,
the enemy that demolishes the earth,
demolishes the free ways of living.
The enemy that confines, that punishes, that mutilates,
that terminally infects you with its cancer of Power
mutating from organ to organ.
We are its antibody, having developed an immunity
to its sick human plague.
We are the struggle without borders or distance,
we are the rage of the vibrancy of our blood.

We light up the light of the night.
Darkness and light are accomplices of our steps,
we are battle without reprieve,
a cellular metastasis in every place;
it is better to die fighting than to die without having tried,
better to be free even while confined.

Today again I have a dream, different than yesterday's,
of the certainty of not having lost, not being defeated.
Tomorrow will be different than today,
my rage will be no different, nor tomorrow's.
Strength will go to those who rage with me.
It will reach across the walls and distances
and I will howl to the moon once more.
I will claw at the cement floor
beyond which lies mud and grass
until my claws bleed.
I will camouflage into the columns,
breathe the air laden with filth instead of mist.
The marks on my body tell me who I am.

When I close my eyes
I travel to the oneiric paradise
where the silence of the wind
is like the kiss of a companion.
Another day of not seeing myself defeated
a day of dreaming without abandoning who I am,
another day of being ready to arise tomorrow

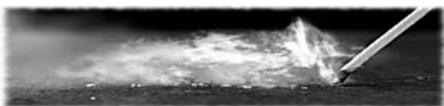
Henry.

San Pedro Prison, rainy La Paz

*[ed. – Henry Zegarrundo (see **Return Fire vol.2 pg68**) is now under pre-trial house arrest; further case details in **Return Fire vol.1 pg76**]*



GLOBAL FLASH- POINTS



A (very incomplete) summary of action for the rest of the year we left off on last issue. All individuals and situations cited by those responsible should be mentioned, elsewhere in this listing if not each time.

MARCH

28.03.14, Brighton, U.K.: *Four luxury cars smashed after Darko Mathers dies (see Return Fire vol.2 pg65), in furtherance of "the direct attack against civilisation". 'Anti-Surveillance Front / Incendiary Nomad Cell' of the Informal Anarchist Federation (F.A.I.) also announced their part in a series of additional actions, beginning on January 28th with breaking the glass of a security and CCTV installment vehicle. "[Over the next weeks] the city was covered in provocative slogans, countless billboards were defaced and night time visits were paid to two churches in different neighbourhoods, covering the exteriors in messages of queer and nihilistic fury, and put in the stained glass windows of one of them with some stones from the wall surrounding the building. Over 100 state and privately owned CCTV cameras were also destroyed in this timeframe, using a wide range of simple and easily reproduced methods, from improvised lassos, smashing with hammers, dropping bricks from above or simply using our bodies to tear down and destroy them. [I]ndividuals carried out well coordinated and extensive expropriations from high street shops on a daily basis, and thousands of pounds worth of products were taken to share amongst friends and keep our bellies full. [...] The new anarchist urban guerilla is no vanguardist structure or party requiring specialist tactics or knowledge, but a free-association of individuals who are ready to engage and experiment with anarchy here and now and create the ruptures in society that we wish to see." Claimed in solidarity Gianluca Iacovacci^[1], "all combative prisoners" in Greece and Chile, Gabriel Pombo Da Silva (see Return Fire vol.2 pg22), Sean Swain^[2] and Casey Brezik^[3].*

[1. Convicted of 13 sabotages of a landfill site, banks, fur and energy companies in Castelli Romani (Italy) with Adriano Antonacci. Now on house arrest.

2. U.S. anarchist/indigenous prisoner held without a legal conviction or sentence since 1991 for the self-defence killing of a court official's relative who broke into Sean's home and threatened his life.

3. Casey Brezik is an anarchist incarcerated for an attempted assassination of U.S. Governor Jay Nixon and wounding a university dean.]

"Everything is going as per usual. Every morning millions of people drag themselves towards their working place where they will get humiliated, numbed, exploited for the most part of the day. The media blare the words of the bosses, the politicians and specialists through their screens and loudspeakers. People without papers are locked up in asylum camps and deported; others reach their hands out to the places where there is an abundance of money and are promptly convicted for it and locked up in prison. Everything is as usual. More and more people's existence is being reduced to calculations: calculating whether there will be enough money to pay the rent; counting down how many hours and days they will still be locked up in the school classes and prisons; overestimating the importance of numbers to indicate the state of pollution this planet is in, how many people die at or because of their job, how many refugees die at the borders or the police station; saying to themselves, while holding the law book in their hands, that the price of revolt is too high. But there are people who break the normal course of things and the accountant-existence. People who do not wait any longer for revolt against what destroys them. People who slap their bosses in the face. People who rebel against the guards of their existence and put fire to the prison in which they are locked up. People who do not lower their eyes for a uniform, a costume, a priest's garb."

– Not Everything is Following its Normal Course

23.05.14, Santiago, Chile: "12:30 am, we carried out a traffic blockade on the South Access, the highway that connects the city of Santiago with the south section of Chile. We brought 8 tires, 8 boards with nails, around 7 liters of gasoline, and pamphlets which remember a *compañero* fallen in the fight against state and capital: Mauricio Morales, Punki Mauri [ed. – see Return Fire vol.1 pg92]. With these we succeeded in cutting off the entire freeway to later be able to escape.

[T]he weapon of memory has been loaded and we will not hesitate to fire it against the forgetfulness which the State/Capital want to impose on us.

We are not interested in making an icon out of the *compañero*, much less so in making him a saint of anarchy, but we believe it is necessary to remember those anonymous who turned to the offensive, understanding that social war is not a game but an irreconcilable confrontation to the death, without faltering before the enemy.

[...] In this way, we have positioned ourselves in the same trench as Mauricio Morales, but we believe it is necessary to reflect and be much more critical in turn of the image that has been generated of a *compañero* who, just like each one of us, had ideas, approaches, successes, and mistakes.

We think that many ideas, phrases, and writings of Mauricio Morales have been converted little by little into slogans and maxims of an anti-authoritarian struggle which should consider itself much more than this.

To position oneself in conflict with this order should be the result of a profound and acute questioning, a reflection that aims to identify and attack the logic of domination. Our fight is much more than repeating and reproducing a discourse and aesthetics, in fact, it should be the exact opposite.

We think that in the moment of utilizing certain discourses, of a book, of an ideology, of an individual, etc. it is fundamental to always take into account the repercussions of this, being cautious of how only certain dimensions of anti-authoritarian practices are extolled, fetishizing them, making an empty practice out of struggle, through which mistakes or perceptions can infiltrate and naturalize little by little and have terrible consequences.

We believe in the multiformity with which the attack and propaganda can take place, as we also believe that we have the collective responsibility to take the time to act and construct ideas, when our fight makes itself visible. Every one should be responsible for this, being critical before all, intelligent and reflective with our environment, our action, and above all ones projection, positioning ourselves to create honest and attuned relationships with those we desire to plot our revolt with.

[...] Claudia López^[1], Mauricio Morales and Sebastián Oversluij^[2] present in the anarchist struggle!!!

Hans Niemeyer^[3], Hermes Gonzales, Alfonso Alvial^[4], Mónica Caballero, Francisco Solar^[5] and Tamara Sol Vergara^[6] to the street!!!"

[1. ed. – see **The Burning of a Transmission Mast, Berlin, & Policing Vehicles Up in Flames, Keynsham**

2. ed. – see **Return Fire vol.2 pg26**

3. ed. – see **Return Fire vol.2 pg67**

4. ed. – see **Return Fire vol.2 pg26**; they are now under house arrest.

5. ed. – see **Rebels Behind Bars; Operations Pandora-Piñata & Zaragoza Bombing Trial**

6. ed. – see **Rebels Behind Bars; Tamara Sol Vergara Sentenced, Not Defeated]**

APRIL

08.04.14, Aigaleo,

Greece: *The car of a notorious prison guard is blown up with a grenade, to avenge the murder of a prisoner called Ilir Kareli. "Kareli, after having had enough being beaten, electrocuted, clubbed, doused with buckets of freezing water, tortured and humiliated by the prison guards, eventually "escaped" with his death from the hands of his torturers. We know that his death will be soon forgotten. Like it happened with the thousands of deaths in the hell of prison from diseases, drugs and desperation. The murderous guards, however much they tried to clean the blood using chlorine from the isolated prison cell, failed to do so. It remains there, as a mark on the wall, to remind that blood can only be cleaned with blood. Now it's our turn... The night is our friend and its darkness embraces us. We pick up our weapons, ride our bikes and go hunting. Because tonight we hunt prison guards."*

26.04.14, Brighton, U.K.: *"A roadside demonstration held by the Christian group "Society for the Protection of Unborn Children" at Preston Park was met with a spontaneous anarchist counter mobilisation. The*

anarchists masked up and surrounded the protesters quickly, destroyed a large portion of their anti-choice propaganda and dispersed again before the police could arrive."

15 & 17.04.14, Bristol, U.K.: *"Attack the racists and fascists, history has always proved that they'll be the allies of the bosses, patriarchs and the state..." English Defence League fascist gets flat tyres and scratched bodywork on his car at home,*

29.06.14, Berlin, Germany: *Upon hanging a banner supporting the refugees who are occupying the Ohlauerstrasse school from the rooftop and threatening to burn it down, 'Some criminal queers and accomplices' offer some critical thoughts on the discourse around 'human rights', 'legality' etc. often brought up in the migration context. "The self-assertion of the criminalized cannot avoid bringing with it a dimension of social rupture, an unrecognizable and illegible element intolerable to the present order. Distinct from simple invisibility, to be unrecognizable in this sense can be a strength, if one accepts that integration within civil society is a dead-end street for many people.*

As the Refugee Strike movement has consistently highlighted, breaking isolation means more than simply revolting against the physical separation of bodies: it implies a refusal of the entire system of tracking, containment, control, and petty administration which is put in place to break down the 'humanitarian' subjects it governs, an entire system of soft tyrannies intended to make life under asylum unlivable.

Similarly, for us queerness is about mutiny, not acceptance or integration: if we refuse to attach any positive identity to our sexualities, this is because we have no interest in carving out a space of marginal recognition within this necrophilic civilization for a 'legitimated' queer subjectivity. As some friends elsewhere wrote, "we are captured by the state every time we make ourselves intelligible. Whether it be a demand, political subject, or formal organization, each intelligible form can be recuperated, represented, or annihilated [...] We have nothing to gain by speaking the language of, or making demands to, the existent power structures".

We can fully understand the refugees' immediate demand for and urgent need of legalization and papers. [...] However, as queers who refuse the symbolic integration of our bodies into the administered governmental space of market identity, and as people for whom anonymous and informal criminality will remain a feature of our lives as long as material survival is tied to the capitalist system of production, we feel it is important to affirm, extend and circulate these conflictual aspects of our existence, rather than to downplay, justify, apologize for them or attempt to make them coherent to the state and capital. We would rather break open new spaces of social rupture and illegibility than distance ourselves from all those for whom legality and legitimacy will never be an option.

While the day to day realities of our lives are in many ways distinct from those of the migrants who have barricaded themselves on the roof of the school, and those differences cannot and should not be erased, we see ourselves facing a common enemy: a state and civil society that wishes to police every aspect of our lives, to categorize and contain us, and a capitalist market which tosses away everything and everyone that is not immediately able to produce value for it. For this reason we choose to throw our support fully behind the squatters, not as allies but as accomplices.

Against deportation, against all borders, against the false promises of legitimacy, legality, and innocence."

*and a known meeting pub of the group's regional co-ordination gets windows broken. "[I]n Calais fascists have fallen back for the moment after an international call-out to fight their repeated attacks on squats and migrants [ed. – see **The Veil Drops**], though the bigger enemy remains the authorities and the state. Solidarity to Damien Camelio [ed. – now free] also in France doing time for burning buildings used by the army, the prison service, National Front, and calling to arms..."*

Indonesia: *A whole series of incendiary attacks by F.A.I./F.R.I. 'International Conspiracy for Revenge', starting by "burning down two offices of the general election committee located in Donggala, Central Sulawesi on 16th April. [...] On another chance, we sabotaged two cars (28th April) which were planned to transfer the [General Election] ballots from South East Minahasa district to the capital city of the province, Manado. [...] Abstaining by not giving our voices is not enough for us. We want to bring this confrontation to be more wild than mere words or posters. We want to speak through fire[...] On 19th April, for example, we burnt down the branch of the national electric office in Madiun, East Java. [We continued] by putting a similar incendiary device in the national electric company located in Semarang, Central Java, in early morning 23rd April, which failed to ignite. In fact, we swarmed over the security guard that came by when we were sneaking into the office. He is lucky we decided to let him down[...] In the early part of this month, we continued our campaign by attacking another three power plants in three different places. One in Ternate (5th May), North Maluku and another two in Ambon (8th May), Maluku. [T]o our comrades locked behind bars everywhere, in Europe, in South America and Mexico. Our comradeship also goes to those anonymous comrades who went underground to carry on a constant confrontation..."*

MAY

Brazil: *Ka'apor tribal warriors track down loggers in the Alto Turiacu territory of the Amazon basin, strip and beat them, and torch machinery.*

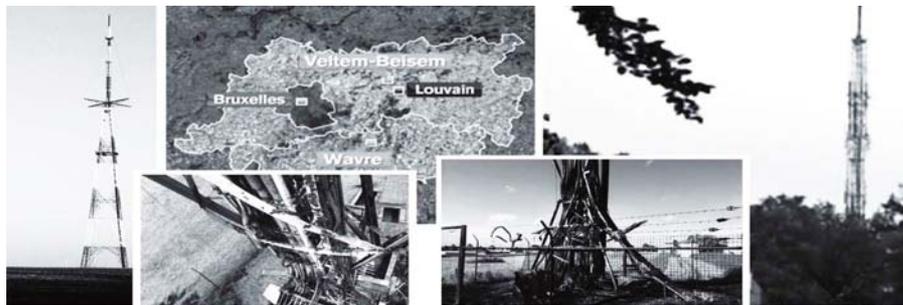


16.05.14, Melbourne, Australia: *Three structures destroyed by fire on the premises of the prestigious Royal Botanical Gardens. "We put these filthy monuments of colonial oppression to the torch in the name of indigenous & anti-colonial resistance both here in Australia & in all other parts of the world & to spit in the faces of all those who seek to tame what is wild into sterile botanical prisons."*

22.05.14, Yate, U.K.: “The justice system tries to pass itself off as the only protection from the very same desperation and imbalances that civilized society creates. Its real function is and has always been to protect and sanctify property and privilege above all: and to usurp free communities or individuals capacity for autonomy, retaliation or reconciliation.” *North Somerset Magistrates Court is firebombed by F.A.I. 'Conscience & Fury'.* “10 camping gas canisters were enough to devastate the front lobby, with a homemade napalm mixture as the detonator. [...] As a result of the blast, multiple windows were taken out and the canopy of the courthouse building was also set ablaze...” *This falls within a solidarity week with Italian anarchists facing (or already sentenced by) terror charges. Also saluted are Babis Tsilianidis (see Return Fire vol.1 pg53; since released), Mario López (see 'Towards the Unknown') and Felicity Ryder (see Return Fire vol.1 pg98).* “For a complete end to all prisons and not just the most physical ones: the whole ensemble of confinement and domestication[...] surveillance, “soft-touch” policing, implanted morality, gender constructs, wage-slavery, schedules, social classes, cities...”



The mural, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, reads: “I AM PROUD OF BEING AN ANARCHIST, OF BEING AN ENEMY OF POWER, AUTHORITY AND THE STATE” (words of fugitive Felicity Ann Ryder)



24.05.14, Belgium: *Sabotage reported on by the anarchist journal Hors Service: “In the night before elections day, a big TV and radio mast belonging to French public company RTBF is set on fire in Wavre. The arson causes the total blackout of several radio stations and the interruption of some digital TV transmissions. In the provinces of Brabant Wallonia and southern Brussels, the whole internet and mobile phone network of company Base is out of service because the attacked mast also functioned as link between dozens or maybe hundreds of mobile phone masts. Elsewhere, in Flemish Brabant, another broadcasting mast is stricken with fire, this time one belonging to Flemish national TV and Radio VRT. A number of radio stations get interrupted. So for once, on the night before the elections and on elections day, hundreds of thousands of people find themselves protected from the bombardment of data, the madness of modern communication which is nothing more than alienation, the mind control that the powerful put into effect through their propaganda apparatus. On elections day we were supposed to listen to the voice of the bosses coming to us via internet, TV and radio. We were supposed to talk about the results of the elections throughout the day but, maybe, thanks to these acts of sabotage, someone talked about something different, who knows.”*

square metre, the water, the trees and the life of every animal (including yourself). This failure to understand that human beings are just another grain of the complex ecosystem in which they dwell, instead of being the centre, is the root from which an encyclopedia of imbalances derives. [...] Hydroelectric plants, industries, agribusinesses, microchips, transgenics, biometrics, the virtual world of social networks. Will the new generations be even more obedient and manipulable? [...] We decided not to stay silent sitting in front of the TV or surfing the social networks, appeased with the miseries of life, tamed by consumption, cowering behind slogans or appearances. We decided to wage war against those who destroy the earth, those who destroy us.” *An explosion at the Military Tribunal of the Union is the work of 'Wild Anti-Authoritarian Vandals'.* “We are sure that we did not come too late for the commemorations of April 1st, 1964^[1]. So here goes our gift to all the militarists and supporters (keeping silence is consent) of the '64 coup which changes name, or form, but is not over. We brought our contribution to combative memory which does not make peace with either the militarists or democracy.” *The action was also motivated by the situation in Haiti (“an occupation by the Brazilian State, the businesspeople, the United Nations for more than a decade”), the cases of Fabrício Proteus (see Return Fire vol.2 pg65), Rafael Vieira^[2], those arrested in state of Goiás for 'inciting violent activities', and Amarildo Dias de Souza who was kidnapped from Rio de Janeiro slums and killed by police, as well as “all the anonymous youths from Cruzeiro, Bonja, Maré assassinated or kidnapped yesterday and today. [...] A salute to ten-some hooded ones who stoned the Brazilian consulate in Berlin, as well as to the thousands who have given war on the World Cup, on FIFA, since last year [ed. – see Return Fire vol.2 pg64] [...] Strength to the struggle of the Kaingang^[3]...”*

[1. ed. – Date of the military coup backed by the U.S.A. which birthed a twenty-one-year dictatorship.
2. A well-known homeless man incarcerated since 2013 during the World Cup cleansing of the slums.
3. ed. – Fierce struggle goes on in the state of Rio Grande do Sul between this tribe and the government/agribusiness. Kaingang people block roads, occupy halls, attack cops with stones, spears and arrows in Porto Alegre, burned the home of an ex-mayor (sending him to hospital), briefly kidnap police and have prisoners taken in return.]

19-21.07.14, France/Spain: *Anarchists present a joint claim for actions “against the prison, capitalist, and patriarchal system”:*

- An attack in Hendaia (Basque country in France) on a Loomis truck (security company which gains great economic benefits from their monopoly on the transportation of commissary and cafeteria money in various prisons) and the expropriation of €22,000.
- Attacks on various bank branches for being responsible for human exploitation.
- The sabotage of security vehicles belonging to the Martutente (Guipuzkoa) prison.
- Attack on the facade of the juvenile prison in Tarragona.
- Electronic attack on different web pages of the UGT, CGT, and CCOO syndicates for affiliation with jailers and for defending repressive bodies.

The objective of all of these actions was to attack whichever focal point of power. The money collected during the expropriation will allow us for once to recover the costs which accompany these actions; we will continue to attack power.

For the fight for animal and human liberation.

Strength and Anarchy.”

26.05.14, Porto Alegre, Brazil:

“Modern civilisation has reached a huge level of devastation of the earth, waters, and all life that inhabits this planet. It’s the result of this sick logic of understanding that everything exists to serve some human being and be transformed: the depths of the earth, each

JUNE

04.06.14, France: A jailer of Osny prison is recognised on the street during the daytime; six assailants beat him and trash his car before escaping.

