Perspectives
on Anarchist Theory

Anarchism in Bolivia: Through the Writing of Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui
A Mestizo's Identity: Concerning a 1929 Anarchist Manifesto
Translated and introduced by Alejandro de Acosta
A Brief History of Anarchism in Bolivia
Translated and introduced by Melissa Forbis and Cale Layton

Equality and the Avoidance of Politics
By Todd May

Four Questions for Anarchist Art
By Josh MacPhee

"Neither Butchers nor Lunatics":
A Roundtable on New Anticapitalist Organizing in Beirut
By Mary Foster and Jerome Klassen

Plus Mark Lance, Ramor Ryan, and Andréa Schmidt on International Solidarity

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Guest Editors & Editorial Wisdom: Mark Lance, Erika Biddle, Robert Augman, Louis-Frédéric Gaudet, Cindy Milstein

Layout and Design: Michael Caplan

Copy Editors: Robert Augman, Erika Biddle, Paul Glavin, Helen Hudson, Cindy Milstein

Production: Alexis Bhagat

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Institute for Anarchist Studies
P.O. Box 1664, Peter Stuyvesant Station, NY, NY 10009
info@anarchist-studies.org; www.anarchist-studies.org

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Perspectives
on Anarchist Theory

Volume 9, Number 1 – Fall 2005

Welcome

This issue of *Perspectives*—the only one in 2005—has been a long time coming. The IAS has undergone significant transformations over the course of the past year. In many ways, the fall issue of *Perspectives* is emblematic of both the changes and continuities within the organization.

Resistance to global apartheid and empire requires that anarchists and anti-authoritarians link our movements and organizing efforts along with the lessons we draw from them. With articles and analyses from Buenos Aires to Baghdad, this issue tries to offer a modest forum within which to make these connections. It is a celebration of the internationalism that has always inspired our projects.

Some of the articles, like the translations of Sylvia Cusicanqui's work on anarchist trade unions and mestizo identity in Bolivia, are windows onto anarchist movements and debates that have unfolded in the past. We hope that they will provide resources for thinking out contemporary challenges and strategies. Others, like the round table on anticapitalist organizing in Beirut and Josh MacPhee's "Four Questions for Anarchist Art," examine contemporary movements and practices. They offer a space for critical reflection, for asking questions and debating answers "as we walk."

Many of the pieces are written or translated by IAS grantees. In that sense, this issue is an example of the community of radical writers that the IAS has long sought to nurture.

This past winter, the IAS decided to decentralize its day-to-day work. It speaks well of that process that this issue *Perspectives* has been so enriched by the talents of many board members. In the spring, we welcomed five new people to the board: Rob Augman and Erika Biddle (New York), Mark Lance (Washington, DC), and Louis-Frédéric Gaudet and Helen Hudson (Montreal). Their skills, energy, and vision have already expanded the horizon of what is possible.

Sadly, the spring also brought farewells. Michael Caplan, a former IAS director, stepped down from the board in order to pursue new family and work commitments. We will miss his low-key savoir faire and impressive administrative talents, yet Michael remains present in these pages, which he laid out and designed. We are grateful for his ongoing support.

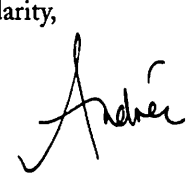
Chuck Morse, founder of the IAS, coeditor of *Perspectives*, and the veritable backbone of the organization since its inception, also resigned from the board. His mark is nevertheless evident in many of this issue's articles, which he edited in earlier drafts. We pay tribute to Chuck's vision and work with the IAS elsewhere in *Perspectives*. But it is worth noting here that his dynamism, rigor, and irreverent sense of humor were greatly missed in the later stages of the journal's production.

Over the years, Chuck's gift to the IAS has been his conviction that anarchism is worth taking seriously, and that anarchists can and should develop themselves to become sophisticated enough to grapple with the contemporary political crises with which we are confronted. This requires anarchist institutions able to endure the ebbs and flows of movements and ideological popularity—hence Chuck's dedication to the IAS. The many writers with whom he worked as editor of *Perspectives* and the *New Formulation* would probably agree that the same attitude shone in Chuck's work on these projects too: he encouraged our writing by demanding a degree of rigor unheard of in most anarchist circles.

