

*Anarchismo Collective*

**Lightening Conductors  
and Stand-ins**

1978

- “The cleavage of men into actor and spectators is the central fact of our time. We are obsessed with heroes who live for us and whom we punish. If all the radios and televisions were deprived of their sources of power, all books and . . . One is spectacle. Like the Phantasmagoria, its goal is the creation of a total . . .” (Jim Morrison).  
The most successful and involving spectacle that power of our time dishes up to us daily is the magic pyrotechnics of armed struggle. Few actors, many supporting actors, walk-ons and a huge audience, all with the knowingful direction amplifying structures of mass communication.
- Who believed that movements such as that of '68 got stuck in the quicksands of groupuscule reformism because power had canons and the others only anachronistic catapults (“the Vietcong wins because he shoots”) and then threw himself headlong to give himself a hundred guns, today hardly manages to admit that the balance of power has changed in favour of power: if first it was 1.000 weapons to one, today it is 600.000 to 300! The gap widens in geometric proportions and doesn't give a damn for arithmetical voluntarism! It is a game that has strange analogies with the electoral run for the conquest of 51 per cent of the bullets . . . The attack on one single field, moreover carried out by professional specialists, has induced a concentration and reinforcing of power to a military level (the mercenaries of the private police are now more numerous than the cops of the regular police). The sectoral and partial critique — and practice — solicited by the rationalisation and modernisation of the institutional military plant; is the “anaemic negation” that power incorporates to be able to continue to survive. the critique — and the practice — is either unitary (i.e. tends to invest itself with the totality of the institutions and ideologies that support it) or it is nothing.
- To understand that what one is consuming is not the civil war of a community that insurges against all the conditions of domination — but its pantomime rigged up by the scriptwriter of the mass-media, the psycho-dramatisation dilated ad arte by the specialists in “various humanities” — is very easy when you think of the Russian reality, where between 1905 and 1906 armed anarchists suppressed about 4.000 between civil servants and czarist officials! The reflection, if anything, should linger on the consideration that in spite of this, in spite of this radicality of intent, the result was . . . that the verminous and wicked “soviet” State had banned even the freedom to think. The contemporaneous emulators, with their little pharmacists' scales and their attitudes of judicial hearings, are no more than the feeble echo of a past that power never tires of circumscribing, sterilizing and utilizing to “update” the spectacle of the upturned representation of reality, and to institute a diaphragm-bunker that separates once again the proletariat from themselves and from the implosion

of their passions that are — these yes — destructive and capable of investing the totality of the sociality.

- What one is consuming, as well as not being a civil war, is not even a real guerrilla; Rudolf de Jong says in fact: “[the guerrilla is] . . . war on a small scale, everywhere, supported by the whole population, or by large sectors of it, in which who participates continues their daily life and work as far as possible. [ . . . ] My concept of real guerrilla implies that the ‘professional’ guerrilla, who has abandoned his normal life does not belong. The Chinese Red Army in its ‘long march’ of the Thirties, the columns of Fidel Castro in the Sierra Maestra, the Bolivian group of Che Guevara, did not belong to the real guerrilla. They represent the nucleus of a new army, the foco — a word in vogue in the ’60s — of a new normal structure directed by power”. The qualitative difference between the guerrilla reduced to a profession and confined only to the lazaret of political economy (i.e. to the need for mere goods) and the Zapatista guerrilla is the same difference that runs between life and the celluloid images of those trying to reproduce it. At Morelos it was the Indian population of the ancient communities that rebelled, because with the expropriation of their land to allow the expansion of the sugar industry, all their life was being threatened, their values, their daily rhythms, their intense communitarian life. It was the rebellion of a community that refused the model of survival that the industry was a bearer of and that disintegrated the forms till then in force in which everybody recognised themselves. And in this rebellion of everybody, extended to every ambit of daily life, there was no room for specialisation, for prefixed roles that tend to change into professions, in a word, they did not fight the enemy that wanted their domestication by adopting his schemes and ideologies, but by denying them radically. They refused the similar ilk similibus and adopted the doctrine of contraries; already in the means used were apparent the negation of the existent. The same did the Russian Machnovists: they were not just a handful of men in arms, but a vast community that associated itself according to other criteria, that produced working the land with different criteria from those that had been imposed on them from that moment, that had instored interpersonal and interfederative relations between base groups socialising always more and that . . . combated Bolsheviks and Whites.
- Contemporary armed strugglists still indulge in equivocal theorisations about “counterpower”, miniaturised and upturned images of the existent of which constitutes the other side of the coin, and they do not realise that they have already reproduced inside them that world which in their delirium of voluntarism they believed they had negated. The process of transformation of reality and man is intended as a progressive widening of “counterpower” to the point