Banbury, U.K.: The high street is left closed after three bank ATMs are torched in a night. The nearby Freemasons Hall was also targeted by the arsonist/s.



Kiev, Ukraine: Fire-damage to heavy machinery in some woodland: “parasites on the body of the Earth and society have taken advantage of the unstable situation in this country, to again destroy nature, [b]ut retribution awaits each of them.”

10.06.14, Bristol, U.K.: Burning of seven mobile phone antennae. One of the arsons targeted the major telecommunications tower in Lockleaze, also taking out various other broadcast services and causing major disruption while networks were already overloaded due to the World Cup. “Daily continuation of capitalist society is dependent on uninterrupted flows (of goods, people, data, and energy) and the communications grid is no exception. The limited uses most of us can make from these flows only mask the way they are mainly used to oversee and impose the dominant order, and increase its’ reach and control. [...] Evidence has mounted up that prolonged use of mobile phones damages the immune system, decreases fertility, and causes brain tumors and cancers: especially in the young. We should mention that the antenna we burned in Coombe Dingle is one of three on the grounds of a university sports pitch also marketed for schools, as are many others. [...] It is now completely standard for people to spend the majority of their waking hours interfacing with one screen or another. [...] As the sphere dominated by information technology expands, what is considered socially of importance in our actual lives shrinks to what can be conveyed and received by the device, and so narrowing human emotion and experience. [...] For most people prolonged

contact with mobile phones or wireless networks in general seems unavoidable, for work or to avoid social marginalisation, in the street, on public transport, or at home: we are soaking in one more accumulative barrage in a poisonous, anti-human and anti-life civilisation that grows by the day.” The action is claimed by F.A.I./E.L.F. (Earth Liberation Front) ‘Live

Wires’, showing solidarity with ten people arrested in Paris for sabotaging bikes hired out by prison-labour profiteers JCDecaux, with Silvia, Costa and Billy (see **Return Fire vol.1 pg14**) who were temporarily threatened with a second trial over their previous prison sentence, and with Eric McDavid and Marius Mason (see **Return Fire vol.1 pg70**; Eric was released since).

29.08.14, Bristol, U.K.: “We mounted our attack against the BAE Systems arms factory [by] setting a fire against the fuel tank outside the onsite Advanced Technology Centre[...] Today we now announce carrying this out in the context of the NATO summit in Newport in five days. Britain is rife with military industrial complex structures all year round and everyone can draw her or his own conclusion.

BAE Systems are possibly the largest so called defence multinational and they are Britain’s largest manufacturing employer. Some of their major projects with the British Armed Forces alone are the NATO Eurofighter jets and nuclear submarines.

From artillery and aerial drones with specialist communication systems to the Israeli Air Force F16 fighter bombers and the shackles used on detainees in Guantánamo Bay you can find BAE Systems across the world behind imperialist conquest and the death or immiseration of millions. The company now has branches in criminal intelligence and investigation that deal with matters like cyber threats to the banking industry and was contracted by the European Union to devise the Strategic Crime and Immigration Information Management System: essentially an international police database. They are in line to profit from managing the transition of analytics from analysis of physical locations to analysis of individuals and how they interact for the advantage of law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

- The factory where we hit produces hardware including that of naval frigates and combat vehicles and there hundreds of staff with the Advanced Technology Centre design cutting edge weaponry for global markets. Just a few of their specialities are:
 - Abnormal behaviour detection & video analytics
 - Bio-inspired technology
 - Micro & nanotechnology and smart materials
 - Technologies for covert & secure operations

BAE Systems are at the forefront of military robotics as well as the latest innovations such as cloaking devices for tanks and body armour formed from liquid to make the modern flesh and blood killing machine even more agile and deadly. Look to their armoured land vehicles which are autonomous of human supervision (like those patrolling the Israeli-Gaza and Israeli-Lebanon border zones) or the tiny above ground or under water machines modelled on insects for audio-visual reconnaissance to see a sign of our future they are preparing.

The company make explicit reference to the age of assymetric warfare and the crossover from use of their products on the battle field to use within society at large: a common phenomenon in the sector. A case to illustrate this is the high power BAE Systems night vision gear finding its way into the civilian surveillance camera market to advance the project making open prisons out of the urban centres and anywhere it is needed to protect the system and its commodities.

Need we more to demonstrate how technological development under the civilised power structure is leading us to a desolate automated landscape of near total dominance and potential annihilation? The hour is late and the brave new world with amplified demand for submission will be the price for our indifference.

To go after them on what they thought was safe ground is what we decided to return in kind for the business BAE Systems have chosen. Through the attack we are with those incarcerated for their own path towards anarchy: Gianluca Iacovacci and Adriano Antonacci; Marco Camenisch [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.2 pg69**]; Nicola Gai and Alfredo Cospito [ed. – see **Rebels Behind Bars; One Year Off, Three Years Added for Alfredo Cospito**]. Every year they spend inside the destructive acts will multiply.

Honour also to fighters of days gone by who walked armed against dominance in their time.”

F.A.I. “Sacco & Vanzetti”⁽¹⁾ Circle of Propaganda by Life & by Deed

[1. ed. – see **Return Fire vol.1 pg86**]

Briger forest, U.S.A.:

"With anger and love we hiked through this southeastern Florida forest and threw 6" nails into the gears of the capitalist death wish. The spikes were driven into countless trees in the areas of Briger already bought and sold for destruction. Slash pines, scrub oaks, saw palmettos, cabbage palms, even invasive melaleuca and Australian pines. Some spiked high, some low—some visible, many hidden. We left nothing safe to cut. Signs were hung near the edges of the forest as a warning to would-be forest levelers: "THESE TREES ARE SPIKED – WILL DAMAGE MACHINERY. FUCK ALTON. <3: YOUR ENEMIES" The Kolter Group and The Scripps Research Institute want to turn this forest into woodchips so they can actualize their vision of infinite industrial growth. These money-hungry psychopaths intend to replace this wild and thriving place with an upscale neighborhood called 'Alton' and a bio-tech lab where animals will be tortured in the name of corporate-sponsored 'science.' We pulled survey stakes and buried them in the woods. We tore the markings off trees. We worked with heavy hearts knowing that we may be the last humans to enter this forest without chainsaws in our hands... that if no one intervenes the creatures surrounding us will be crushed beneath the treads of machinery so that the rich can expand their kingdoms... that without a fight soon the only animals living on this piece of Earth will be those forced into cages as test subjects of poisons and genetic manipulation. Before the rising sun



28.10.14, Santiago, Chile: "Science is one of many pillars that sustains the military, psychiatric, heteronormative, speciesist, and anthropocentric domination within the present patriarchal era. This time, we direct our actions against centers where biotechnology laboratories advance the study and application of genetic intervention." *Various biotechnology facilities are defaced with paint on the walls.* "One such place is clearly a prime example due to its being a clinical biochemistry laboratory, where scientific branches such as endocrinology and nephrology continue flailing about in the genetics and health of civilized humans. Various hormone tests are continually performed, thus justifying and endorsing the chemical domination of our bodies; this is not even to speak of the testing of different "nuclear medicines", such as iodine uptake and 131 Radioiodine treatments that bring with them their legacy with the PACER project^[1].

We also approached the corner of Chacabuco and San Pablo and painted the windows of the Campvs Lab, a laboratory principally responsible for the invasion of human bodies with a technique called PCR. This technique involves genetically manipulating the molecules of the blood and thereby, for example, preventing infection or disease. Through the use of this great biotechnology technique, they foster the deadly dependence on scientific techniques for the health of society; they become the image that civilization had of their bodies. Each civilized human sees their body as an object that just does what it does, neither questioning health primarily on an individual basis nor noting that great nature has beautiful ways of healing.

Be it noted that on site, just under the windows of the laboratory, there is a BBVA bank that was also damaged by graffiti in the action, an act that gave us great joy. GENITEC, located in downtown, is a center specializing in DNA analysis and genetic identification, providing services such as paternity analysis – characteristic of patriarchal attitudes that today dominate human beings and all their relationships. Animal genetic identification takes place there to ascertain the "purity" of animals[...]

Finally, this center serves as a place of expertise for the identification of individuals - that is, it serves all of the judicial and prison machinery in order to aid in incarceration and criminalization. In Nuñoa, GenExpress is a company dedicated to the manufacture and sale of various clothing for biotech laboratories and supply centers where basic fundamentals of science are conceived. In this area, they intend to serve as a material support to the progressive development of technological resources devoted to medicine. Thus, using modern equipment and pharmaceuticals, they seek to go ever further in spreading technology's domain and thus its possession of life. We know that our action is a small gesture in material terms, but we see the need to act on ideas that invite us to find ways of bringing about destruction every day.

Today, we decided to focus our efforts on attacking structures of science. Because we see the various stresses of our lives coming about through many different fronts, the confrontation with civilization broadens our objectives so as to not only consider the enemy system in economic terms. Instead, we become part of the destruction that spreads to every corner, ready to battle even with ourselves. Because of this, we are not disposed to reduce ourselves to creating "alternative" lifestyles, we wish to destroy the pillars of normalcy by way of direct action. Nor do we believe that someone who lights a barricade afire should feel comfortable taking a Tapsin when they get the flu. We opted for the deepening of our ideas, we opted for the deepening of our lives, for seizing them completely and creating chaos in all directions.

Our bodies are an element out of which come many thoughts and feelings of total destruction[...]
We are an earthquake in the here and now."

[1. ed. – The U.S. Project PACER in the '70s tested exploding small fusion or fission bombs underground to generate energy.]

"We are those who walk through the shadows of your cities, between ATMs, buildings and parks that you've transformed into parking lots, swallowing our fury because we are being watched. We are the ones who cannot see a way out in this world, the exploited, the unemployed, the enraged and those who cannot find a point in continuing to study, because we know that everything is part of a process that intends to convert our lives into a fuel for your mechanized and maddened society. We are your children, the youth, those who got fed up with waiting and who just want to light the fuse, out of sheer curiosity to see what will happen, out of a basic need to escape from this cannibalistic monotony that surrounds us."

– pamphlet left by sabotaged cash-points in Pontevedra, Spain, 14.11.12

threatened to expose us, we took rest in beds of pine needles, listened to the growls of bobcats and songs of chuck-will's-widows, and spoke words of solidarity and gratitude for those who've risked their freedom to defend the Earth."

JULY

01.07.14, Bologna, Italy: *A pipe filled with gunpowder detonated and caused damages to the shutters and windows of the premises of the Casapound fascists.*

27.07.14, Germany: *Molotovs thrown at chemical-industrial firm Bayer AG's vehicles.* "Through operations of bio-piracy, farming and chemical companies always try to secure themselves patents and make certain plants, animal and genes their own property. Naturally Bayer also do it: 'According to research published by the USA Edwards Institute, Bayer produce a drug for the treatment of diabetes, Glucobay, by using bacteria coming from the Ruiro Lake, Kenya [to the profit of] about 280 million euros, not even a cent

goes to East Africa.' Other companies that use the same methods are 'Syngenta', 'BASF', 'Dow', 'Monsanto', 'Du Pont'. In Mexico a natural reserve (biosphere) has been assigned to companies such as 'Bayer AG' and 'Monsanto' so that the latter can scientifically exploit 'wild nature'. But there is an obstacle represented by the people who have always lived there in a relation with nature which is definitely better than the ways offered by 'Bayer AG' all over the world." *Additionally the attackers, 'Eco-Struggle Tendencies - Informal Group' extensively document the genealogy of this corporation, which supplied militaries, from the Nazis (for whom they also designed a concentration camp) and Spanish fascists to the Iraqis who used their gases and attacked the Kurds in the 1980's, and the Agent Orange defoliant sprayed extensively over rainforest and cropland during the Vietnam War by the U.S.* "Poisonous chemicals Poncho and Gaucho produced by 'Bayer AG' have been introduced in Mexico for over twenty years, and these are massively used in agriculture as pesticides but as they end up in the soil and water sources they also harm bees, fish, birds, worms and many other species. That's how these pesticides are poisoning and modifying nature in a deeper and more extended way than the destruction of a forest can do. We are not saying that the latter is not a serious matter but that it takes place in a less visible way. [...] We want to oppose destructive normality and set up lights in the darkness. We know we're not the only ones..." *They close with greetings to "our friends in Mexico", E.L.F./A.L.F., "and the comrades who are in the jails of democracy for the liberation of the Earth, the animals and man [sic]."*

AUGUST

01.08.14, Tucson, U.S.A.: *Anti-colonial anarchists take out every window of a G4S office.* "This action was taken in solidarity with those surviving and struggling in Occupied Palestine and also as a strike against border enforcement on Occupied Tohono O'odham land in southern Arizona [ed. – see **'Where Struggle is Commodity, Allyship is Currency'**]. It is also a gesture of solidarity to those planning on blocking Israeli commercial ships from docking in Oakland on August 2nd. [...] G4S is involved in incarceration, immigrant detention, and deportation globally. When people in what are called the U.S.-Mexico borderlands are apprehended on immigration-related charges, it is G4S-operated buses that transport them to detention centers, courthouses, and ultimately to the border for deportation. [...] G4S is only one of many entities directly implicated in occupation and militarization on the so-called U.S.-Mexico border and in Palestine.

Israeli contractor Elbit systems was recently awarded a DHS [Department of Homeland Security] contract for surveillance infrastructure in southern Arizona, based largely on the company's work on Israel's apartheid wall. Struggles against borders here and the fight for a free Palestine are intertwined in their common resistance to colonialism."

20.08.14, Bloomington, U.S.A.:

"Six vehicles at the Deputy Sheriff's substation had their tires slashed, their exteriors spray painted, and their windows covered in glass etching solution. Three detective vehicles parked at the Bloomington police station and four private security vehicles in a separate lot had their tires slashed. [...] Solidarity with the revolt in Ferguson^[1]! Full force against the cops!"

[1. ed – Multi-day insurrection in the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson during August 2014 (and continuing smouldering throughout the rest of the year with periodic spikes), after a white policeman shot the black teenager Mike Brown dead. Revolt in various forms spread to a great many U.S. cities.]



Revolt in Ferguson

23.08.14, Scorze, Italy: Raid by the A.L.F.

"There were three structures at the farm for the keeping of animals, one was empty, so we were busy in the other two where hundreds of mink were locked in cages. We removed all identification tags, making it impossible to identify or classify any animal who was recaptured. We damaged several cages and destroyed dozens of meters of fence at the back of the farm to allow the mink to escape into the fields between thick crops and streams. [W]e dedicate this liberation action to the anarchist prisoners Gianluca and Adriano."

Istanbul, Turkey: *F.A.I./F.R.I. 'Furious Hookers Militia' take their bolt-croppers to a construction vehicle,* "which takes an active role in the clear-cut of forests and in the urbanization of the last places remaining without concrete[...] Even though, the deepest darkness of the night is thought to hide all of this system's infamies, it also becomes accomplice to some furious hookers who want to destroy this shit before the dawn." *Dedicated to Nikos Maziotis and his fugitive companion and comrade Pola Roupa (see **Return Fire vol.2 pg46**) as Nikos had recently been recaptured after an Athens shoot-out.*

SEPTEMBER

02.09.14, Brighton, U.K.: *A police car and rubbish containers set on fire in the centre.*



07.09.14, Nancy, France: *Sixty black-clad individuals storm the city centre during the Saturday rush-hour and vandalise two premises of EDF (French-state owned nuclear operator), a McDonalds, an Orange outlet, and bank branches during a thirty-minute blitz, marching along main roads in the opposite direction of heavy traffic. Police are notified and attempt to corral the illegal demonstration, but can't make arrests. The rampage is linked to the fight against a proposed international nuclear waste disposal site in nearby Meuse. "It's true that we are feeling a rise in tensions in this society," confessed a deputy security officer afterwards.*

26.11.14, Warsaw, Poland:

"The institution of the City Police – summoned in purpose of cleaning the city-parks – had become a paramilitary group, who 'cleans' mainly homeless people, hustles kids that smokes weed or skip school." *Responding to their beating of a youth, F.A.I. 'Queer Meinhof' torch one of their vehicles before their station. In memory of Rémi Fraise (see **Radical Scavengers Come Out of the Woodwork**), "and to friends behind the bars. Instead of a minute of silence – a whole life in struggle! Fire to all the prisons, closed detention camps, psychiatric wards..."*

12.09.14, Nottingham, U.K.: *A £20-million 'sustainable chemistry' facility at Nottingham University is destroyed after several fires break out inside the state-of-the-art building, before it has yet opened. The laboratory was mostly funded by notorious pharmaceutical giant Glaxo Smith Kline (targeted in the past by animal liberationists etc.), who are partners in the project, to further their noxious drugs.*



21.09.14, Eastern Townships, Canada: 'King Ludd and his army of Fenians' "set fire to a railroad telecomm cable linking Brigham to Sherbrooke (Qc) to the US, thinking about the Algonquins people recently evicted from a resistance camp and detained in Gatineau^[1].

We took the time to select a railway bridge in the middle of nowhere near Waterloo, so we'd not have to dig to get to the cables or attract too much attention. Some fuel was dropped through an opening in the steel casing of the cables, then set on fire. Nothing fancy. It worked better as we'd guessed, as a few seconds later it already smelled burning rubber a few meters away. The enclosed air in the conduct apparently turned the fire into something like a blow torch. Kind of easy game to be reproduced elsewhere by others, we told ourselves... so that's a reason to let others know. [...] It is noteworthy that this railway line is the exact same on which the tar sands train used to pass, taking the lives of a hundred people last year^[2]. It is again used to transport oil from the West to the US, though at much smaller rate. [D]uring the following days, panels for rural residential developments were vandalized, each in the name of prisoners Amélie, Fallon and Carlos imprisoned in Mexico[...] This fast-growing type of visual pollution plays a key role in the destruction process paving way to the invasion of techno-industrial society..." *Solidarity with the 5E3 (see 'Towards the Unknown')* and "all the creatures killed or evicted by the death machine of society that keeps spawning."

[1. ed. – Occupation of a 3,000-year-old indigenous archeological site to resist the \$43-million waterfront redevelopment project by the City of Gatineau and the National Capital Commission

2. ed. – Lac-Mégantic rail disaster, when an unmanned train with 72 tankers carrying 30,000 gallons of crude oil careened into a small town where it derailed, exploded, and killed 47 people.]

24.09.14, Buenos Aires, Argentina: *Explosives are placed inside the bathrooms of the building where the 2nd Congress of the International Federation of South American Societies of Animal Laboratory Sciences is taking place; a text left with the bombs by 'Free Animals' states "FOR EACH ANIMAL LAB CENTER A BOMB – FOR EACH CONGRESS AN ATTACK".*

OCTOBER

10.10.14, San Marta prison, Mexico: *Huge graffiti in the canteen of Dormitory C, referring to the hunger-strike underway in the Mexican prison system^[1]. It is where anarchists Fallon Poisson and Amélie Pelletier (see 'Towards the Unknown') are held. "It is a way to start discussion and create spaces for reflection inside the prison. This is one of the ways we have here inside to tackle social peace and*

26.11.14, Athens, Greece: *Once spotted in the neighbourhood of Exarchia, the lawyer Alexis Kougias who defended the cops that murdered Alexis Grigoropoulos (see Return Fire vol.1 pg17) is promptly assaulted. The attack is dedicated to Nikos Romanos (see Return Fire vol.1 pg75) – close friend of Alexis and witness to his killing – and Giannis Mihailidis (see Return Fire vol.2 pg74), both then on hunger-strike.*

pacification. From our perspective, there are many ways to fight back and take a position of rejecting authority. The intention is not to claim anyone's innocence, but to generate contexts of conflict and a break with the established order."