This readiness to take ourselves seriously—tempered with a good dose of humility—is vital to our collective work as anti-authoritarians at a time when genuinely radical movements in North America are immmobilized. (Even the response to the Bush administration's post-Katrina policies—basically, ethnic cleansing of an area known for its history of resistance to racism and slavery—has barely dented that administration's power.) To paraphrase Louis in his review, "Walking on the Edge of Revolt," these moments of low activity are precisely those in which anarchists should build the bases for more sustainable struggles, by nurturing institutions founded on the values that we hold dear and developing our critiques of the systems of domination in which we are enmeshed.

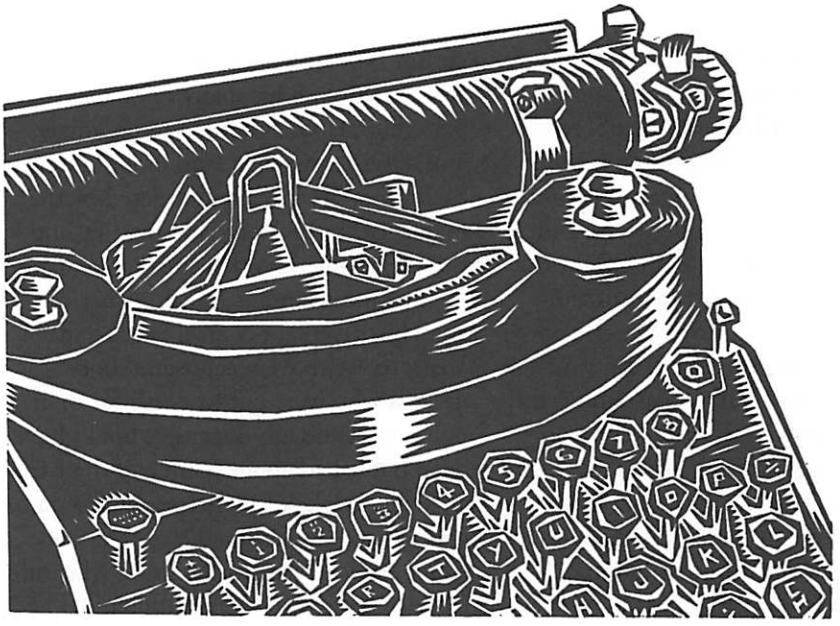
The IAS will persist in its efforts to be such an institution. And we leave you to enjoy *Perspectives* on a self-critical note: As you peruse these pages, you will notice that many of the authors are men, and many are academics. To be worthwhile, *Perspectives* must become a writing and thinking space for a multitude of anti-authoritarians who are not necessarily supported by universities. If you read this journal and feel alienated, or think that important issues that should be considered through an anarchist lens have been left out, you probably have an essay to contribute. Please write.

Solidarity,



What's Happening
Recent Books

by John Petrovato



The year **2005** has been an especially remarkable year when it comes to the publication of quality books on the subject of anarchism—from new and original pieces by writers rethinking the anarchist tradition to writings that have been brought back from obscurity and reprinted. I will here briefly review some of the interesting newcomers within this recent deluge of books.

Anarchist History

AK has recently reprinted a number of books by Paul Avrich. These books were originally published by Princeton University Press, and many have been out of print for a while. Paul Avrich has traditionally been recognized as one of the best-known historians of anarchism, and his views on anarchist history are widely respected within the community. *Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America* is not a conventional historical narrative, but rather draws from hundreds of interviews with anarchists, offering their individual voices and perspectives. This reissue by AK Press (much more affordable than the Princeton original) provides extraordinarily rich insights into anarchists who participated in the movement throughout the 20th century in America. The collection does not discriminate between the "famous" and "obscure" but, instead, collects all of their voices into a single compendium. This book is invaluable to contemporary anarchists interested in historical origins within the United States, and gives us important "real time" insights into previously existing traditions.