of becoming Power, a widening obtainable by exasperating the mutilating partiality of the schlectric reduction of social subversion to its shadow of “military form” operated by specialised taylorists that met in combatant corporations. To the short-sighted lovers of “counterpower” we remember what G. Sadoul wrote in “La Revolution Surrealiste” of December 1929: “I am taking the chance to salute la Ghepeu, revolutionary counter-police in the service of the proletariat, necessary to the Russian Revolution such as the Red Army”. And Aragon in “Front Rouge” (1931): “Long live la Ghepeu, dialectical figure of heroism!”. The fact that one can be only negation of power, antipower, and that to be it it is not in fact sufficient to counteract to some figurine-function-role of the domination in act (cop, corporals, foremen), moreover changing the logic, and that instead you must extend the viewfinder of the critique to the subjectivity colonized by capital, domesticated to the objectivity of goods interiorised and become me, to the introjected logic of power that becomes conditioned reflex, represents the threshold that armed strugglism does not want to cross. Its monovalent, one dimensional “battle” is all inclined to obtaining power over the production of goods re-evaluating objectivity, and in particular expresses a moralistic critique-practice to the foremen there where it declines, in a Manichean way, from exercising the critique against their own subjectivity which . . . reproduces more power than it destroys.

- Those who lose two fingers under a press, who wither their lungs down the mine or who do such harmful work that an annual fixed amount ends up a death sentence; the insiders of the productive cycles of pestilent chemicals or radiation that exposes their bodies to every injury and that could lead to the scars of work . . . well, not for this can they desert their role imposed on them, not dissolve the imaginary cage of the function to which they have been condemned.

Why-ever should some mistake, some “knee-capping” and a higher level of paranoia should come out the effect — really healing! — of cleansing the bad, of reclaiming the swamp of the (gregarious) foremen? To overestimate the effects produced by the pedagogy of terror (strike 1 to educate 100) means to fly from the pavement of the purifying e purificatory mystique and stay entangled in the snare of revenge; and who deludes oneself to retaliate deciding to chop off the snare, is forced to dive into those waters, where it is the fisherman to have decided to drop the nets.

- To strike the goods, the technologies, the reproduction cycle of the im-muted present, the mechanism or the men? The resentful Christians and the Manicheans strike the men. The condition of proletariat is given by the awareness of not having any power over one’s life. The others — the gregari-etti/foremen — are an exception? Unless one wants to exclude a priori any

character of humanity from the process of social radical transformation, it appears that the Manichean fulmination of who is — also him — determined by current social relations, is a shortcut that takes an elevated path on the patchwork of real determinations of the present, which we are a part of. The critique must be a laser that creeps in depth. “The dilemma is to organize the struggle against death without sacrificing life, which is fully such only in the freedom of spontaneity.” (O. Alberola). To strike the mechanism therefore, not its valets, because the colour of the livery informs about the bosses, not the valets. An assembly line sabotaged, stopped, that does not produce, turns the foreman into a someone that has lost his function of hierarchical control over the workers, who from that moment are no longer “wage-earners” but ozious. Of goods, their totalitarian imperialism over life, we don’t want to know and we don’t give a damn, of men, yes. Vice versa, for capital man is nothing and the goods are everything, and sacrifices tranquilly that to the other. This makes capital the most nihilist force of our time.

- Armed strugglism at best manages to “destabilize” the equilibrium of the fictitious sphere of politics, but it does not destructure the world of institutions, the circuits printed by alienated people strangers to themselves and their desires, who have lost the compass that orients towards the pleasure principle. The critique emanated by armed strugglism stops at the surface of things (be they objects-goods or objects-people), does not penetrate in depth, not go to the root of things that is man himself, and does not do so because it does not know how to recognise the profound aspirations, and does not recognise them because it does not know how to identify them — above all — in itself, as a man that affirms himself against the dehumanisation imposed on him. Rather than exalt the discontinuity, the ruptures, the differences, the anomalies and the perversions above all of their own subjectivity, one blends in behind some “respectable” role, mimes normality and respectability, then it reproduces them enhanced by a surplus of ideology . . . and thus began the ballet of self-clandestinisation of the identity of one’s own self and one’s own will to delight in that circus of dressage that is survival.
- No stupor if then armed strugglism fully shows what intimately it really is: routine, quantitative logic, obsessive repetition. Armed strugglism as endemic factor, as bacterial culture having only the capacity to self-produce itself; variable of politics that becomes always more predictable, controllable, programmable. A variable that has become constant! A price to pay — contemplated on the scales of prevision — in power’s continual reproducing itself. In the game of the subversion of dehumanised order it is time to introduce other “variables”, other games. The subversive practice that expresses itself in looting a destruction of the urbanistic monstrosity that happened during

the black-out of New York [of 1977], has shown that all those possessed by a will to live know their needs, and know how to satisfy them as soon as minimally favourable conditions present themselves; and in doing this any logic of heroism is banished. And has shown also the total extraneity to these events of any “vanguard” political racket or combatant corporation.