[1. ed. – Four anarchists declared that from October 1st they "declare this hunger strike, without any request or demand" of the prison system, as a way of "starting with small acts of denial and ignorance of its influence on our lives". They are Mario González and Abraham Cortes (arrested in October 2013 for combative actions marking the Tlatelolco massacre anniversary – see 'Towards the Unknown'), Fernando Bárcenas (arrested December 2013 for torching the Coca-Cola Christmas tree during protests against the metro fare hike – see 'Towards the Unknown'), and Carlos López (see 'Towards the Unknown').]

13.10.14, Cunningar, Australia: *E.L.F./A.L.F. visit the construction site of a big duck factory farm.*

"Incendiary devices were strategically placed and accelerant spread on 3 of their earth destroying machines, and with just a spark, smoke began to fill the sky as we made our departure. For all those suffering at the hands of their domesticators. Commodified, but not forgotten."



08.11.14, Chareroi, Belgium: *Unknown individuals forced their way into the technical buildings of the Proximus network and run a disc cutter through bundles of thousands of copper and fibre-optic cables. The action turned off dozens of alarm*

14.10.14, Coast Salish Territories, Canada: "The genocidal displacement of the Secwepemc from their Homelands through starvation, fear and assimilation by the state and industry being acted out by Imperial Metals stops now." *Secwepemc warriors burn down the bridge leading to Imperial Metal's Ruddock Creek mine. In the area,*

industrial development has met sustained indigenous resistance, with both Fortune Metals and Shell already kicked out (as well as the prevention of over-hunting by non-indigenous), and in 1995 there was a gun battle with militarised police followed by a month-long armed stand-off after warriors travelled to Secwepemc lands to defend against a threatened camp eviction by settler ranchers. "The Imperial Metals Mount Polley mine disaster^[1], in the

area known as Yuct Ne Senxiymetkwe, the absolute destruction and devastation of our Territory has never been answered for. [...] Imperial Metals continues to force through another mine in our Territory while criminalizing the Klabona Keepers of the Tahltan Nation..."

[1. ed. – August 2014, 24 billion litres of waste from gold and copper mining burst out of Imperial Metals' Mount Polley tailings pond into the local watershed, in the largest mining waste spill in Canada's history.]

NOVEMBER

"we're not going to use this space to expound upon the horrors and injustices of factory farming. there is more than enough armchair-activists and those of passive politics who are more than willing to do that (anything to keep from getting their hands dirty). we, the unsilent minority (the 1%, if you will), choose a more direct form of action. we're not delusional enough to believe that this action will shut down the harris feeding company, let alone have any effect on factory farming as a whole. but we maintain that this type of action still has worth, if not solely for the participant's peace of mind, then to show that despite guards, a constant worker presence, and razorwire fence, the enemy is still vulnerable."

– claim for the destruction of 14 cattle trucks at California's biggest cattle feed processor by placing containers of accelerant underneath linked to digital timers via a kerosene-soaked rope, with two million dollars damage, Coalinga, U.S.A., 08.01.12



systems, including bank branches and businesses, and disrupted traffic at the Gosselies airport. Security was immediately increased around the banks, as well as Jamioulx prison. TV, telephone and internet service was also taken down for thousands of consumers. An official lamented that reconnection was an "immense task", because "we need to repair the network cable by cable". Police formed an emergency cell to determine the motive of the saboteurs.

DECEMBER

01 & 06.12.14, Athens, Greece: *In support of Nikos Romanos (who had been denied supervised prison leave to attend university classes), the other hunger-strikers, and those forced into clandestinity in different parts of the world, F.A.I./F.R.I. 'Eternal Students at the University of Anarchist Insurrection' go on the attack. "Not having any illusions about the institution of education as a tool of subjugation and domestication of people in the hands of Domination and the role of the university as a factory that produces docile slaves in the service of the capitalist profitability and normality, [Nikos] is on a hunger strike since November 10th[...]. So, in the morning of 1/12, we torched a school bus owned by St. Lawrence College in Ag. Dimitrios. Also, we claim responsibility for the attack with gas canisters, shortly after midnight on 6/12, against a car owned by the construction company Aktor Facility Management (subsidiary of ELLAKTOR group, known for its involvement in mining gold in Skouries, Halkidiki [ed. - see **Return Fire vol.2 pg40**] and several cases of pillaging of the natural environment)."*

Barcelona, Spain:

Graffiti appears on the veneers of two different psychiatric units; "The fight for freedom is therapeutic!" / "Pathologised ones in struggle!" / "Against the institution of psychiatry-prison", etc.



The graffiti reads; "BEING WELL ADAPTED TO A PROFOUNDLY SICK SOCIETY IS NOT A SIGN OF HEALTH!"

03.12.14, London, U.K.:

Arson of a private security vehicle in solidarity with the hunger-strike of Nikos Romanos and Giannis Mihailidis, joined now by co-convicted Andreas-Dimitris Bourzoukos and Dimitris Politis, by F.A.I. 'Fires on the Horizon - Nikos Romanos'.

Besançon, France: *Collated report on rebellion against surveillance, from Rabble counter-information site: "CCTV has been proliferating in the town with the renovation of its transportation systems. The exception to this is 408, a poor and rebellious neighbourhood where cops and architects have hesitated more than once to tread their dirty paws. Six 360 degree rotating cameras have been set up to watch the inhabitants 24/7 and have come under repeated attack. In a string of incidents running back months, camera posts have been set alight or sawed down with angle grinders, cables torched, and the electricity supply to the neighbourhood sabotaged, providing a cover of darkness for the inevitable police visit and allowing camera cables to be cut in safety. The wave of sabotage in an area frequently subjected to state harassment and patrols by riot police follows a revolt during an arrest by undercover cops there in June. Residents of all ages, 'right up to grandmas in slippers', came out of their homes to support a man being bundled in a van by plain clothed police, following an assault by the accused captured on one of the newly-installed CCTV cameras. The cop car was attacked during the unrest, and a number of women and men were taken along with him. One of the new cameras allowed six of the mob to be identified and convicted just days later. Some locals reacted immediately by felling the camera post with an angle grinder. The insubordination has continued periodically ever since, with the police commissioner's car tires let down during a raid, and empty apartments being reoccupied - serving not only as hangout spaces for local youth, but handy storage depots for projectiles with which to welcome the riot police."*

24.12.14, Temuco, Chile:

Anonymous hands place an explosive against the door of the Arms Control Unit of the Second Commissioner of Temuco, amidst the police's

Christmas festivities. The blast destroys the entrance and leaves the second-in-command screaming on the floor with strong acoustic trauma. Simultaneously, a second bomb is placed at another station of the investigative police, but the detonator (a clock) fails.

30.12.14, Canary Islands: *'Anarchist Faggots Organising Rage' sabotage some bank ATMs and spray messages for "our anarchist and feminist compañeras detained recently as part of the so-called "Pandora case" [ed. - see **Rebels Behind Bars; Operations Pandora-Piñata & Zaragoza Bombing Trial**], and making clear our revulsion at this murderous capitalist and hetero-patriarchal system..."*

France: *"Over the past few days, in Paris, Ivry, Kremlin-Bicêtre, Gentilly, 5 ATMs and a real estate agency were smashed with a sledgehammer, and three vehicles belonging to prison constructors and suppliers (Vinci, Sodexo, Onet) were torched. Solidarity with the incarcerated anarchists in Spain!"*

31.12.14, London, U.K.: *New Year's Eve demonstration visits two prisons, behind the banner 'Break the Long Arm of the Law!'. "[W]e heard about how the other protest in Brixton was repressed using pepper spray, several being attacked & arrested by the cops that try to control us everyday of our lives, both physically (as shown) and psychologically (the ability of the civil majority to repress themselves). We were determined for this crack we had opened within the fabric of prison society to not go the same way as the other demo. After marching around the right hand side of Pentonville prison we began chanting with all our force, numerable fireworks quickly appeared and were fired above the prison, quickly followed by burning material being thrown from the windows of one of the cells. We were ecstatic to hear the prisoners screaming anti-police slogans and the one lone prisoner that we could not see, but could hear bellowing in a low voice the one beautiful word 'Freedom' from his cell. [...] We took a short march to the women's prison Holloway & again preceded to march around the perimeter as close as possible to the wall, letting off a spectacle of more fireworks for those outside. We also persisted to bang on metal dumpsters outside raising a crescendo of noise that was so loud that the prisoners must have heard it alongside the chant of 'THE PASSION FOR FREEDOM, IS STRONGER THAN THE PRISON!' & 'FIRE TO THE PRISONS!'"*



REBELS BEHIND BARS

– text by prisoners & repression news

position of either guilt or innocence of the charges, choosing instead to use their lives as a praxis of contempt and deconstruction of social logic, assuming that we live in a patriarchal, antropocentric, authoritarian and speciest world that looks with scorn upon all those who believe that life is something much more than cement.”

The hearing for the case came on July 28th. After the judge barred a disorderly mob from entering the courtrooms to support the two, fights between those the solidarity and the cops broke out before the courthouse before making it inside the building. Two women were charged with public order offences and four more kidnapped for ID checks at the police station, but all were eventually released. Shortly before this, Tato had been transferred to the isolation

unit “to punish her for her attitude of disrespect and contempt for the prison institution” and the morale of it’s officers. Javier was granted pre-trial house-arrest on October 8th... which was swiftly revoked days later after an appeal by the prosecution. More news to follow...



The mural, in Gaza City, reads “Down With the Walls” (in Spanish) and “23-30 [August]: International Solidarity Week for Anarchist Prisoners” (in Arabic)

“Our Main Source of Strength” – letter from prison & the situation of Tato and Javier (Chile)

Friends, comrades, family and those in affinity. Thanks to a few words I managed to exchange with some people (because so far I’ve been in solitary confinement and I don’t know what’s happening outside) I learned about the week of agitation between 10th and 20th April in solidarity with antiauthoritarian prisoners, above all those condemned to long sentences.

So I’d like to give a contribution on solidarity with this piece of writing, precisely solidarity with imprisoned comrades.

I used to think (and now with the experience I’m going through it’s even more clear) that a comrade who is sent down and therefore becomes a prisoner finds his or her most important support in himself or herself, his or her beliefs, thoughts, ideas, feelings and self-love, their individuality, which is fundamental when one is faced with such an ugly and decadent place as prison, and moreover we ourselves are our main source of strength.

But all of a sudden it happens that our eyes and ears encounter gestures, initiatives, actions carried out for us and in these moments we feel like being in an embrace, where our chest swells and our inevitable smile comes back; it is when they go beyond the prison walls that all the prisoners’ individualities fill with strength and reassurance. I see this moment as complicity because we know that we are carrying on struggling.

I join the call that is being carried out and invite to solidarity with prisoners in the territories that are struggling and taking a position against all forms of authority.

All my love and strength to those facing long sentences, and whose ideas and feelings are not annihilated by the long years in prison.

And let’s not forget that prison, a human product, also strikes other beings. Animals held and tortured in cages to please humans.

I conclude sending all my love to my friends, comrades, family and the girls in the struggle against patriarchy.

– *Tato* (Natalia Collado)

From Unit 1,
San Miguel prison
Sunday 12th April

Tato and her comrade, Javier Pino, were arrested in the early hours of April 7th 2015, outside the University of Santiago Chile, and charged with setting the fire which destroyed a city bus near the central station moments before. Both declined to cooperate with the authorities, and had their DNA taken by force. The Highly Sophisticated Crimes Taskforce, a collaboration of several forces dedicated to stemming the multiplicity of anarchic attacks, took charge of the case.

As a group of their friends and comrades have written, from the beginning both “openly expressed their view of life as a daily confrontation with the system that is imposed by civilisation and openly defended the feelings that emerge from the heart when you decide to break the social monotony. They refuse to claim a

“Anyone who decides to Rebel against the present reality exposes themselves to ferocious State repression and criminalisation from its whole system and the sentence turns out to be total and endless. Many don’t think about it until it happens to them. Nobody dreams of a future of struggle in the prison undergrounds. Nobody sets off on their path thinking about the bitter side of the story, because the initial will to struggle instinctively gambles on the preservation of life in Revolt, in constant Subversion. But the circumstances of the conflict and tensions evolve continuously and so do the risks. Because the choice of being Antagonists and against power in all its expressions carries with it the magnifying glass of the police turning us into targets for killers whose minds are aligned to serving the State. That’s how the Rebel, Subversive and Libertarian struggle goes on. Life seen as a whole, radicalising it in all its aspects. Let’s put an end to the eternal ‘it can’t be done’ and give space to the powerful practice of rupturing that draining social peace that serves the powerful.” – Freddy Fuentesvilla, Marcelo Villarroel, Juan Aliste
[see *The Burning of a Transmission Mast, Berlin, & Policing Vehicles Up in Flames, Keynsham*]

One Year Off, Three Years Added for Alfredo Cospito & 'Like a Virus' (Italy)

[continued from *Return Fire* vol.2 pg80]

In early May, the Italian Supreme Court decided to reduce the sentences Alfredo Cospito and Nicola Gai received for shooting Roberto Adinolfi. Alfredo's was taken down by a year and three months (to 9 years and 5 months), Nicola's by 8 months (to 8 years and 8 months). However, in June 2015 another trial sentenced Alfredo, Anna Beniamino (see *Return Fire* vol.1 pg78) and Stefano del Moro; each got three years under Article 414 ("instigation to commit a crime") for publishing the anarchist paper KNO3 (although all of them were acquitted of "subversive association with intent of terrorism").

The following is what Alfredo wrote to introduce an interview between himself and the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire 'Imprisoned Members Cell' in Greece (see *Return Fire* vol.1 pg40). In it, is set out what to our minds is the clearest rationale of (some of) those who make real the proposal for an Informal Anarchist Federation / International Revolutionary Front (F.A.I./F.R.I.), and the broader tendency of communication and action which is known as the "black international". It also goes into the necessary questions such as what differs between these tools and 'traditional' anarchist organising forms, and further thoughts on the question of coordination (see *Return Fire* vol.2 pg44). All we would add would be the following, noted by some Italian anarchists during the '70s: "The simple fact is that there is no form of organisation that can guarantee the success of revolutionary struggle or even immunity from relations of domination. The former can never be guaranteed – the choice to rise up, destroy one world and create a new one is always a gamble, a stake to be played. The latter can only be guaranteed by the refusal of individuals to be dominated. So the question of organisation is not a matter of seeking panaceas, but of discovering, creating and experimenting with self-organisation."

Alfredo Cospito, C.C Via Arginone 327,
44122 Ferrara, Italy



'LIKE A VIRUS'

Before answering your questions, I'd like to stress that what I'm about to say is my own truth. One of the many points of view, sensitivities and individual nuances within that crucible of thought and action that goes under the name of FAI-FRI.

An informal federation that, rejecting any hegemonic temptation, represents a tool, a method of one of the components of an anarchism of praxis. An anarchism of praxis that is, only when it is informal, without being forced into organisational structures (specific, formal, of synthesis), when it doesn't seek the unbearable consensus (and therefore rejects politics), then it can be recognised in a wider chaotic universe called the "black international".

To understand this better, FAI-FRI is a methodology of action that only some of the sisters and brothers of the black international practice, it's not an organisation nor a simple collective signature, but a tool that aims towards efficiency, whose objective is to reinforce cells and each comrade of praxis through a pact of mutual support based on three key points: revolutionary solidarity, revolutionary campaigns, communication between groups or individuals:

REVOLUTIONARY SOLIDARITY

"Each group of action in the Anarchist Informal Organisation is engaged in showing revolutionary solidarity to comrades who are arrested or are in hiding. This solidarity will show itself mainly through armed action and the attack against men [sic] and structures responsible for the imprisonment of comrades. Solidarity will always be practiced as an indispensable feature of anarchist way of life and action. Of course we do not refer to legal and technical support: bourgeois society offers a sufficient number of lawyers, social workers and priests, which means that revolutionists can be engaged in another kind of activities."

REVOLUTIONARY CAMPAIGNS

When a group or individual starts a revolutionary campaign through the deeds and related communiqués, other groups and individuals in the Anarchist Informal Organisation will follow according to their methods and time. Each group and individual can launch a struggle campaign on specific targets through one or more actions signed by the single group or individual and by the claim of the Federation. If a campaign is not agreed by the other groups, the criticism will show itself through actions and communiqués that will contribute to correcting or discussing it."

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS

The groups of action in the Anarchist Informal Organisation are not required to know one another. This will avoid repression striking them and possible leaders or bureaucrats from emerging. Communication

between groups or individuals is carried out through the actions and through the channels of the movement without them knowing one another directly."

(Drawn from the responsibility claim for the attempt on Prodi, at that time President of the European Commission, 21st December 2003, taken from *Il dito e la luna* page 15-16).

This pact of mutual support in fact bypasses the assembly, its leaders, the specialists of speech and politics and the authoritarian mechanisms activated even in the anarchist sphere when the assembly becomes a decision-making body. **What the black international should do over the coming years is to reknit that "black thread" that has been broken for a long time.**

A thread that binds anarchism of yesterday which practiced "propaganda of the deed" [ed. – see *Return Fire* vol.1 pg85], offspring of the International Congress of London in 1881, and anarchism of today, informal, anti-organisational, nihilistic, anti-civilisational, antisocial.

Nicola and I, the only members of the 'Olga Cell', don't know in person the other brothers and sisters of FAI; knowing them would mean seeing them locked up within the four walls of a prison cell. We were convinced of the utility of FAI-FRI thanks to the words (communiqués) and the actions of the brothers and sisters who preceded us. Their words always confirmed by their actions, gave us the indispensable tenacity, without which any project is reduced, in the era of the virtual, to useless, sterile words in the wind.

We needed a compass to find our way, a tool to recognise and unmask those who have created an anarchist gym for verbalists, a filter to distinguish empty words from those that carry reality.

We found in this "new anarchy", in its claims and the related revolutionary campaigns, the perspective of a real attack that amplifies our destructive potentialities, protects our autonomy as rebel and anarchist individuals and gives us the opportunity to collaborate, strike together, without knowing one another directly. No kind of coordination can be included in our planning.

"Coordination" necessarily requires knowledge, organisation between the sisters and brothers of different cells. **Such a coordination would kill the autonomy of each group or individual. The most "efficient", prepared, courageous, charismatic group would inevitably prevail, reproducing the same deleterious mechanisms of the assembly, in the long run leaders, ideologists, charismatic "bosses" would rise again, it would be a step towards organisation: the death of freedom itself.**

Some might say that even in an affinity group, in a FAI cell, a charismatic leader, a "boss" could hide. In our case, however, damage would be limited as between cells

there is no direct knowledge. The gangrene could not be extended.

Our being anti-organisational preserves us from that risk. That is why we need to rely on “revolutionary campaigns” which exclude knowing groups and individuals directly, killing every glimmer of organisation. **Campaigns must never be confused with coordination, this is the informality, this is the essence, in my opinion, of our operational planning.** It must be clear that when I speak of an affinity group or action cell, I may refer to a single individual or a numerous affinity group. We should not make an issue of numbers.

[...] Our knowledge of the FAI-FRI must always remain partial, limited to our affinity group. We only need to know the paw marks, the scratches, the wounds FAI-FRI causes to power. It would be mortal to create something monolithic or structured, each of us must avoid hegemonic misunderstandings or fantasising.

Organisation would restrict tremendously our perspectives, reversing the process from qualitative to quantitative. The action of one strengthens the will of others, creating inspiration. Campaigns are spread unevenly.

A thousand heads raging against power, cutting them all off is impossible. **It is these very actions followed by words (communiqués) that allow us to exclude with certainty theorists, pure lovers of speech,** giving us the chance to relate exclusively to those who live in the real world, getting their hands dirty, risking their own skin. These are the only words that really matter, the only words that allow us to grow, to evolve. Revolutionary campaigns are the most efficient tool to cut, harm where it hurts the most. Giving us the opportunity to spread throughout the world like a virus, carrier of revolt and anarchy.

“In the fragrance of the wet earth we’ve found the inexhaustible processes of resistance that germinate the wild flower of anarchy. In the warmth of other species we’ve discovered the irreducible value of each individual that denies the instituted order and breaks away from fear and inaction. In informality we’ve found the pleasure of an individual revolt which is spontaneously capable of transforming itself into a plague.”

– E.L.F./F.A.I. 'Anti-Civilisation Fraction'



Tamara Sol Vergara **Sentenced, Not Defeated** **(Chile)**

Since her arrest (see **Return Fire vol.2 pg26**) Tamara has been incarcerated in San Miguel jail. The first semi-public news from her was after some comrades went on a demo to the jail (also to remember the death of many prisoners there in a fire in December 2011), to which she addressed these words: “As far as prison is concerned, I had to face the conditions of the unit where I find myself, which is called “public connotation”. Here the jailers are trying to establish a schizophrenic “friendship” with the female prisoners, thus creating a sort of Stockholm Syndrome.

My attitude in the face of this situation was to keep the necessary distance between myself and my kidnapers, however gentle such distance might be. In this way I gained the “reputation” of being an enemy of the guards, so they leave me alone. I managed to overcome some frictions with my co-prisoners in this unit, frictions due to the forced living together, and made an effort to be friendly in spite of my anti-social nature.

As for the actions of solidarity that can be harmful for the investigation, I’m of the opinion that these actions must not be stopped, even if a prisoner can always disagree with them. News of these actions cheered me up, when I’ve been feeling very low in the last three months. **For this reason, comrades, any public evaluation, criticism and self-criticism must come from action.** They say that the best way to teach something is to do something, and it is our task to learn without getting tired and find a balance between intelligence and praxis while leaving our ego aside, taking responsibility for our mistakes and concentrating on the things we sometimes neglect.

*You know what I’m talking about, and you can understand what happened on 21st January [ed. – date of her arrest]; our feelings are the same when we see a comrade dead or in prison, the blood in our veins boils, our hearts beat faster and we mourn together. **We know we are not many but we are there and forge relations,** and these relations are a response to the system/existent, where machismo, power and the like are reproduced by women themselves; these relations also allow me to stand up with my head held high, as a political prisoner opposed to the attitude of the prisoners who behave.*

I hope I won’t bother you with my first communiqué, and I send you a hug full of the strength and energy you gave me when you



came here to commemorate the death of 81 prisoners right in this jail. Everyone here noticed it, and now they all greet me in the corridors. It left me without tears for so much crying.”

While entering the prison for a family visit in June 2014, her mother was condescendingly spoken to by one of the jailers in particular; to which she replied that, despite their petty power 'inside', on the street the guard was a nobody. The guard then prevented her from seeing her daughter. Upon hearing of this, Tamara gained an audience with the warden; only to spit in his face and that of his assistant.

In early 2015, she was sentenced to seven years (for shooting the bank security guard) and 61 days (for taking his gun). Immediately after the trial, clashes began between her family and the courthouse police guards – Tamara’s grandparents are Luisa Toledo and Manuel Vergara, the parents of Eduardo and Rafael (two young anti-regime fighters shot down during the dictatorship, originating the annual March 29th Day of the Youth Combatant; see **Return Fire vol.2 pg71**) and they identify the sentence as a direct reprisal against their presence in militant struggle over the years. The family writes; “Their media has already begun to relate Tamara’s case to that of March 29th, with her uncles Eduardo and Rafael; this includes showing photographs of our sons and brothers between bank robberies from this decade. Neither is it accidentally that the police force maintain a presence in our doorway during the entire time the trial against Tamara has been carried out. Nor that the media of the powerful have said that this sentence is the longest sentence given to an anarchist in the last decades in our country.”

April 17th 2015, Tamara and her wing-mate Natalia 'Tato' Collado (see above) responded to the call from the outside for a day in support of long-term prisoners – to “send all our love, support and rebelliousness, [we] abstain from meals all day[...] For total liberation; down with patriarchy and the techno-industrial society! Solidarity with all antiauthoritarian prisoners!” A solidarity march took place on April 30th; nine people were arrested, and one (David Farias, Tamara’s father) was kept in the cells for harming a cop.

During the Full Moon of May, Tamara penned a long letter, outlining her stance and principles. **Here is an extract:** "The ability to live autonomously is in our hands, with no boss or master, or schedule. Let us value our will. We are capable of striding away from materialism, commodities, and consumption. Let us go back to being wise, let us listen to our elders, our children. **Let us leave behind these binary roles that generate dependencies and hierarchies in our relationships.** Let us be ourselves without prejudice. We do not need a father figure, a man or a State to protect us. Creativity and knowledge are innate in ourselves, and **we can be self-sufficient with what the land gives us, we do not need more than that.**

Let us go back to senses, look inward and connect with life, nature, and learn from our ancestors.

Technology and science aren't in our favour; they also belong to the rich.

Monsanto is a clear example: utilizing biotechnology to invent seeds and agricultural plants, making them resistant to a carcinogenic pesticide, talking complete control over fruit and vegetable plantations, the base of our nutrition.

The same occurs with the forestry plantations of pine and eucalyptus, as important commodities for export, and thereby one of the main sources of wealth. The monoculture of these species requires a specific pesticide to confront pests, and the pines have been biochemically modified to confront these and all temperatures, demanding greater quantities of water than a native forest, contaminating and sterilizing the land.

They experiment with our bodies, inventing sicknesses and selling the antidotes through the mafia that is the pharmaceutical industry in collusion with others in Power.

[...] Let us understand that the idea of consumption and accumulation is empty. It has nothing to do with life. We should understand that we are part of the universe and cannot keep participating in the immense damage that the powerful have made on the planet in which we live, in order to keep their privileges.

If we are conscious and take responsibility for this we can stop them and recover our autonomy, individual will, sensitivity, the earth's and our bodies' fertility, as well as the joy of living without affective or sexual misery; enjoying the chaotic fluids of free relationships and our natural wildness.

I'm happy to know that there still are and there will continue to be restless, rebel, autonomous hearts being born; beings that are not seduced by the comfort

*of neoliberalism and democracy. I keep you in my mind and in my heart always. From here I extend a great hug; **know that your acts make us strong and brighten up our days.***

[...] *Solidarity and respect to the people of the earth in Wallmapu [ed. – see **The Intensification of Independence in Wallmapu!***

Solidarity with the Prisoners of the World!

Against the Techno-Industrial Patriarchal Society!

Against the State, its Oligarchy and all forms of Domination!

For the destruction of all cages!

Heart, will, memory, intuition and instinct! Trust in oneself!

Ana, Luisa, Manuel, Alen, I love you all infinitely!"

You can reach her at **Tamara Sol Fariás Vergara**, Torre 1, Centro Detención Preventiva San Miguel, Santiago, Chile



Operations Pandora-Piñata & Zaragoza Bombing Trial – crackdown in the Spanish State [& communique]

[continued from **Return Fire vol.2 pg78**]

"[T]hose who were breastfed by this system and attempt to perpetuate it will never comprehend our forms. Forms that break down the hierarchy, that do not receive orders from anybody, that grow and multiply like weeds in their quiet and sterile garden. Anarchist ideas in their entirety are developed in the complexity of individual integrity; this individual freely associated with other individuals put an end to this rotten society. The forms and modes in which individuals confront domination are multiple and limitless; neither one is better nor worse, they're just different. No acratist!" that considers oneself as such can impose what is to be done on anyone, let alone permit some type of imposition. On the path of anarchist construction-destruction we do not possess (nor want) any type of manual or itinerary; we construct it day by day with our comrades in affinity. As for those who believe that we antiauthoritarians follow the postulates of some "renowned" comrade to the letter, I tell them they haven't understood anything."

– **Mónica Caballero, September 2014**

* ed. – Some anarchists, especially in Spain, choose the term 'acratist' (i.e. for 'acracry', no government) to describe themselves to distinguish themselves from those for 'radical' democracy ('government by the people').



In July 2014, it was confirmed that Francisco Solar and Mónica would both be tried under the anti-terrorist law for the action by 'Insurreccional Commando Mateo Morral' in Zaragoza; the other three who had also been arrested that past November were acquitted. The Spanish State claimed that both were also involved in a fictional hybrid of the Informal Anarchist Federation / International Revolutionary Front (F.A.I./F.R.I.) [see above] with the Coordination of Anarchist Groups (G.A.C. in Spanish).

Neither of these (actual) entities were so much as mentioned in the claim for the Zaragoza bombing, nor in the previous communique from the same group (see **Return Fire vol.1 pg70**). The G.A.C. is a 'movement building' platform for anarchist groups across Spain – it is an open (rather than clandestine) group, who most notably have done publishing and campaigns in support of persecuted comrades. It would seem that the strongest reason to accuse the comrades of being of the F.A.I./F.R.I. is that it is the only set anarchist formation which the investigators thought to be listed by the European Union as a terrorist organisation.

Since their arrest, both anarchists had been confined under the notorious F.I.E.S. isolation regime, spending 22 hours a day in their cells. However, it came to pass that their arrests were the opening stages in an unfolding drama of 'anti-terror' operations in the regions of Catalonia, Madrid and Palencia, carried out by the highest level of the Spanish court system, operating under the names of Operations Pandora and Piñata, totaling more than forty people charged to be part of this same fictional 'terrorist' alliance. Just a day before its opening shots, the much-protested Law on Citizen Security (or Gag Law, colloquially) had been passed, designating crimes such as "photographing or recording police", "peaceful disobedience to authority", "occupying banks as means of protest", or "not having authorisation for a protest".

All this is a clear response to the disruption caused by various social movements or tensions which have been playing out around Spain in the last few years, amongst other things. 'Revista Argelaga' described the atmosphere of repression (predating the actual raids) as follows. "For quite a while now fantastic stories about mysterious international visitors, the messengers of anarchy, as well as other tales of the same alarmist type, have been circulating, stories that have a tendency to criminalise the only means that exist which are opaque to Power (an opacity that is itself a scandal): squatted buildings,

libertarian cultural centers and self-managed collectives. The message is clear: either us or chaos. The strategists of Power do not believe that the libertarians and squatters are their most fearsome enemies, even though they are quite aware of the example of Can Vies [ed. – long-standing Barcelona libertarian squat, eviction of which served as the catalyst for multiple consecutive nights of rioting in the city]. **On the contrary, in their view they comprise a weak enough link to serve as a scapegoat, a kind of warning buoy to those who might also think of navigating such waters.**” The rise of the far-left opposition party in Spain means their interests are also in the neutralisation of the anarchists, some of those agitating the most in the social movements to head off their 'alternative' governance, similarly as in Greece when a far-left party took over and quickly resumed the administration of austerity. This hasn't stopped some cynical opportunists of the Left (and not only) from expressing their support for the anarchists caught up in the repressive swoop; the consequences of which we shall touch on again later.

Operation Pandora opened on December 16th 2014, clearly well orchestrated with the media, with dawn raids across different towns and cities. Eleven anarchists were eventually bailed pending trial, seven of them after spending another month-and-a-half locked up. In Barcelona, about fifty people raised a roadblock in solidarity with the nearby invaded anarchist squat Casa de la Muntanya, until dispersed by riot police around 8am. Some of those snatched during the raids released a statement afterwards: “48 hours later we were transferred 600km to the Audiencia Nacional [national high court] in Madrid. After long hours of waiting during which you could cut the mutual hostility with a knife, four comrades were released with other precautionary measures and we 7 were put in preventive detention without bail on charges of creation, promotion, management and belonging to a terrorist organisation, destruction and possession of explosives and incendiary devices.

We perceive this latest repressive strike as an attack on anarchist ideas and practices, at a time when the State needs internal enemies to justify a series of increasingly repressive and coercive measures to reinforce the existing forms of totalitarianism. With the discourse of the crisis and insecurity as a background, we have witnessed the intensification of border controls, racist raids, evictions, hetero-patriarchal violence and the exploitation of labour and a long etcetera that manifests itself in increasingly miserable conditions for most people. [...] We send a greeting, always fighting,

always fraternal, to Francisco Solar, Mónica Caballero, Gabriel Pombo Da Silva [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.2 pg22**] and all and the indomitable who beyond imposed boundaries and despite imprisonment, oppression and hardship, do not put down their heads and continue to make bold the struggle. Our hearts are with you.”

The following is from an anonymous text put out shortly after the operation against anarchists. “The morning of the 16th of December has NOT surprised us. The autonomous Catalan police (the Mossos d'Esquadra) and the Guardia Civil [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.2 pg80**] and judiciary powers of the Audiencia Nacional stormed more than ten houses and a few anarchist spaces in Barcelona, Sabadell, Manresa and Madrid, with house raids, arrests, confiscation of propaganda material and information, to also use the occasion to enter and plunder (with the entire riot police team of the Mossos d'Esquadra) Casa de la Muntanya, a squatted place that has existed for 25 years.

[...] Since three years, or perhaps a little longer, the Spanish media have started a campaign to prepare the ground in such a way that operations like these are not only possible but also predictable. Pointing out milieus, and sometimes even spaces or people with their full names, collectives, etc., constructing a fairly bizarre caricature of an internal enemy, is indeed nothing new, although in the last years the focus was on a very specific character: the “violent anarchist”, the “insurreccionalist”, the “antisistema [against-the-system] who infiltrates social movements”, etc. [...] The State and its servants say to have opened Pandora's box. In Greek mythology Pandora is the equivalent of Eve of the Bible. With the characteristic misogyny of both mythologies, Pandora opens her box as Eve eats her apple, liberating all the evil that it contains.



We are capable of creating our own story and ridding ourselves of their shit mythology. Our history is different. The “box” that this repressive operation has opened urges us to act, to be careful, to be alert in regards to what their next step will be. It makes us think, again and again, of the world we want, and the distance of that world to this one. It makes us see the

urgency of acting, of going forward.” The evening of the sweep, 3-5,000 marched in Barcelona as the largest spontaneous anarchist solidarity gathering probably since the '70s. Many banks were smashed and rubbish containers set ablaze across the streets; riot police charged but made no arrests. Protests continued into the next day, when the public prosecutor's headquarters in central Barcelona also mysteriously caught fire and had to be evacuated. A week later three or so comrades were arrested entering the Radio Mataró studios to disrupt the broadcast to read to statement in supports of the Operations Pandora's targets and against the Gag Law. (We've not ourselves heard news of charges laid against them.) During the normally-quiet period between Christmas and the New Year, demonstrators again took to the city centre streets in solidarity. As was later reported, “hooded comrades uninhibitedly attacked many bank branches, several multinational shops, as well as the 5-star Casa Fuster hotel...”

By March the nine specific attacks it was that made up the first indictment were made public. They are:

21st December 2012: Three coordinated explosives against CaxiaBank's property in Barcelona, one exploding dildo posted to the Archbishop of Pamplona and another to the director of an elite Legionaries of Madrid school (Catholic religious order embroiled in scandals over paedophilia, investment in the porn business, high-end real estate and the arms trade).

7th February 2013: Explosive placed in the Almudena Cathedral in Madrid; the first claimed action of Insurreccional Commando Mateo Morral.

10th April 2013: Explosives placed simultaneously against branches of the banks CaixaBank (in Barcelona) and BBVA (in Madrid).

6th September 2013: Two letter-bombs sent to Italian financial institutions operating in Catalonia, one simulated package left at another in Valencia.

2nd October 2013: Bombing of the Basílica del Pilar in Zaragoza; the second action of Insurreccional Commando Mateo Moral, and that for which Mónica and Francisco are imprisoned.

Aside from the actions of September and October 2013, most of these were claimed near the time in the context of the F.A.I./F.R.I. (which the prosecution claimed to be listed as a terrorist group). Again, the press and judiciary accused the G.A.C. as being one and the same as the F.A.I./F.R.I., hence terrorist. This is a tactic which the Spanish State has previously deployed against separatists in the Basque country; if someone acts in (what can be construed as) 'furtherance of the aims' of 'Basque Country & Freedom' (E.T.A.) then they too are terrorist and will be tried as such.

On March 26th 2015, having leveled these accusations, three controversial laws were then approved in the Spanish Congress: the new Penal Code and the new Anti-Terror Law, to join the Law on Citizen Security. Online activism is also targeted, with jail sentences of between three months and a year threatened for publishing “slogans or messages” or “inciting any offence of disorderly conduct” including “disturbing the public peace”. Hacking was also targeted and classified as terrorism if its goal could be said to be the “public peace”.

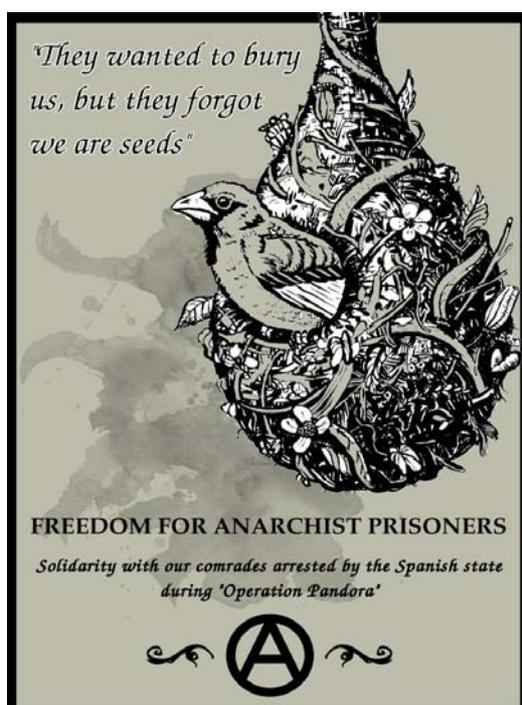
Francisco wrote from prison after the raids to say that “[t]here can be many and varied explanations for the repressive blow of December 16th, just as the general and specific causes that intertwined to create a delirious net of power leading to the arrest of our friends and comrades are many.

Perhaps one of the general causes could be the introduction of the Law on Citizens Security, known as the ‘Gag law’; this, along with the exacerbation of the penal code, which has re-introduced life sentences, creates a pattern whereby the control exercised by power is more efficient and strengthened by constant paranoia. Sentences for attacks on authorities, public disorder and disobedience have been exacerbated; at the same time social protests like those of 15M [blockade of parliament] and of PAH (a group against housing taxes) are being punished. Progressives and social-democrats say that the State is ‘leaving less space for freedom’ and that ‘the struggle for rights is being criminalised’. As you can see, the turn of the screw by the repressive-judicial apparatus is striking citizens, that is to say those who struggle for more and better laws, more and better democracy, for more participation in the management of misery. **Freedom and law is inconsistent with one another. As anarchists we are aware that the more rights are granted the stronger the State becomes and as a consequence our submission grows.**” (He also states his opinion that a “undeniable increase, in both quantity and intensity, of street fighting in Barcelona in the last year could be another reason for our friends’ arrests.”)

Mónica also added that “[i]t is not a coincidence that the detainees are part of my immediate environment, indeed, more than half of them frequently visit me in jail. The judicial-police mallet has punished solidarity.”

Though all seven of the initial detainee who had been remanded were bailed after January, with heavy restrictions before trial, **two months later Operation Piñata was launched. As well as eleven**

houses, another six social centres were invaded. Fifteen individuals were targeted; three in Barcelona, one in Palencia, one in Granada and the rest in Madrid. (One of those arrested had only just been bailed pre-trial in Operation Pandora.) Another fourteen were arrested and initially charged for resisting the raid of one of the social centres in Madrid, though they were all released the same evening. Through this operation, the police claimed to have arrested the “leaders” of the G.A.C. That same evening there were solidarity demonstrations in Granada, Salamanca, Zaragoza, Girona, Madrid and Cuenca. In Barcelona, a crowd of 500 gathered and marched to the police station where the detainees were being held, smashing banks along the way.