When emancipation is — really — the work of the exploited themselves, all the “organised segments” are extraneous, nobody claims, nobody can limit themselves to the claiming of the spectacle in the passivity of the spectator and the supporter. They can only regret not having taken part.

- Whoever still operates the schizophrenic division of time, in the present and future, where the present is hell to get to paradise, is an altar boy who insists on staying in the limbo of alienation, is “revolutionary” politician mediator of the present with the remote past. He is the Clarissa of the christian maxim “there is no pleasure-seeking without suffering!” and does not grasp that “Revolution means turning the hourglass. Subversion is something else: it means breaking it, eliminating it”. (Dubuffet). The effrontery does not lie in saying it but in doing it.
- Armed strugglism is a myth. Also in the past other myths have exercised their medium-like influx among the exploited, for example that of the general strike that would rout the dominant classes. The myth produces itself and occupies a place in the mind and in the expectations of the subordinated because — evidently — they need it and are carriers of this particular kind of “demand”. It is a reality that comes to manifest itself intersected determinations of who puts forward the “demand”, of who “satisfies it” with practice, and of who cultivates it with a concerted effort of informative and cultural support that massifies it. The myth is the absolutisation of an instrument, of a specific means of struggle, it is a blunder that takes for exhaustive globality something that only had validity if it was a combination — in the contemporary — of various methodologies of attack. It ends up being predilection of the monochord note detached from a polyphonic concert. This absolutisation of partiality becomes possible in characterial structures of the religious kind, that does not tend towards self-liberation but waits that from outside oneself something is going to free him; revolution seen as eschatology. The myth is a propelling force that pushes to paralysis, feeds “political” hope in the future (modern form of religiosity) and twists the contours of the real making it dull, and even renders possible that the hunchback of some Andreotti whatever passes through the eye of the lottarmatista needle while the poliomyelitic leg of Agnelli continues to ski. . .

- The union is the structure that reflects (goes) in a distorted way the spectre of the economic needs of the wage-earners, and attempts to satisfy them mediating them with the need to save the cohabitation of the capitalists and wage-earners in order to be able to continue to act as mediator. The “worker” parties are structures that reflected the most fictitious needs, pulverised, rarefied and falsified. At the moment in which the proletarians start to refuse the division of their interests into economic and political and take into their hands their affairs, armed strugglism arises as a structure capable of administrating the exercise of revenge, also called “proletarian justice”. It is a structure that represents the sphere of the so-called “base instincts”, so needs its public-relations, its delegates that gather the instances of the “base” and transmit them to the military “summits”, which then pass to execution. Substantially, the relationship between the “base” called to express the opinions, the mass delegates solicited to compile index-of-rating of the actions carried out and the operative staff, remain immuted. It makes no difference whether it is a question of political, trade union operators, of cultural or armed strugglism animation. It is a model which structurally does not present anything new. Even if the inverted optic of the armed strugglism bears at the “base” of its presumed inactivity and likes to think of itself and represent itself as the “advanced department” that expresses antagonism also when everybody is dumb and blind.
- F.L.N., F.A.L.N., E.L.N., E.R.P., M.L.N. Tupamaros, Black Panthers, Weathermen, Gauche Proletarienne, M.I.L., G.A.P., F.R.A.P., etc. A list just sketched reported to different geo-political contexts that denies imported guerrilla triumphalism and confirms the failure of all the forms of partialisation realised from the subversive praxis and its debasement to under-militarism that competes with institutional militarism. Only a practice that combines all the possible means of struggle in a concert that goes through all the moments of the reproduction of power can actuate phases of liberation. When also they compare with M.P.L.A., P.A.I.G.C., Fronte algerino, etc. as “victories”, we know that they are the victories that have historically manifested the new dominion of State bourgeoisie that can now opt between the various “imperialisms” available.
- In the present, the real negators of the social life sentence can combine the will to live with the reawakened resources of fantasy, with the interior war conducted in the isolation cell of one’s own self (to expel tabus, rules, norms, ethics), with the potentiality of the bodies become conductors of pleasure, with the identification of Power in the downtime and the estrangement that one encounters along daily life (and not in the invention of always new sociological “more combative” new strata), with the rediscovery of nomadism and the accelerated desertion of roles, with knowledge intended as experience lived

in the adventure and in erratic movement and not as an exclusively cerebral fact, with the decodification of all the languages with which power speaks to us . . . We learn to recognise daily subversion in the terms in which Bakunin lived '48: "It seemed that the whole was inverted; the incredible had become habitual, the impossible possible, and the possible and habitual absurd!"



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