The judge of at the *Audiencia Nacional* imprisoned five of those arrested before trial, while the other ten got heavy bail restrictions until their court-cases. (The day before their pronouncement, during a solidarity demo outside that court four people were arrested and clashes with cops resulted in twelve minor injuries; eight of which being on cops.) As well as membership in the G.A.C., the five remanded are accused of “promotion and coordination of sabotage”, including that of a hundred and thirteen bank ATMs that February (which had been anonymously claimed to “wish a welcome home the recently released comrades of Operation Pandora”), and possibly also the two attacks by Insurreccional Comando Mateo Morral. The court also then ordered the closure of the bank accounts that were opened to collect solidarity money Operation Pandora detainees, for lawyers, prison commissary expenses, and transportation expenses (for family

members to visit those imprisoned); as well as an investigation into the owners of the accounts as well as all related transfers and transactions. **Again, this was reported to be following the model used to repress the Basque independence movement.** Eventually, all of those arrested in Operation Piñata were released, but not before a demonstration in Barcelona destroyed the windows of bank and real estate agencies, shops (including a beauty salon), a bus shelter, three car dealerships (in one of which a fire was started).

On October 28th 2015, an announcement was due on whether Mónica and Francisco would have to be released until their trial or whether special permission to extending the maximum pre-trial incarceration would be granted. **That same day, the second phase of Operation Pandora was launched (handily intimidating the demonstrations planned for the evening); nine arrests were made in Barcelona, all alleged to belong to the G.A.C./F.A.I./F.R.I.** Two were released without charge; another six were put on pre-trial bail with restrictions. The last, Enrique Costoya Allegue, remained locked up on remand – he is a lawyer who had defended anarchists in the previous ‘terror’ cases. He was already on bail awaiting trial for alleged damages against the Corte Inglés shopping centre during the rowdy March 2012 general strike (see **Return Fire vol.2 pg25**). Amidst the fervor, the detention of Mónica and Francisco extended. Once again, the targets of Operation Pandora II were involved in the support of those arrested in the first wave, who in turn had been supporting Mónica and Francisco. **To top it off, five more anarchists in Madrid were seized under the anti-terror law on**

November 4th, once again alleged to belong to the G.A.C. etc. and accused of the two attacks by Insurreccional Comando Mateo Morral. Fitting with the overall tinge of xenophobia to the case of Mónica and Francisco (and the anti-anarchist alarmism in general), the press duly parroted the police emphasis on the Latin American origins of three of the latest arrests in Madrid. This, together with previous cases, brought the total number of anarchists arrested on anti-terrorism charges in the Spanish state in the last three years to sixty-eight.

(Although Enrique was released on pre-trial bail in November at the cost of thousands of Euros, by the end of December he had been arrested again along with a second Barcelona anarchist, both accused of ‘obstruction of justice’, ‘extortion’ and ‘public disorder’ in relation to a campaign to force the Corte Inglés to drop its financial compensation claim from the general strike trial proceedings, while

several times this shopping centre has been picketed or sabotaged.)

Support for the anarchists of Spain has been fairly visible within the social movements and elsewhere; however, the forms this has sometimes taken as well as some voices expressing it are at the least problematic. Mónica and Francisco stated their opinion on this, as well as on the calls coming from some quarters for them to be 'pardoned' by the State. "As we've seen, the collective spaces and individuals hit by the repression are heterogeneous and have differences and common points concerning their view of the State and its function, and consequently of how to face the blows of Power and prison, and how and with whom to make alliances. In this respect it is often said that it's better to overcome divergences and prioritise common points with the aim of facing the blows of power efficiently, an approach that in all respects favours the quantity issue rather than determination and will, aspects we consider fundamental. **We acknowledge the importance of making alliances, the point is with whom.**

History has clearly shown us the nefarious consequences for anarchists of alliances with authoritarian groups and/or groups that support institutional politics, as these groups always aspire to power, crushing all libertarian initiatives in the end. Should we bow our heads and pass over aspects that are fundamental to us? No way.

Among other things, when one gives up certain important ethical aspects one ends up following the track of leftist, citizenist and democratic movements, with which we have nothing in common: they support the Power that we want to erase from our lives. A clash is inevitable and necessary for us to develop politically. How do we distinguish ourselves from those who defend and strengthen the present established order? With the consistency of our actions. [...] We don't want the State's pardon, we want only its destruction."



The banner (in Porto Alegre, Brazil) reads; "In the face of repression STRENGTH TO MONICA AND FRANCISCO Let nothing stop the solidarity"

The two have been consistently supported by actions within this destructive element within their country of origin, Chile; indeed,

both there and in Uruguay anarchists have begun affixing the acronym 'G.A.C.' or 'Commando Mateo Morral' to their sabotages (incendiary blockades of freight trainlines and firebombing a foreign office of Spain's ruling party, respectively).

In early March 2016, the two have stood trial for the Zaragoza attack. (The days began in Spain with "serious delays and economic losses" from a trainline sabotage in vicinity of the prison where they are held, and in Zaragoza the cathedral they were accused of bombing had "Monica & Francisco Free Now!" graffitied.) To justify the terror charges stemming from the alleged linking of various unaffiliated organisations together, the investigators asserted that "the insurrectional affinity groups, like the jihadist cells, are perfectly clear about their generic enemy and therefore need no superior command in order to set an attack in motion." Forty-four years in prison each was what the prosecution was asking for. But it came out that in fact the F.A.I./F.R.I. has actually since some years been de-listed by the European Union as a 'terrorist' group; which may complicate the prosecutor's designs. We await sentencing. Since the cycle of raids began, offensive action by anarchists (anonymous or not) has persisted; here, we will end with a communique from a Barcelona from a section of the F.A.I./F.R.I. (which the police had claimed to have rendered inoperable), the same section which has since gone on to burn

tens more vehicles (security company and private) in that city. In this way, although obviously not uniquely, comrades (known or unknown) of Mónica and Francisco show that even when separated, ties between rebels are written in ink, blood and fire.

NEITHER 'INNOCENT' NOR 'GUILTY'
DEATH TO THE STATE
& LONG LIVE ANARCHY

Mónica Caballero Sepúlveda and Francisco Solar Domínguez, C.P Villabona-Asturias, Finca Tabladiello s/n, 33422 Villabona-Llanera, (Asturias) España/Spain

[Post-script for 2nd edition:] **March 30th, Mónica and Francisco were each sentenced to twelve years for the Zaragoza bombing. However, the charge of belonging to a terrorist organisation did not hold, meaning no precedent is set for the over thirty anti-terrorism cases pending against anarchists in Operations**

Pandora, Piñata, and others. The same night of the sentencing, the cars of a member of the European Parliament and of a NATO employee were torched in solidarity at the foot of the Saint-Gilles prison in Brussels; during the same night some bank ATM screens were sabotaged in Barcelona. (The authors of that attack publicised that they had used the small hammers "like those inside buses and trains, also called security hammers, allowing the sabotage of several ATMs discreetly, fast and silently, as a single stroke is sufficient to destroy the display.")



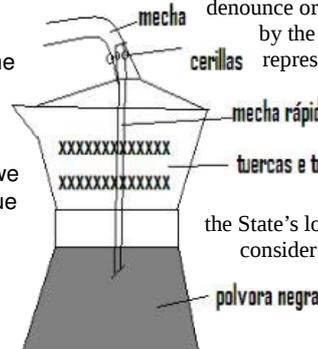
'THEY DIDN'T MANAGE TO STOP THE ATTACK'

After the recent police operations against anarchist milieus, so much has been written and said; statements and opinions mainly denounce or 'condemn' the repression inflicted by the authorities. After the latest repressive operation and the reactions that followed, we reckon we should give our point of view.

Starting from the fact that the ongoing repression is the State's logic response to those who consider themselves (or the State considers) its enemies, we don't understand certain communiqués full of victimisation, where in practice (and with the most appropriate words, of course) they beg the State to stop unleashing its cops 'indiscriminately' against anarchists. And they say that repression is unjustifiable, and of course they use and abuse the word 'frame-up', and say we do nothing wrong, and that they attack us because we 'think in a different way'... They try to give a picture of 'normality' and endeavour with all means to make this picture clean and

socially acceptable. **They do their best to take distance from violent words and actions; and as they become entrapped in the game of power and use the latter's language, they make distinctions between 'good' anarchists and 'bad' ones,** thus promoting criminalisation from within their ranks.

At this point some of these 'anarchists' don't feel ashamed of giving pitiful interviews to the media, and what is worse they pose as spokespersons of the 'anarchist movement' (and then of all social movements); these would-be politicians and leaders of the masses try their best to alienate anarchism from its subversive and conflictual character, and present anarchism as a simple movement of activists, deprived of any words or actions that clash against power and the established order.



mecha = a fuse; cerillas = matches; mecha rápida de petardo = a quick fuse from a firecracker; tuercas e tornillos = screws and bolts [as shrapnel]; polvora negra = black powder (gunpowder) in an Italian-style pressurised coffee pot, taped to gas cans (diagram sent to accompany a claim for the bombing on 20.12.12 in Barcelona, by F.A.I./F.R.I. 'Artisans Club for Putting Coffee to New (and sometimes spectacular) Uses')

Then there are those who just talk of how terrible repression is, how all comrades are under strict surveillance, and one can't do anything; this kind of attitudes only spread collective panic and paranoia, and these are the attitudes of those who hide their inactivity behind the pretext of ever-present repression, surveillance, 'I'm being strictly watched', etc. **Anyone who is reluctant to take responsibility can be so according to their personal decisions; but to hide oneself behind uncontrolled and often groundless fear and to spread discouraging feelings wherever one goes, is dangerous and counter-productive.** This doesn't mean that there are the 'brave' ones and the 'cowardly' ones; it's perfectly normal to fear police checks, prison, beatings, torture and murders committed by cops and jailers...

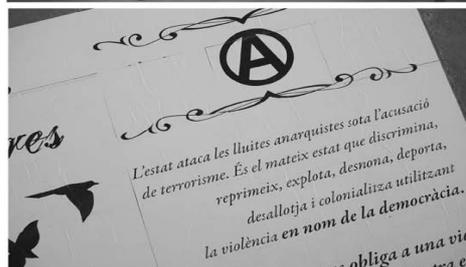
But fear spreading leads to panic and paranoia, and in turn this leads to discouraging speeches calling for inaction, maintaining that 'to behave' is better for both oneself and other comrades so as not to be the objects of police investigations.

To conclude this topic it must be said that even if the State has shown us nothing more than the tip of the iceberg, this is nothing compared to what could happen; in fact it's sufficient to look at repression currently occurring in other areas of the world (and not even that far away) or in the Spanish State itself a few decades ago. It should be clear that as we stand as anarchists we live with the risk and possibility to be hit by the machine of repression, also at the margins of our practices, because, as we've seen, there are times when the same repressive machine tries to stir fear among the enemies and strikes everyone rather than inflict targeted blows; as a consequence **anyone of us can be a target.**

However, in spite of the deployment of police operations, arrests and slanders that have been carried out (and in spite of what has yet to come), power knows that there will always be individuals who cannot be controlled or frightened, no matter what, our desire to destroy everything that oppresses us cannot be put off. We are glad to see how in spite of everything, they didn't manage to stop the attack on the existent; **every day there are some who still don't give in to fear and social submission and go on constant attack. Multiform anarchist action keeps on spreading** through many neighbourhoods, cities and countries in the form of publications and militant texts, posters, graffiti, banners, sabotage, fires and explosions, roads blocked with barricades, clashes, attacks on the buildings of power and disorders during demonstrations...

Although the Spanish state prefers not to make claims known so that actions are silenced, we know for certain what's happening, with more or less frequency. The violence of the minority will continue, and we talk about violence openly and without being troubled by it because we are convinced that power won't fall by itself, nor will any Messiah come from heaven with a solution.

We don't use words such as 'self-defence' or 'counter-violence'; nor do we talk of anarchist violence only in a context of mass uprising



when it's more acceptable. We've found it out that in spite of everything insurrectional practices and attacks are still possible; police can't be everywhere, they don't spy on us all or control us all, **some common sense, good planning and good will are more than enough to prove that the picture of a controlled and pre-arranged world is just illusion;** it's up to us to break this illusion of tranquillity.

[...] Words without action are dead words to us, so we take the occasion of this communiqué to claim the following actions carried out in several neighbourhoods in Barcelona: *the burning of security company vehicles, private ones as well as State-owned ones; attacks on bank branches through damages to windows and ATMs caused by hammers, stones, paint and fire; fire and destruction of street furniture.*

With this communiqué we want to give our warm greetings to our prisoners, especially Monica and Francisco, who have been in pre-trial detention for over two years always with their heads held high; to comrades Nicola and Alfredo [ed. – see above], the comrades of the CCF [ed. – see above] and the comrades imprisoned in Chile; and we want to remember our fallen ones and greet those who day by day continue to bet on constant conflict and anarchist insurrection, and make anarchy be once again a threat.

For a black December everywhere!

For the black international of the anarchists of action!

For the spreading of chaos and Anarchy!

Nothing ends, the war continues...

– **Individualities for the Diffusion of Chaos**
FAI / FRI



Ilya Romanov Given 10 Years Hard Labour (Russia)

[continued from *Return Fire* vol.2 pg74]

June 2015, Ilya was sentenced by the Military Judicial Council (because of the target of the alleged attack attempt) to ten years hard labour – recall that the anarchist had his left wrist amputated after the explosion – and a 110,000 ruble fine. **The charge that seriously upgraded the case, “inclination to carry out terrorist attacks”, is based solely on a talk he gave in Donetsk, Ukraine, at the end of his previous ten-year sentence** (because the Revolutionary Co-Federation of Anarcho-Syndicalists taped and then released the event audio). His words follow: *“I will tell you this about prison: you mustn't be afraid of prison, you the youth. Go to prison relaxed. Fight Capital, fight the civil state even if it means you will go to prison. Do not be afraid, you will be fine inside there. Normal. No, no one will turn you into rubble. Now, and this I can tell you, the comrades outside will keep you warm, you will receive letters and parcels normally. Therefore, you will not die there. Now, the mortality in prisons is much lower compared to what went on before in the Ukraine, or even more recently, with Kuchma [former vice-president of Ukraine]. Back then it was terrifying, prisoners dropped dead like flies. Now that doesn't happen, you will stay inside normally. The only drawback is that, I will be blunt, that inside there is now very stupid youth, these stupid youths are the majority now, but even with them you can find a form of communication. There is time for reading, for the bettering of your spiritual level. I say to you: there is nothing completely terrifying in imprisonment. Therefore do not be afraid, fight, fight... I feel fine after my release from prison [ed. – one day before], and I wish you the same when your turn comes.”* In a video of the trial, Ilya is seen spitting towards the judge in defiance on the last day.

FIRE TO THE PRISONS

MEMORY AS A WEAPON

THE WITCH'S CHILD

Doubts blew in with the clouds over the grassy hill and down by the willow tree where the child played in the afternoons. The witching hour had come, and the child was still awake, following those doubts past the rows of empty houses to the corner, where the bus comes in the mornings to take them all away.



A shadow came in the window and settled over the bed. The winds outside calmed, but a little breeze in the room itself seemed to tousle the child's hair, and caress its cheeks. When the child fell asleep, the shadow bent over its ear and whispered a bedtime story:

"Child, beneath this golden roof, you, of all people, know what it means to be homeless. It is the tragedy of some in this world to be uprooted, of others, to be rootless. This is the story of the rootless ones. Your bones already know the story, though your mind does not yet understand it. One day, in the waking world, this story will come back to you.

Some say it began with the Romans, with their new geometries of warfare, their civilization and slavery. But the truth is, we only have ourselves to blame. Already before the Southerners came, we had lost the first battle. We chose the War, and have been living in it ever since.

It was a small mistake, but it was we who opened the gate to our enemy. We can still undo this mistake, but the hour grows late.

Our Mistake was this: we stopped celebrating the Spring. **We let the silence of Winter extend over the whole of the year. The time of the year for turning**

inwards became our entire lives. We turned away from one another, and became bored with ourselves. We cared less about what happened in the world outside. So we turned the sensitives into priests, and asked them to bring the mysteries to us, rather than searching for them. We turned our war leaders into leaders of every day: of course all of our days would become a quiet war! We began to fear our own adventures, and asked the leaders to entertain us with their trite wars.

We fell into routines. Life was no longer becoming, but simply being. The women turned to their fertility cults, replacing an unending web of mysteries with fascination over the one that still fit into their lives: when the one becomes two. The men, jealous of their exclusion from the possibility of creation and foolish to think they ever *could* be excluded from creation, turned to their destructive sports and wars. The war against women began as just another game, another competitive raid.

Those little wars became our pasttime, and the years went by as though we were trapped in a little house, counting the days until the equinox. Waiting for a Spring we never welcomed. But Spring has to be welcomed, or it never comes.

For the spectator, Winter never ends. Spring is an insurrection. A hammer that cracks the walls of seed pods, a bud that breaks the sheets of ice. An erotic meeting that shatters the contemplation of Winter and upsets all the old orders by the untamed collision and growth of bodies.

This is why on May Day, we celebrate. A people who welcome Spring will never know of kings.

When the Romans came they trumped all our little games. Our raids and fertility tricks were child's play next to their *polity* and *economy*. Their contemplations were more sophisticated than ours. Their silence much louder than ours. Their Winters did not even come with cold.

We saw that they had perfected the game of conquest, and we envied them. In our own eyes, we became the barbarian at the gate. Hermann, who smashed the legions on the forest road^[1], had studied under them. We were not

"For anarchists, we don't have a linear view of the past, and then, *into the future*. We don't have a history with a capital 'H', but a patrimony, a heritage – which is still alive today." – Jean Weir

the slave who rebelled, but the young Prince. In the end we were the ones who sacked Rome, but only because we thought to outdo it.

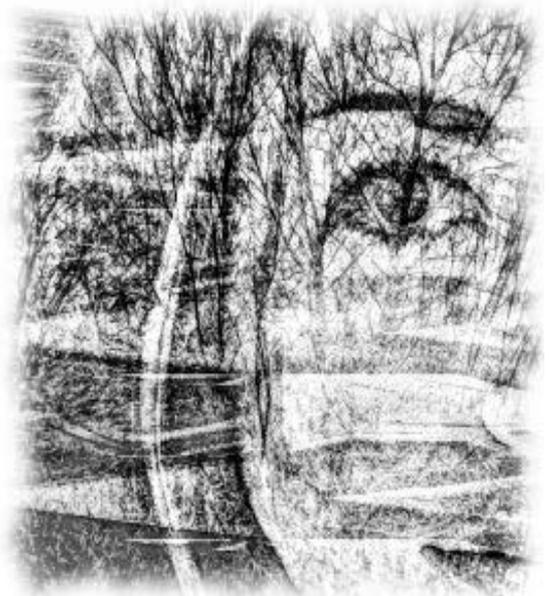
When the Christians came, some among us adopted their God, because He was a God of conquest, a jealous God, created in our image. A God better suited to this war. When they began to destroy the sacred places, to burn the books, to torch the holy groves, there were finally those who understood our Mistake. We rose up. We joined those fighting against the legions and the slavers, those princes fighting to become kings, and we marched on Rome.

But we misunderstood who we were. We thought that without the Romans, their geometries would disappear as well. But those we followed into war carried them in their breasts. We thought that they were our people because they spoke the same language, but in secret they were speaking the language of conquest. We thought that they were our people because they celebrated the same gods, but in secret they bowed down to the God of jealousy. **We thought that we had destroyed Rome, but in fact we had spread it everywhere.**

This is why on May Day, we mock. Most of all, we mock ourselves, for this mistake that still haunts us.

Since that day, our task has been to learn who we are.

Because it was not our fight that we joined. The war leaders and their closest followers



were still playing their games, but we did not see this because they had long since stopped laughing. They were like the farmer scrutinizing his root cellar, counting the days until the last frost, weighing the diminishing supplies, eating the maths in his head. In their permanent contemplation, they saw that the Romans were becoming weak, and the time was coming to attack them, and take over their game.

Rome could not be made to work. A succession of war leaders, pretending to sack it, tried studiously to put its geometries back to work, but there was always another war leader eager to try his hand, and the whole thing fell apart.

For a thousand years, an uneasy truce prevailed. The slavery of the Romans was ended, but a venomous compromise snuck into its place. The war leaders who led us to victory returned half of the greatness wrested from the Romans, parcelling it out among us. They kept the other half for themselves, and passed from being leaders to lords. On the estates of the Romans, the servants were told they were free. The land was no longer their prison, but a trust between themselves and the new lords. They could live as they chose, as long as they tithed a part of the harvest to feed their liberators and the armies that protected them. A compromise between lord and peasant. A new equation, for a thing that was being called freedom.

Caesar was not dead. There were a thousand Caesars. And the Church kept peace among them.

The priests came among us. They taught us to hate our bodies. They taught us to fear the forest, the mountains, the black night. They monopolized magic and wed it to ceremony.

Many free communities remained, and stayed true to the old ways, but one by one they were conquered, chased out, razed to the ground. The princes offered us protection, but they were the ones bringing war. No one could stand up to them, but by allying with another of them. The princes were brought into the Church first. In order to make us believe we were the same, and at the same time to make themselves seem godly, they brought the religion down on their serfs.

There were heretics, but thousands of us were thrown on the fire. Most of all our memories were burned. The voice was replaced with paper, and a greater silence came to reign. Any stories that were not in their one Book were banished. Memories of magic, of healing, of speaking with the forest, of our origins, memories of the time when we shared everything and nothing was owned, were suppressed.

This is how they destroyed our roots. *And this is why, on May Day, we tell stories.* Stories of our lives, of our struggles, of the future we want, of a past we invent because we no longer remember it.

One year, their whole game was almost wrecked by a simple force of nature. A disease swept through the crowded cities and hungry countrysides, and few had the strength to resist it. Every third person perished. **The princes and the priests were most troubled by their loss of subjects. Bodies in their service became the most prized wealth, and they suddenly discovered that they were not in charge of the production of bodies. The mothers and midwives were. What if these should decide to sabotage the growth of the nation for their own, personal reasons?**

There were even some who declared they would not bring children into this world to live as servants.

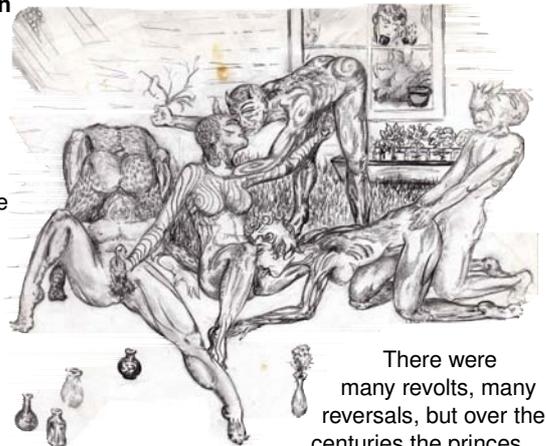
Contraception and abortion became the worst of crimes and sins. Love was only allowed if it bore children. The Christians had always hated women who loved women, and men who loved men, but now they turned ever more from preaching their hatred to enforcing it at the gallows.

Midwives were suppressed, wherever the princes could afford it. The mistrusted choices of the mother were overruled with

the loyalty of the professionals. The worst heresy was *that people could learn from their own bodies.* The only learning to be trusted in the future was the education in schools and the new universities. And all the professions they produced were self-regulating conspiracies. One could only practice by joining the profession, and one could only join the profession by passing through the training administered in the universities, and one could only pass the training by adopting the goals of the princes who funded those universities.

In the interests of keeping subjects alive, midwives were kept on as nurses, because the new doctors were inadequate on their own. But they excelled at governing the bodies under their charge with an iron discipline. **The world before these doctors was mute and witless. In their minds, sickness was not an attempt to communicate, and bodies could not be trusted to heal themselves.** Disease was something to be located, named, and excised. In time, even the experience of pleasure would be classified as a sickness.

This is why we celebrate May Day with orgies. To learn from our own bodies. To show that pleasure can be shared with whomever we choose. To respect another's desires and take joy in their satisfaction.



There were many revolts, many reversals, but over the centuries the princes became kings, and their domain expanded. Our yoke became heavier, and we were expected to pull more and more wealth from the land to give to our lords. And these lords denied there was ever a time when they were our brothers-in-arms. They were separated by blood, related to God, unlike anything else on the forsaken earth. It was forgotten that being a serf was once thought of as infinitely better than being a slave. There was less and less difference.

“In the witch-hunts, the Church explicitly legitimized the doctors' professionalism, denouncing non-professional healing as equivalent to heresy: *“If a woman dare to cure without having studied she is a witch and must die.”* (Of course, there wasn't any way for a woman to study.) Finally, the witch craze provided a handy excuse for the doctor's failings in everyday practice: Anything he couldn't cure was obviously the result of sorcery. The distinction between “female” superstition and “male” medicine was made final by the very roles of the doctor and the witch at the trial. The trial in one stroke established the male physician on a moral and intellectual plane vastly above the female healer he was called to judge. It placed him on the side of God and Law, a professional on par with lawyers and theologians, while it placed her on the side of darkness, evil and magic. He owed his new status not to medical or scientific achievements of his own, but to the Church and State he served so well.” – *Witches, Midwives & Nurses*

Still the lords needed to squeeze more blood out of the earth. They turned towards faraway lands, and they called the people they met "slaves." But this was a crueler slavery than anything the Romans had ever inflicted. If their God despised the human body, He hated the slaves' very souls.

They needed our help in these new wars of conquest, and above all, *they needed to prevent our defection*. So they told us we were white, which was immutably different from being black, or being a savage. The lords and their priests, cops, and explorers could not build new cages fast enough, so they built categories, and taught us that we were born into them, and could never choose who we were. And who we were was an army, mobilized to assault all those who still had roots in the world.

This is why we celebrate May Day with visions. To see that magic is everywhere, and all life is mutable, all categories inadequate.

For in those years we fought many wars against them. We burned lords and priests, we ran off with savages, we threw captains overboard. And they responded by intensifying their war against us. They burnt millions for using sacred plants, for healing, for speaking with the forest, for communing with the old gods, for refusing to be white, for disrespecting their new laws that said land was not a trust but property, inhering to individuals, and only to men. And they slaughtered many millions more of the rooted ones, to take their lands, or punish them if they refused to be uprooted.

And then they moved us all about, wherever they wanted us, rootless and uprooted, mixed together, tracked by our categories, until the very earth became strange to us, and we to ourselves. They put us to work. They no longer asked for a portion, but for everything, for our very time. It was not enough to partition the land. They also had to partition our lives into hours, and assign each one a price. **They learned to kill us in how they kept us alive. They taught us to view life as a series of numbers, to convert joy to value**. The forest became lumber. Our hands became labor. **They ruled us with calculations determining the cost of our lives, the price they needed to pay to keep us working**. Eventually they tricked us to view life in the same terms.

"[S]ettler-invaders had recourse to an instrument that was not, like the guillotine, a new invention, but that was just as lethal. This instrument would later be called Racism, and it would become embedded in nationalist practice. [...] Human beings were mobilized in terms of their lowest and most superficial common denominator, and they responded. People who had abandoned their villages and families, who were forgetting their languages and losing their cultures, who were all but depleted of their sociability, were manipulated into considering their skin color a substitute for all they had lost. They were made proud of something that was neither a personal feat nor even, like language, a personal acquisition. They were fused into a nation of white men. (White women and children existed only as scalped victims, as proofs of the bestiality of the hunted prey.) The extent of the depletion is revealed by the nonentities the white men shared with each other: white blood, white thoughts, and membership in a white race. Debtors, squatters and servants, as white men, had everything in common with bankers, land speculators and plantation owners, nothing in common with Redskins, Blackskins or Yellowskins. Fused by such a principle, they could also be mobilized by it, turned into white mobs; lynch mobs, "Indian fighters." "

— Fredy Perlman

This is why we celebrate May Day with feasts. Because scarcity is a phantom that must be banished. Because the only things that matter cannot be counted. Because despite all that we have endured, we love ourselves and we will not be instruments for the ambitions of others.

On several occasions we still rose up. We captured kings and threw them from their towers, bombed their carriages, or cut their heads off. But the war still carried on. **Over time the kings fractured and multiplied into a whole array of technicians. They made us accessories to production. They turned our bodies into machines**. The factories were the new model for humankind, the new treasure of our rulers, and they despised us for the fact that their precious machines needed us. The old equation changed. Freedom no longer meant a compromise between master and subject. It meant all power to the

machines, and the greatest mobility for their product. Our lives were sacrificed for the machines to keep running.

This is why we celebrate May Day with sabotage. For we will not surrender the rhythm of life to the timing of gears.

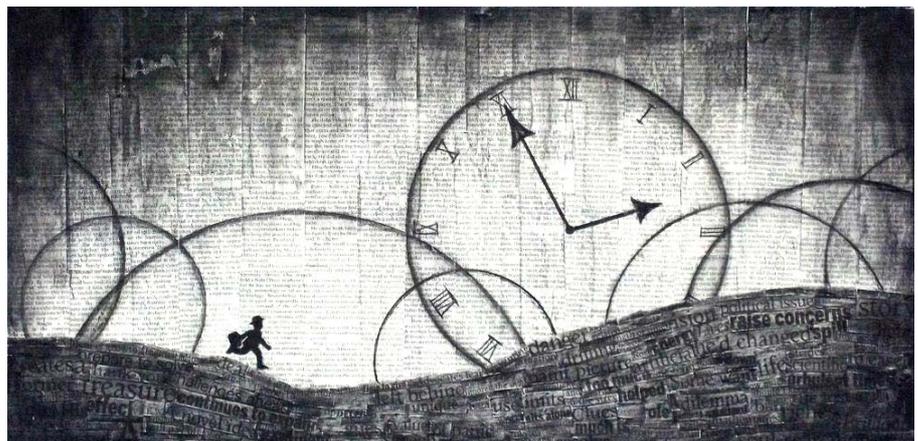
All their new techniques of warfare could not quench our rage. Even in the factories, or in the private places where they tried to confine the women, we formed new communes. Major upheavals shook the halls of the well masked princes, and they began to call these upheavals revolutions. **They said the old forms of authority were finished. They said we were all free, and could participate in their project as equals. And most of us were fooled.**

Just like the barbarians before us, we reacted more to our *exclusion* than to our *domination*, and tried to become the new Romans.

But more and more are beginning to realize that this project we're invited to participate in is the war against all of us. It allows us anything but mutiny. It keeps us



The anarchist Gaetano Bresci kills King Umberto of Italy in 1900 after 90 killed (including his sister) during bread riots



alive as long as we do not nourish ourselves. It demands only our complicity in this constant uprooting, and the suppression of those who still remember their roots.

They put our freedom down on paper, the better to silence it.

This is why we celebrate May Day with riots. To make a noise that will not go away. To burn all that is not true. To rip up the paving stones and discover, beneath them, the earth. To begin to grow roots again.

*This is your story, child. This is why it seems you have everything, but you feel you have nothing. **Trust your feelings. Do not numb them with the pills they offer you. Because those feelings of anguish and rage are the same itch the seed feels in the last days of Winter, before it bursts open and sends out its buds into the world. It is this growth – uncontrolled, spontaneous – that would deprive them of their soldiers, which is why they fear it above all else.***



Not everyone arrived in this desert along the same path. But there are many who share your story. There are others who still remember their roots, and know where to find them. But those like you do not even know what is missing. Remember this story, and there will be hope for Spring.

1. ed. – Hermann der Cherusker, a chieftain of the Cherusci tribe of Germania leading an alliance with the Marsi, Chatti, Bructeri, Chauci, and Sicambri (five out of at least fifty Germanic tribes at the time), ambushed and annihilated three Roman legions and their auxiliaries in the Teutoburg forest, in 9 A.D. This is regarded as Rome's greatest defeat, at the peak of its empire, and they made no more attempts to conquer Germania past the Rhine river.

'THE TRANSATLANTIC INSTITUTION'

[ed. – extracted from 'The Many-Headed Hydra', by Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker.]

According to the Beggar Act of 1598, the first-time offender for begging was to be stripped and whipped until his [sic] back was bloody; second-time offenders were banished from England, beginning the policy of *transportation*. Several thousand soldiers were recruited from London's Bridewell between 1597 and 1601, and in 1601 and 1602 four galleys were built and then manned by felons. After 1617 transportation was extended as a statutorily permitted punishment for felons; at each assize thereafter, half a dozen men were reprieved for galley service and ten conscripted for the army. Sir William Monson expressed the relationship among expropriation, theft, terror, and slavery when he wrote: "*The terror of galleys will make men avoid sloth and pilfering and apply themselves to labour and pains; it will keep servants and apprentices in awe[...] it will save much blood that is lamentably spilt by execution of thieves and offenders, and more of this kingdom than any other[...] And that they may be known from others, they must be shaved both head and face, and marked in the cheek with a hot iron, for men to take notice of them to be the king's labourers, for so they should be termed and not slaves.*"

Banishment legislation was aimed at the Irish, the Gypsies, and Africans after the 1590s. **The English conquest of Ireland in 1596 laid the material foundation and established the model for all conquests to follow.** Land confiscation, deforestation, legal fiat, cultural repression, and chronic crises of subsistence caused the Irish diaspora, sending men and women in waves to England and America. In 1594 all native Irish were commanded to leave England. Ulstermen [sic] found in Dublin were shipped to Virginia as slaves, as were Wexford rebels in 1620. **The Gypsies, a nomadic people who had brought Morris dancing to England, offered an example of life lived without either landownership or master. By an Act of Mary, any gypsy who remained in England longer than one month could be hanged; an Act of Elizabeth expanded the capital laws to include those who "in a certain counterfeit speech or behavior" disguised themselves as Gypsies.** In 1628

eight men were hanged for transgressing these laws, and their female companions transported to Virginia. In 1636 another band of Gypsies was rounded up; the men were hanged and the women drowned at Haddington. Africans, too, commanded the attention of Queen Elizabeth I, who in 1596 sent an open letter to the lord mayor of London and to the mayors and sheriffs of other towns: "*Her Majesty understanding that several blackamoors have lately been brought into this realm, of which kind of people there are already too many here[...] her Majesty's pleasure therefore is that those kind of people should be expelled from the land.*" In the same year, she engaged a German slave dealer to confiscate black people in England in return for English prisoners of war. In 1601 she proclaimed herself "*highly discontented to understand the great numbers of negars and Blackamoors [which] are crept into this realm.*"

Another part of the terror was forced labor overseas, a different kind of "going west." **Through the transatlantic institution of indentured servitude, merchants and their "spirits" (i.e., abductors of children and adults) shipped some two hundred thousand workers (two thirds of all those who left England, Scotland and Ireland) to American shores in the seventeenth century.** Some had been convicted of crimes and sentenced to penal servitude, others were kidnapped or spirited, while yet others went by choice – often desperate choice – exchanging several years' labor for the prospect of land and independence afterward. During the first half of the seventeenth century, labor-market entrepreneurs plucked up the poor and dispossessed in the port cities (London and Bristol especially, and to a lesser extent Liverpool, Dublin, and Cork) and sent initially to Virginia, where the practices and customs of indentured servitude originated. In order to entice settlers to and secure workers for the infant colony, the investors of the Virginia Company of London fashioned a covenant between the company and the workers. Imperial and local rulers of other colonies, most notably Barbados, adapted the new institution to their own labor needs. Indentured servitude, Eric Williams has remarked, was the "historic base" upon which American slavery was founded.



Dale Farm eviction, Essex: four hundred years on, the British State's war on travelling peoples continues

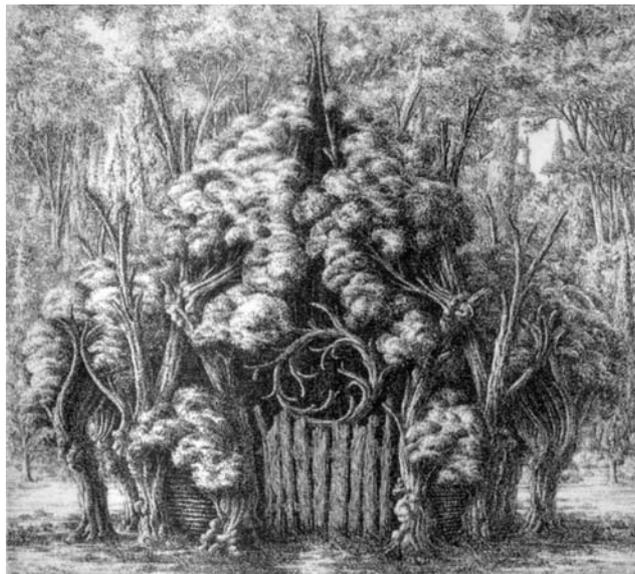
TEXT CONCERNING HAMBACH FOREST (GERMANY)

[ed. – The Hambacher Forest (often shortened to Hambach) has been called the last primeval forest in Europe. It has existed continuously for some 12,000 years, though now only a fraction remains (and much of that younger growth). Since 1978, energy companies have been devouring it tree by tree, in order to mine brown coal to fuel Germany's industrial expansion. The remaining chunk of forest, populated by massive hornbeam and oak trees along with several rare or endangered species of animals, has been targeted by the European energy giant

RWE who begun digging an incomprehensibly huge open cast coal mine, displacing entire villages and clear-cutting the last remnants of this once great forest. In April 2012 the forest was squatted in order to prevent it from being cut down and to prohibit the growing of the mine. Since then the occupations have been evicted several times but every time shortly afterwards re-occupations have taken place. Here is a report on the recent phase. **STOP PRESS:** March 15th –

Huge police raid on Hambach, all barricades are being destroyed. Police are engaged in cat-and-mouse with fighters in the woods trying to erect new ones.

Elsewhere, near Bristol, U.K., the trainline connecting 70% of Britain's power-generating coal to its distribution had been cut through in multiple places, urging the fighters in Hambach onwards. As some of the comrades from the forest wrote in a call-out; "Regardless of the oppression the state throws at the Hambacher Forest, like the microbes, insects, plants, birds, and animals cohabiting all of our living barricades, that remain alive with the spirit of resistance, Hambacher Forest will remain as not just a reminder but also a call to action."



The conflict against RWE at Hambacher forest has intensified with every day since the beginning of this new year [2016].

Many individuals embracing a diverse variety of tactics have been hard at work bringing anarchic mischief to the mine.

Some elements of practical refusal from the occupiers of the forest include:

– The continuous barricading of the roads used by security and construction vehicles, as well as structural damage to the bridges they use with fire and pick axes.

– Tree-spiking and the placement of "potential improvised explosive devices" in threatened areas of the forest, as well as more and more barricades, platforms and tree-defenses deeper in the woods.

– The technological apparatus of RWE such as pumping stations, radio-masts and electrical transformers being set aflame almost daily.

– Sabotage of coal-transportation infrastructure, such as short circuiting the power lines running above the train tracks and burning of electrical components alongside the railway.

– Numerous attacks with stones, slingshots, fireworks and molotov cocktails against the mines security forces, either ambushed on their patrols, or directly confronted at checkpoints. Many of these acts

have now been carried out in revenge for the attempted murder, hospitalization and subsequent imprisonment of one comrade on the 21st of January^[1].

Of course this has not gone unnoticed by the cops, who have openly acknowledged the area surrounding the mine as "outlaw territory". For over a week now, surveillance of the forest occupation has increased, with helicopters hovering above for some time almost every day, and sending groups of cops in riot armor into the forest. They also make many attempts to ID-control people who are coming to the forest from the train station.

It should go without saying that we will not be intimidated by the presence of some vans of cops, skirting fearfully around the woods. **Every time, the helicopter has been greeted routinely with fireworks, and one cop car which ventured a little too deep into the autonomous zone was smashed up, as was the vehicle sent to retrieve it.**

Day and night, we lay in the woods, watching, waiting, ready to strike at any moment, and should you imprison or strike down any one of us, as you now well know, there will be consequences, here in Germany, or anywhere else in the world where RWE spreads its sickening tentacles.

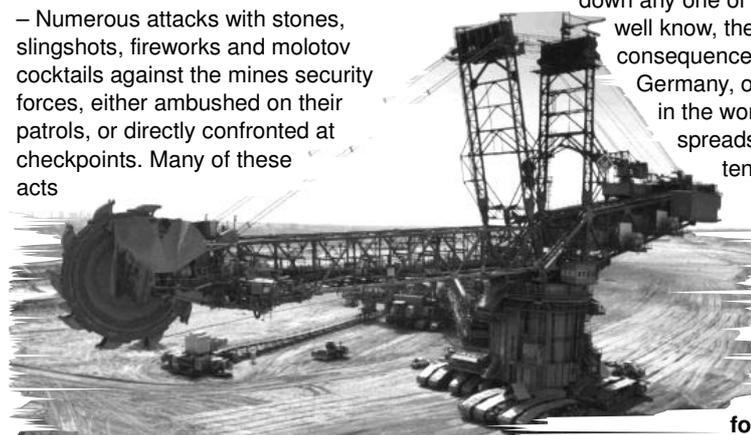
lignite mining and deforestation in the Rheinland in Germany, RWE, its subsidiaries and accomplices are to be found everywhere. Their projects, their offices, their cars, their machinery, our targets, are to be found everywhere.

They are responsible for the running of coal mining operations worldwide, such as the collaboration with Hrvatska Elektroprivreda to run the Plomin coal-fired power station in **Croatia**, the lignite and gas-fired Mátra Power Plant in **Hungary**, where RWE is the 2nd largest competitor in the national electricity market, with shares in the ELMŐ/ÉMÁSZ Group, FIGÁZ and TIGÁZ. They also seek to expand the development of the coal industry in the Asia-Pacific region with offices opened in **Singapore**, and operations based out of their offices on the 22nd floor of The Plaza Office Tower in Jakarta, **Indonesia**.

RWE also makes a killing (literally) from its part played in the increased development of the atomic menace, running and servicing nuclear power stations across the world, with the collaboration of the Technical Association of Large Power Plant Operators and VGB Power Tech.

And what would RWE be, without its contributions to the industry of hydraulic fracturing and the construction of gas-fired powerplants such as the CCGT power plant in Denizli, **Turkey**, with the aid of Turcas Petrol and Metka, or increased oil and gas exploration in Poland, under the banner of RWE east, whose central offices are located at Limuzská 12/3135, 100 98 Prague 10, Stranice, **Czech Republic**.

RWE Innogy, the subsidiary complicit in the farce of greenwashing industrialism, which boasts of "renewable" or



It is now of importance to address that of course **RWE is not just responsible for open cast**

“sustainable” energy operations. With this approach, RWE feeds the insatiable hunger of the industrial leviathan and at the same time satisfies the manufactured needs of those “benevolent” and “conscious” consumers, so that they too may spend all their lives in the glow of artificial light, with dead eyes staring blankly into screens, as they attempt to distance themselves from the harsh realities of the mechanised and systemic dominion that they depend on and contribute to, whilst at the same time sacrificing themselves upon the altar of the “green economy”.

With biomass power plants, solar, wind and hydro farms – all highly dependent on the same ecocidal methods used in their production, operation and maintenance, such as the extraction of rare minerals for circuitry and other sophisticated technologies and the burning of immense amounts of fossil fuels just to keep them in working order and fully integrated into the electrical grid – **in Belgium, the Netherlands, France, the UK, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Poland the USA, and many other countries (which are listed conveniently on their website, along with the locations of their offices and so on).**

RWE are also working together with Siemens to build virtual power plants... “What the fuck is a virtual power plant” you ask?

According to RWE's web page “A virtual power plant is a link-up of small, distributed power stations, like wind farms, CHP units, photovoltaic systems, small hydropower plants and biogas units, but also of loads that can be switched off, in order to form an integrated network. The plants are controlled from one central control room.”

With this, Siemens and RWE seek to create an interconnected, easily controllable and digitalized electrical grid, so that the functioning of capitalism, and the smooth flow of profit and products can be managed with ease, by some cabal of technocrats, plugged in, locked away, working towards the total control and destruction and of the natural environment which all life is dependent on.

In the words of Siemens-puppet Thomas Zimmermann: “With this technologically leading system, RWE will be well equipped to meet the challenges of an increasingly digitalised energy world.”

RWE is also making major contributions towards the approaching technological singularity, which seeks to encompass all aspects of life under one suffocating, automated, artificial reality. With the aid of its research project “E-DeMa”, they are

working on projects such as “smart homes” and “smart meters”, so that each individual/familial consumer-unit is completely integrated into the automated capitalist-industrial machine^[2].

Plugged in permanently one can use their “smart” phone to manage their levels of electricity consumed, turn heating and lights on and off whilst slaving away at some mindless job, simultaneously booking in appointments and sending “emoticons” to their so-called “friends” on disgracebook, ordering the latest automated vacuum cleaner to keep the prison-home sterilized, all from the comfort of your place of employment-imprisonment, working for digital money, to spend on mind numbing drugs and healthcare, and the latest distraction, all kept safe and secure under the surveillance of countless corporations, working hand-in-glove to spy on, collect and database every aspect of your life... all this for your security, all this in the name of convenience.

Of course this dystopian vision of the future offered by RWE and the nerds of the techno-industrial system is only available for those those eager to comply and bend themselves to the will of another, and those privileged enough that the increased development of this technologically driven society has not already landed them in prison or some distant mass grave.

We conclude this text with a call out to all cells and chaotic individualities tending towards the international anarchist offensive against power, for the direct attack against RWE, its subsidiaries, its partners such as Siemens and VGB Power Tech and their projects.

Our targets are everywhere. Opportunities present themselves everywhere.

From expensive, isolated and indefensible pieces of infrastructure on the edges of the prison-cities, such as power lines, substations, transformers, wind/solar/hydro farms and so on, which if destroyed will all have a wide knock-on effect, to the densely packed clusters of targets in cities, such as offices and groups of vehicles parked outside, CCTV surveillance cameras, telekomm masts and electrical boxes full of fiberoptic cables line the streets, begging to be sabotaged, shattering the hold of civil normality for a time, perhaps long enough that some will look away from their glowing screens and see the fire of chaotic anarchy on the streets. With a little research, the homes of the technocrats are uncovered, and their daily lives can be ruptured at any moment, their ostentatious cars burning on their driveway, windows shattering in the night.

With easily reproducible and simple methods elaborated in the numerous communiques of anarchist action cells, such as the placement of a single firelighter cube, or the indiscriminate application of bolt cutters, crowbars, rocks, hammers and molotov cocktails, our targets are all too easily destroyed. Our targets are everywhere. Our tools are many, and the automatons of order cannot be everywhere at once.

In solidarity with imprisoned warrior Fledermaus^[3].

For international coordination and combative anarchy!

1. ed. – During clashes with RWE security, one guard deliberately ran over a forest-defender known as Fledermaus (bat in German; Hambach is home to the seriously-threatened Bechstein's bat), who was subsequently beaten and imprisoned.

2. ed. – For more on the 'smart' environment, see **Bristol, Britain's Flagship 'Smart City'**

3. ed. – After four months inside, he is now free.

INGREDIENTS
(Cleaned of fingerprints)



Good quality firelighters. The hi-energy individually sealed or 'gell' type are the best and also help prevent forensic traces on your clothes.



Lighter/matches

Instructions

We light the product(s) properly and place in position 1 (directly on top of the wheel under the arch below the fuel tank/cap) for hi-energy individually sealed type, or position 2 (push into/through outer engine grill) for 'gell' type.

The flames will take some time to establish, giving you time to leave the area. Be aware of witnesses and your entrance and exit route.

Position 1 will result in a fuel tank explosion if product(s) are hi-energy. Position 2 will result in an engine fire which will also destroy the vehicle.





FOR SOCIAL WAR NOW 

'TO CREATE & MAINTAIN THEIR WEALTH' / 'SENSUALITY, MAGIC & ANARCHIST VIOLENCE'

[ed. – Reviews by anonymous authors from the *Jauría trans-feminist zine* (Spanish language) and *Black Seed anti-civilisation paper* respectively]

'To Create & Maintain Their Wealth'

The history of accumulation from another perspective

Normally, industrialisation and capitalism (as well as the class relations generated in their womb) are explained to us through the figure of production and wage labour. This approach ignores and mutes the role of millions of subjects whose labour-power has also been used for accumulation; *and whose exploitation and resistance has also formed part of the story.* On the one hand, we are talking about non-human animals and their unpaid work, essential for the development of major industries and the generation of wealth; on the other hand, we refer to women relegated to the caregiver/reproductive role, carefully designed to ensure the continuity of the system and discourage any hint of dissent or solidarity.

Although we cannot aspire in these lines to a comprehensive analysis of the issue and its nuances, we would like to throw together some of the key proponents as proposed by the author Silvia Federici and the historian Jason Hribal.

The first delves into the roots of the State and economic control over the feminine body and social role, dating back to the post-colonial American witch hunts [ed. – and much before]. **For Federici, the capitalist system is not a logical evolution of society, but a plan carried out in a calculated manner for a few to create and maintain their wealth and privileges. In this regard, criminalising sexual and reproductive freedom meant creating a break from the norm of the time and, simultaneously, neutralising experiences of self-organisation and social functions of some women who could be possessors of knowledge linked to respect for nature and the community. Thus, any possible resistance to the necessary social transformation for the emergence and development of capitalism was annihilated or contained.** Women

were gradually set aside from productive economic activities and, when waged work became the main source of wealth, women's bodies began to be conceived of as reproductive machines for the creation of the future labour force. At the same time, unpaid housework accounted for the livelihood and the daily reward for the existing [male] labour force: *"capital has made and makes money out of our cooking, smiling, fucking."* (Federici, 1975).

Also profitable to the bosses and to the system in general was all the energy produced by non-human animals. In his work, Hribal shows to what extent these were depended on during industrialisation: *"On the agricultural farms, it was oxen, horses, mules, and donkeys, as well as the occasional cow, ewe, or large dog, which pulled and powered the plows, harrows, seed-drills, threshers, binders, presses, reapers, mowers, and harvesters. In the mines, they towed the gold, silver, iron-ore, lead, and coal. On the cotton plantations and in the spinning factories, they turned the mechanical mills that cleaned, pressed, carded, and spun the cotton. On the sugar plantations, they crushed and transported the cane. On the docks, roads, and canals, they moved the carts, wagons, and barges of mail, commodities, and people. In the cities, they powered the carriages, trams, buses, and ferries. On the battlefields, they deployed the artillery and supplies, they provided the reconnaissance, and they charged the lines. This was the labor of production: producing the power necessary to propel the instruments of capitalism. Indeed, the modern agricultural, industrial, commercial, and urban transformations were not just human enterprises. The history of capitalist accumulation is so much more than a history of humanity. Who built America, the textbook asks? Animals did"* (Hribal, 2003).



Already in previous economic systems, other-than-human animals had been used as currency, or as products, or as machines for production. What capitalism skilfully did was to take control of those ambiguous relationships in which the animal was, at the same time, a resource and a member of the human community. It dissociated those 'products' and 'machines' from the subject who they came from, from the individual character of the 'operator's' experience. In this way, not only the interests and the needs of the animals themselves were muted, but also the voices that were beginning to rise up to show solidarity with them and to demand an end to their slavery.

In the same way, this system achieved that the very concept of 'woman' be assimilated almost exclusively into the role given to her in the hetero-patriarchal home. According to Federici, capitalism has led women to believe that household chores and caring for children are 'an act of love', and it is still commonly accepted that only maternity, infinite patience and caring dedication make us 'real women'.

Control of the Body

Even so, to Silvia Federici the female body is not the only one in which capitalism intervenes, but the bodies of the proletariat in general are dominated through hunger, reproduction, the subordination of basic needs to work, etc. The case of the non-human animals is an absolute exponent of this domination, their bodies at the same time being a source of labour-power, machine production and products. In all these cases, the control of the reproductive capacities of individuals plays a fundamental role for the accumulation of wealth. **The sows, cows and sheep on the farms, female elephants and lionesses in the zoos and circuses, the orcas in the aquarium... usually resist reproducing. Their pregnancies are induced, their deliveries are scheduled, their daughters [sic] are stolen and killed by the same industry that steals life from them. It's them who decide how many bodies will be born and how they will optimize their productivity.**

Lives are created in order to be exploited and destroyed. In a more veiled way, States legislate to punish a woman who does not want to collaborate in the reproduction of the workforce [ed. – see for example the recent extention of prohibitions against abortion in Spain, Brazil, etc.], and to have the last word about how, when and how much she should give birth: “Capitalism has always needed to control the bodies of women because it’s an exploitative system that privileges labour as the source of wealth accumulation[...] Imagine if women go on strike and don’t produce children; capitalism comes to a halt” (Federici, 2014).

Denial of reproduction, exercised both by humans and by individuals of other species, is without a doubt a powerful form of resistance, but it’s not the only one. The animals have made changes in the history of labour by slowing or shutting down production, attacking their exploiters, fleeing and even forming maroon communities free in nature. The women accused and persecuted for witchcraft were not the only people who dared to challenge or question the power of the Church, the patriarchy and the economic system. If exploitation and rebellion exist beyond the classification of genus and species, so too can solidarity.

The search for the commons

Taking again the example of the witch hunts, the criminalisation and isolation of certain subjects means a breakdown in the community. The woman who wants to be something more than ‘woman’, who claims herself as a free individual, owner of her body and of her relationships, is presented as a monstrous lover of the devil, and enemy of humanity. She who wants to control her reproduction is shown as a devourer of children, who can make men impotent.

Ultimately, the woman is ‘something else’, different from other members of the social group. Midwives and healers, and the religions linked to respect for nature, are also stigmatised.

Wildness and nature become something undesirable, and punishable. In the same way, non-human animals are punished and subdued until they are docile enough to be useful. These animals are also perceived as ‘something else’, however much they work and live with the group, and although there is no real

taxonomic or logical difference between what it means to be ‘human’ and what it means to be ‘animal’.

Thus, although capitalism in practice places workers, housewives and beasts of burden in the same position, only those who contribute with waged productive work are considered among them as members of the working class, and on the basis of this consideration build relationships of mutual support and solidarity. Both Hribal and Federici pursue with their research, more or less explicitly, a break with this limited view of the idea of class. Their proposals seek to broaden the concept of the commons, to put it into practice, and promote recognition among equals from below, by eliminating the barriers imposed from above to prevent that we find and help each other.



It’s a newly-born idea, which has much to say and discuss, but at the same time it’s one of the oldest ideas in the world: we are in this together, and together we’ll get through this.

‘Sensuality, Magic & Anarchist Violence’

In early Spring of 2013, a small handful of anarchists, calling themselves Feral Death Coven, republished and began circulating a book called *Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture* by Arthur Evans. The original was published in 1978 by FAG RAG books, and is a cult classic among radical fairy and queer witch circles. Without permission or authority, the book is a beautifully pirated edition, suitable for its content. In a world where original editions of the book regularly sell for hundreds of dollars, such an edition is a welcome contribution to the queer, pagan, and anti-civilization canons. The new edition has largely been circulated at anarchist bookfairs and hand to hand, fueling discussion and inquiry.

In the context of a renewed interest in the history of the Witch-hunts and the rise of Christian civilization, this book offers a significant contribution. In recent years, anti-capitalists and pagans alike have explored a radical analysis of these histories and have worked to understand the conditions by which patriarchy and capitalism have developed together as two heads of the same monstrosity. This line of inquiry is perhaps best illustrated by the relatively widespread reading and discussion of Silvia Federici’s *Caliban and the Witch* and also the renewed excitement about Fredy Perلمان’s *Against His-story, Against Leviathan!*

“Kathleen Jamie has written that “*there was a time [when] there were no wild animals because every animal was wild*”. Her point can be extended by suggesting that there have been times and places where there were no “animals” at all because all animals were individuals (or at least representatives of particular species). A koala wasn’t an animal but was simply a koala nor was a raven an animal but rather simply a raven. A koala and a raven are clearly very different individuals and haven’t always both fallen under a homogenizing term such as “animal”. In *Creatures of Empire*, Virginia DeJohn Anderson notes [speaking specifically of Algonquin-speaking Indians in New England and the Chesapeake region of colonial America] that: “*Colonists who compiled lists of native vocabulary recorded names for many kinds of animals, but no Indian word for “animal” itself... The absence of a clear equivalent for animal is striking, since compilers of native lexicons typically recorded words in common use and it seems unlikely that the term never came up in conversation. If this linguistic peculiarity represented a genuine conceptual difference, it suggests that Indians did not conceive of the natural world in terms of a strict human-animal dichotomy but rather as a place characterized by a diversity of living beings*” [...] of which we are a part.” – *Without a Word for Animal*

“The animic world is in perpetual flux, as the beings that participate in it go their various ways. These beings do not exist at locations, they occur along paths. Among the Inuit of the Canadian Arctic, for example, as the writer Rudy Wiebe has shown, as soon as a person moves he or she becomes a line. People are known and recognised by the trails they leave behind them. Animals, likewise, are distinguished by characteristic patterns of activity or movement signatures, and to perceive an animal is to witness this activity going on, or to hear it. Thus, to take a couple of examples from Richard Nelson’s wonderful account of the Koyukon of Alaska, *Make Prayers to the Raven*, you see ‘*streaking like a flash of fire through the undergrowth*’, not a fox, and ‘*perching in the lower branches of spruce trees*’, not an owl. The names of animals are not nouns but verbs.” – *Rethinking the Animate, Re-Animating Thought*

This book tells a congruent story, but from a unique position. While engaging with the same history as Federici, Arthur Evans departs from her in some marked ways. He subtitled his book “*a radical view of western civilization, and some of the people it has tried to destroy*,” and in doing so he attempts to hear and to share the perspective of those people annihilated in the Witch-hunts. This effort is something tragically absent in the patronizingly materialist writings in *Caliban*. While Federici critiques the capitalist Mind/Body and Material/Spiritual splits which cleaved the world into an alienated hell, her methodology is rooted in the Mind and Material poles of these violent dichotomies. **This intrinsically domesticated perspective may indict the Witch-hunts, yet it remains a tacit acceptance of the ideology which has fueled centuries of genocide.** In his lament for the world vanquished by Civilization and his celebration of the voices of the defeated, Evans’ critique has more in common with Fredy Perlman’s. Both describe Leviathan’s material rise as being inseparable from the sensual and spiritual poverty it has enforced upon the biosphere.

His narrative differs from both *Caliban* and *Leviathan* in its being explicitly queer. Fredy Perlman’s book describes the rise of patriarchy from a implicitly gender essentialist framework and has absolutely no analysis of the existence or struggles of queer people, which amounts to an unfortunate blemish on what is an otherwise brilliant text. Federici’s book is also regrettably tarnished by a more explicit gender essentialism. In the introduction to *Caliban* she argues that “*the debates that have taken place among postmodern feminists concerning the need to dispose of ‘women’ as a category of analysis, and define feminism purely in oppositional terms, have been misguided*” and that “*then ‘women’ is a legitimate category of analysis, and... a crucial ground of struggle for women, as [it was] for the feminist movement of the 1970 which, on this basis, connected itself with the history of the witches.*” Her willful refusal to engage with anti-essentialist queer and trans thinkers is made all the more sinister by her omission of the histories of these people within the Witch-hunts. In fact, queer people earn little more than a single footnote in Federici’s book length academic text. Thus, *Witchcraft* is a refreshing corrective to ways that *Caliban* falls short. **Firstly, because as a historical document, the book demonstrates that the nascent Gay Liberation movement also connected itself with its witch predecessors. Secondly, by telling the history of witches from the perspective of the queer, trans and gender-variant people**

in the struggle, Evans provides an implicit rejection of ‘women’ as a hegemonic or natural category long before the so-called ‘postmodern debates’ which Federici conjures to dismiss this perspective. And lastly, because this book is perhaps the first to beautifully situate the rise of heteronormativity as inseparably bound to patriarchy, industrialism, and the state. So, for those who cannot be satisfied with a mere study of industrial/white-supremacist/patriarchal civilization, Witchcraft could prove to be a weapon in a struggle which concurrently attacks the industrial, racialized and gendered orders.

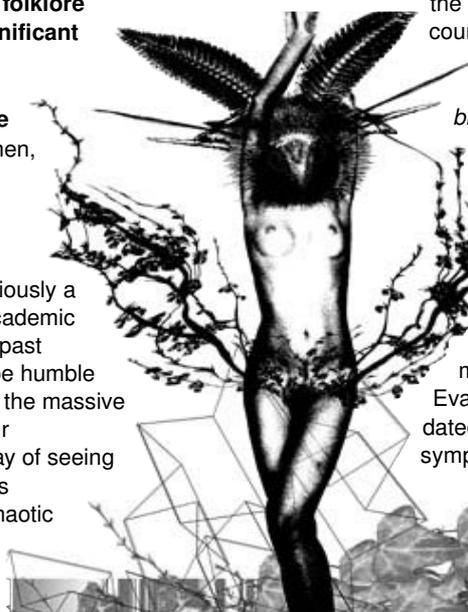
None of this, of course, is to say that *Witchcraft* is beyond criticism. The book is greatly flawed and dated in ways that cannot be ignored. Foremost among these problems is Evans’ ambiguous relationship to the disciplines of Anthropology and History. **While he often critiques the biases and worldviews of the white anthropologists he draws upon, his criticism often feels superficial at best.** He implicates these anthropologists and historians in a more general heteronormativity, but he never takes this towards a deeper critique of Anthropology itself (as if these Scientists would be acceptable if they were only more gay-friendly). Anthropology, as a white supremacist and civilized discipline, can only inherently look to the past through a domesticated and racist lens. The result of such inquiry will always then be mystified through a racist and essentialist paradigm. Many of the claims that Evans reproduces from white anthropologists, must thus be treated with even greater skepticism than he uses, and should constantly be subject to critique.

In Evans’ own introduction, he denounces academic historians and anthropologists. Instead, he celebrates mythology and folklore as being as significant and vital to our understanding of our collective past. It is sad, then, that he does not push this alternative to its conclusion. To actually take seriously a critique of the academic approach to the past would mean to be humble enough to admit the massive blind-spots of our domesticated way of seeing and to reverse this unknown as a chaotic wonder to be explored. **Refusing this**

academic worldview is equally important if we are to acknowledge that the struggles of indigenous people, queers, and witches are not a relic of the past – rather that these cultures survive into the present and continue their struggle for survival.

Yet there still remains a crucial benefit from a study of the war between Civilization and the nature-cultures that it has struggled to eradicate. This benefit is the perspective that the continuous trajectory of His-story and its Civilization has been won at the expense of countless queers, witches, gender-variants, trans-people, heretics, indigenous cultures and wildlife. And so this story demonstrates that the cherished Progress of the society which holds all of us hostage is also the story of rape, torture, eco-destruction, enslavement, murder, genocide and omnicide. If we understand the beast which confronts us, we are all better equipped to combat it without falling into its snares.

To genuinely appraise our enemy and to avoid its traps would mean to critique this book, but to take its conclusions beyond themselves. Contemporary readers of the text should find it very frustrating for its naïve optimism in its final chapter. **Evans concludes his extremely thorough critique of industrialism, militarism, statism and patriarchy by paradoxically arguing for a ‘new technology’, a ‘new socialism’ and a ‘new civilization’ that is not based on any of the infrastructure of the current one. These hopeful and empty assertions can only possibly read as baseless and absurd after enduring the horrors of the text’s narrative.** Those living in the cybernetic, techno-industrial, mass-alienated prison society which has unfolded in the last 35 years must concede that whatever optimism around technology and socialism that may have ever existed must be left in the dustbin of history. The countercultural fetish for a ‘new technology’ which prevailed in the 70s gave birth to the cybernetic governance that we now live within. It is abundantly clear that those who fetishize technology and socialism only serve to construct a more abysmal and well-managed dystopian future. Evans reads as all the more dated and foolish in his sympathies for a Maoism of the past. Any misplaced hope in the Maoist project must reconcile itself with the industrial and genocidal atrocities



to which that project gave rise. We can safely discard of this naive and conclude that no 'new technology' or 'new socialism' nor anything short of a cleansing fire can assist us in our self-liberation.

Even after excising the anthropological and socialist perspectives, this book still contains a great deal of relevance for those who desire such a fire. *Witchcraft's* own argumentation offers a vindication of queer sensuality, magic, and anarchist violence which speaks for itself and can be followed toward any number of endeavors in the pursuit of freedom and wildness. In spite of our criticism, we are passionate about this book because of the way that these perspectives and proposals invigorate our own struggles against this world.

"We need to offer the death rites in a culture that pretends that death can be cheated by buying the latest i-gadget or hooking ourselves up to plasma bags of young blood. These technological and scientific responses do not account for the wider environment which we do not control, but which now seeks to redress the killing balance and is doing so with storm surge and wildfire and tornado and flood and drought regardless of what is playing on your headphones or how high the gates are to your compound. I welcome this storm. I had spoken to a friend about a time when a spirit came through to us and just wept. He wanted to know if the spirit world was aware and reacting to all this. To us they are. Our allies in the wild are making their last stand and we stand with them. We are embedded in this other world and it will speak through us. [...] Witchcraft is profoundly animist, and that means we have responsibilities to fulfill. There is no hierarchy of actions, no purity test as to how practitioners use this knowledge; each will find their own innate response that is generated from their own circumstances and the needs of their community of spirits. [...] Witchcraft has never been passive in the face of power. Our witchcraft will not be silenced at a time such as this, it will not be polite. Witchcraft cannot retreat to the wilderness, because there is no exterior wilderness left; instead we need to exteriorise our inner wild. We need to wake up to the animal in our bodies. This is witchcraft as contagion, as living flame. We witches must however reluctantly return the curse that has been laid upon us all."

– *Rewilding Witchcraft*

sources if not already cited: (anonymous if unlisted)

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– by *Destruye las prisiones*

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– by M.

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from 'Foward, Wild Ones!', in *Terra Selvaggia* #27

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– from 'All the Rest is Boring', by Nicola Gai

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WHY WE ARE WITH THE FIGHTERS

[ed. – Put out by the London anarchist web infrastructure project Rabble, partly prompted by the statement of the U.K. Anarchist Federation against “the support that [many anarchists] are offering the ‘Rojava revolution’” (which they do not consider a valid process because, among other reasons, it does not resemble the Western proletarian ‘appropriate-the-means-of-production’ industrialised debacles which they correctly see as their heritage). **This is in reference to the extensive social transformation underway in the west (‘Rojava’ in Kurdish) of the traditional Kurdish regions which are mostly still colonised by Syria, Turkey and Iraq.** (For the last century, the U.K. state has been a major initiator and supporter of Kurdish oppression in the Middle East.)

During the so-called ‘Arab Spring’ (see **Return Fire vol.2 pg87**), forces used the destabilisation in Syria to declare the region of Rojava autonomous, allegedly inspired by the vision of a Syrian self-described anarchist Omar Aziz – though there certainly is still a governing framework (however directly democratic, revocable, grass-roots, etc.). **This piece was written during the bloody defence of the city of Kobanê from the siege by fundamentalist militias of ISIS-Daesh;** since then the Islamist forces have been pushed back. However, a suicide bombing in Suruç in June 2015 targeted people on their way to aid the reconstruction of the war-torn city, killing 32 (including the anarchists Evrim Deniz Erol, Alper Sapan and Medali Barutçu). Turkish State involvement in the event is strongly suspected; their hatred for the Kurds and covert aid to ISIS are well known. Turkey went into a state of near civil war after the atrocity, with clashes and armed demos across Istanbul and the Kurdish south east of country, and two Turkish cops were anonymously executed the next day; also, more Kurdish regions declared autonomy despite army curfews and ongoing deaths or brutalisation.

Following this, international solidarity was also felt, with Turkish embassies visited and their walls graffitied (Nepal) or their vehicles bombed (Switzerland); other targets have included Turkish airlines (picketed in Turin) or travel agencies (burned down in Heilbronn). **Many have travelled to Rojava to join the social transformation underway, focused on radical decentralisation, ‘social ecology’, and readings of feminism; in some ways, it has been reported that it should no longer be exclusively thought of as a ‘Kurdish revolution’ because of the number of internationals involved (not to mention number of Kurds not involved).** Regional combat continues with ISIS and Turkish military.

As well as the military offensive, the Turkish State also threatens the region with the GAP Project of 22 dams being built across north Kurdistan for hydro-power for the industrial centres of west Turkey, which will flood diverse bioregions and some of the longest-standing settlements on Earth, forcing Kurdish people out of the rural areas and into the cities, and reduce water-flow to Syria by 40% and Iraq by 80%. International companies involved in the project include Andritz; with an English office in Belper, Derbyshire. The Turkish army has additionally re-started burning down the oak forests of north

Kurdistan to flush out guerrillas, a method it has used since the ‘90s.

Ourselves, we do not feel we can really venture ‘a position’ regarding the Rojava revolution, so far away in both space and context. **There certainly are a lot of unanswered questions we have about the support many anarchists and revolutionaries are throwing behind organisations in the region;** the Kurdish Workers Party (P.K.K., formerly Marxist organisation with an armed wing, which has been ‘converted’ by its imprisoned leader to a ‘democratic confederalism’ inspired by a U.S. ex-anarchist academic) has viciously repressed and condemned the Kurdish youth who autonomously fight police, burn schools, police stations and banks, and loot supermarkets. Also, the Western powers have been supplying some aid and airstrikes to the autonomous regions of Kurdistan in their fight against ISIS, via the Democratic Union Party (P.Y.D.) in the area. Rojava is rich in oil, gas and phosphates; surely the West never supports something that will not help them in the long-term.

Zaher Baher commented that, “[c]ompared to the help the US and other Western countries give to reactionary and terrorist states, their help and support for Rojava is nothing. But still, why do they give it? The reason is that to defeat Rojava by military force would not be easy at all. Any country that fought Rojava’s movement would face a huge protest, not just by its own people but also by people from other countries. **So the best way to defeat it is to support it, and thereby to contain it and tame it, without sacrificing any of their soldiers. Once this has been done, they can occupy it economically.** What I see from the interviews of the PKK and PYD leaders and their attitudes is that they are very anxious and are rushing to get closer to the US and other Western countries.”

The character of the social transformation in the autonomous regions does have interesting aspects for sure; the gender theories being experimented with are said to be informed by studies of pre-civilised, gynocentric cultures of the region, and while the movement is not ‘anti-civilisation’ in the sense we know it, there is a level of awareness of the influential turns which were made by Mesopotamian civilisation so many thousands of years ago, and the catastrophes it wrought and spread. However we have no desire to either project ‘anarchism’ onto their struggle, as some are quick to do (although some within that struggle do clearly position themselves as such), nor to reprimand it for ‘not being anarchist enough’; both in this case being colonialist impulses. We certainly don’t condemn the bravery of the men and (a great many) women fighting there. When it comes to solidarity, we can state our enmity for the Turkish State and ISIS clearly, and await more first-hand information about what the paths being travelled outside the P.Y.D., P.K.K. et al there in fact are. Direct accounts by known comrades who have travelled there will be our greatest help in this, and we know that they are slowly coming in. Either way, we see our greatest contribution to a rebellion along the lines we’d feel complicity for as being one and the same; to constitute the internal enemy in the Western societies, fighting to destroy the imperialist monstrosity from within.]

We are with the fighters in Kobane, defending their lives and freedom against the fascists of ISIS. Just as we are with all those who take up arms against oppressive regimes, in Turkey and Syria and across the world.

We are with the rioters and looters in Ferguson, Athens, London, and all the streets of the world, wherever people take to the streets and confront the violence of police and state.

We are with the individuals and small groups of insurgent friends who, even though they are few and scattered like fireflies in the night, attack the system however they can.

When it comes to the fighters in Kobane and Syria, we don’t give a toss that few if any of them are anarchists. We are well aware that many are affiliated to the PKK, an authoritarian party hungry for power just like all political parties, whether they call themselves communist, socialist, liberal, democratic, or whatever.

When it comes to the rioters, we don’t give a toss that few if any of them are anarchists. We are well aware that people who get angry and fight in the streets have lots of very different ideas and desires.

When it comes to acts of sabotage and attack against the state and capital, we’re not particularly bothered if they’re claimed with anarchist communiques or initials, let alone whether we agree with all their reasoning or their wording or their choice of targets. We certainly don’t care whether they have the support of “the masses”, or more to the point, of commentators who claim to speak for us all.

What we care about is that there are people standing up and fighting against domination, and risking their lives and their freedom to do so.

The point is that, in dark times, in a world that often can seem locked down by the massive military and surveillance power of the state and capital, a world where revolutionary hopes are again and again extinguished by murderous repression, where in many regions fascism and brutal patriarchal religions are on the rise, there are still people who fight. Who are taking up arms, whether that be a rock or a rocket launcher.

Showing solidarity with the fighters does not mean becoming mindless cheerleaders. For example, even as we support the fight in Kobane, we point out the brutality and authoritarianism of the PKK, and expose lies and cover-ups in its propaganda. If the PKK wins the day, its leadership would become one of the biggest threats to the revolutionary tendencies that are sprouting in Rojava.

Showing solidarity with the fighters does not mean we glorify violence. State institutions, from ISIS to the NYPD or Metropolitan Police, are based on the systematic use of murderous force. There is no way to overcome them without using violence of our own, though we will certainly never match their levels of brutality.

Showing solidarity with the fighters does not mean we only celebrate attack. To make new worlds we need to build, create, educate, learn, share, nurture and care for each other, spread ideas, open spaces and networks and alliances, develop new cultures of life and joy. Love and war have to go together. **We can't create new worlds without fighting for them; we can't sustain our fighting without at the same time making better ways to live.** We are not just fighting against, we are fighting for.

As anarchists, we make our own choices about whether to actively join in particular combats, how and where to do so, or how to show solidarity in other ways. We make our own choices about what alliances we form. We can spread information and debate to help each other make informed choices.

But what makes us queasy is seeing some anarchists joining in with the chorus of voices that always springs up to slander and condemn those who fight.

Solidarity is important because fighting is hard. And particularly fighting against powerful state forces, against often overwhelming odds. It means risking your life or your freedom. It means dealing with suffering, exhaustion, injury, loneliness, loss and pain.

It means also internal struggles against our own fears, and against our own ingrained social training into submission: particularly, for example, for women taking up arms in a strongly patriarchal culture, and for everyone subdued by a lifetime of living under dictatorial or democratic regimes.

This fear and passivity is amplified by the choirs of liberals, pacifists, professors, party leaders, newspaper columnists, and other experts and representatives who tell us that it is futile, counter-productive, infantile, delusional, hasty, macho, or

whatever, to take the fight back to the powerful. Whenever the state's monopoly of violence is challenged, this chorus sings out loud from all the TV channels, newspapers, pulpits, schoolrooms, and the rest.

Three and a half years ago we heard it loud in London against the riots, and at much the same time against the uprisings in Damascus and Cairo. Now we hear it in the US against Ferguson. And against Kobane, as most of the left turn on the fighters through blinkers of crude anti-imperialism (US bad, muslims victims) or 19th century revolutionary fantasy (wait for the great ever-distant day of the glorious pure mass proletarian uprising).

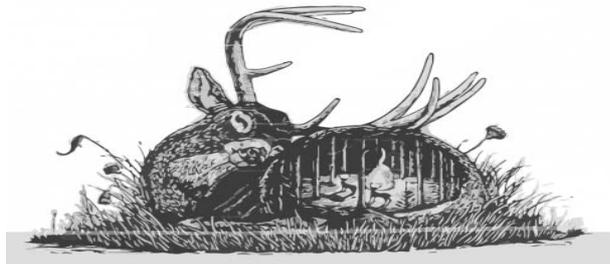
The role of this chorus is to further sap the energy of the fighters. To discourage, disempower, isolate.

We are with the fighters because **solidarity is the weapon that breaks through isolation.**

We are with the fighters because, even if so many of our struggles end with bitter tears, nothing ever changes for the good in this world without a fight, and those who stand against oppression need all the strength they can get.



RAT ATTACK - animal liberation & radical ecology gathering this summer



This summer, from the 25th to 31st of July 2016, the first Rat Attack will take place in Marseille [France], a gathering surrounding animal liberation and radical ecology, to meet each other, share and organise together.

We refuse to remain passive faced with this world that has sworn to ensure our misery. When everything's always rapidly worsening faster, attacks against the earth and the lives that inhabit it are becoming increasingly more violent; while we're always getting locked up in ever more elaborate ways, with death that spreads even into our hearts.

This misery is also the domestication, exploitation and murder of non-humans which are both ignored and legitimised by those who pretend to be fighting against any form of hierarchy. Yet at the same time, it's a consequence and a symptom of dominations logic that's extending all around us. **If we refuse the submission imposed upon us, we also refuse to impose it upon others.** It's also why we oppose in any form the fascination of the antispeciesist movement, from the far-right^[1] to their inevitable apolitical apologists who only ever dream of a green capitalism. What they don't understand, is that the nature of capitalism itself is based on the domestication and exploitation of every being surrounding it.

The rage that consumes us reminds us that it's every aspect of our lives that are at war. A war against our bodies, our existence and our struggles, making them more necessary than ever. **Our hopes have been extinguished, overshadowed by the artificial desires and beacons of capital's monstrous cities. We're not waiting for a distant utopia gained by reforms and state requests, we want to transform this entire system into ruins, because there's nothing to save, from its rotting foundations to its sophisticated tactics to control us.**

All of this ignites the fire living inside us and gives us the strength to fight. With you this summer we want to make this fire thrive. So come with your backpack and rage to together build a stronger movement, to share practices and experiences, but also with analysis and info stalls to better understand and fight against our common enemies.

Because we want to build this project collectively we are calling for you to join us, by contacting us to organise workshops and discussions during the camp, as well as support and information events to establish this project.

We certainly won't be there to reproduce violent situations that we're already experiencing everyday. Don't be a scumbag, let's be mindful of each other so we can be dangerous together.

Contact us at ratattack@riseup.net
(pgp public key available for more security)

1. Possibly a reference to the arrest, in 2013, of three animal rights activists for arsons in Tuscany, Italy, signed Animal Liberation Front (enclosed in the circled A of anarchy, moveover): the one, Philip Serlupi, who admitted responsibility, is known to be far-right, and was defended by lawyers of the neo-fascist movement. Or referring generally to right-wing appropriation of struggles that are historically anarchic or libertarian.

“ FOR THE CORPSE IS NOT DEAD ! IT STILL LIVES ! IT HAS MADE ITSELF A HOME IN THE WILD FOREST OF OUR GREAT CITIES, AMID THE RANK AND CHOKING VEGETATION OF SLUMS ! IT HAS FORGOTTEN OUR LANGUAGE ! IN ORDER TO LIVE IT HAS SHARPENED ITS CLAWS ! IT HAS GROWN HARD AND CALLOUSED ! IT HAS

DEVELOPED A CAPACITY FOR HATE AND FURY WHICH WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND ! ITS MOVEMENTS ARE UNPREDICTABLE ! BY NIGHT IT CREEPS FROM ITS LAIR AND STEALS TOWARDS THE SETTLEMENTS OF CIVILIZATION ! AND AT THE SIGHT OF A KIND FACE IT DOES NOT LIE DOWN UPON ITS BACK AND KICK UP ITS HEELS PLAYFULLY TO BE TICKLED AND STROKED . NO ; IT LEAPS TO KILL ! ”

- Native Son