AK Press has also produced two other exciting collections this year: *Dreams of Freedom: A Ricardo Flores Magon Reader* and *Anarchy Will Be! Selected Writings of Luigi Galleani*. Compiled and annotated by Chaz Bufe and Mitchell Verter, *Dreams of Freedom* describes the life and times of Ricardo Flores Magon, who along with Francisco Zapata was one of the most important figures of the Mexican revolution, and was imprisoned for his attempts to build the revolutionary movement from his position within the United States. This book contains the first English translations of his writings, as well as a chronology, maps, images and bibliography to provide context. *Anarchy Will Be!* discusses an important figure in the history of American anarchism—Luigi Galleani, an Italian immigrant who was extremely vocal and militant in the battle against wage slavery and for the rights of immigrants during the period of the U.S. government's criminal Palmer raids. Importantly, the book also provides newly translated pieces from Galleani's anarchist newspaper *Cronaca Sovversiva*, printed from the period 1903-1918. With an introduction by anarchist historian Barry Pateman.

Additionally, AK Press has reissued another classic work that has long been out of print: *The London Years* by Rudolph Rocker. Rocker is perhaps best known in anarchist circles as the author of *Nationalism and Culture*—an impressive work critiquing nationalism from an anarchist perspective—and is widely recognized as one of the principal theorists of anarcho-syndicalism. *The London Years* is Rocker's autobiographical account of early 20th-century London, and it documents his strategies for the correction of unjust workshop conditions for Jewish immigrants in Britain. Though a German Catholic, Rocker eventually became one of the most influential figures within the Jewish anarchist milieu.

A collection of the writings of the early 20th-century American anarchist Voltairine de Cleyre has just been pub-

lished by State University of New York Press. *Exquisite Rebel: The Essays of Voltairine de Cleyre: Feminist, Anarchist, Genius* seeks to bring the essays and articles of de Cleyre "out of undeserved obscurity." (Evidently, the editors of this collection are unaware of the AK Press book published just last year, *The Voltarine de Cleyre Reader*.) Twenty-one of her eloquent and incisive works have been reprinted here, including: "Anarchism and the American Tradition," "The Dominant Idea" and "Sex Slavery." The critical writings of de Cleyre focused on an end to women's economic dependence, unequal gender roles, and articulated an important demand for the autonomy of women both within and outside of marriage. Moreover, she offered a radical and original critique of the role of church and state in sustaining the existing oppressive conditions for women. Three original biographical essays are also included: two new ones by Sharon Presley and Crispin Sartwell, and a rarely reprinted one from Emma Goldman.

From the 1950s through the 1970s, one of the most articulate historians of anarchism was George Woodcock. His writings included everything from anarchist pamphlets to lengthy histories of anarchism, as well as analyses of the historical method, poetry and more. Considered one of Canada's most important writers, Woodcock is best known within radical circles for his book *Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements*. Long out of print, this classic work of intellectual history and political theory (first published in the 1960s, revised in 1986) is now available from Broadview Encore Editions.

The first of two volumes of *Anarchism: A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas*, edited and introduced by Robert Graham, has recently been released by Black Rose Books. In addition to carefully chosen selections from the classical European anarchists, *Volume One: From Anarchy to Anarchism (300CE to 1939)* includes substantial sections on Latin American anarchism, as well as anarchism in China, Japan and Korea. Much of this material has never before been published in English. Graham was awarded an IAS grant for this anthology project in January 2004.

Two new books have been released on the subject of Italian-American anarchism. The first concerns Carlo Tresca, one of America's most controversial and charismatic figures of the early 20th century. *Carlo Tresca: Portrait of a Rebel* (Palgrave Macmillan) is a biography in which author Nunzio Pernicone recounts Tresca's life through his many roles: newspaper editor, labor agitator and organizer, anti-fascist, anarchist, and indomitable Stalin foe. Eventually murdered by the mafia, Tresca had a fascinating life, and the biography does that life ample justice.

The most famous Italian-American anarchists were, of course, Sacco and Vanzetti—two Massachusetts shoemakers who were put to death for their politics. Although dozens of books have been published about them and their trial, a new book entitled *Representing Sacco and Vanzetti* by Jerome Delamater and Mary Anne Trasciatti (Palgrave Macmillan) attempts something different. The authors take a unique look into the literary, artistic, and mass-mediated representations of Sacco and Vanzetti to show how the stereotypes of so-called "foreigners" and "others" prevailed in the 1920s, then use this material to demonstrate how many of these same representations continue to color contemporary perceptions of immigrants and "foreignness."

Two new books about the IWW (International Workers of the World) have just been released. The first, *Wobblies: A Graphic History of the International Workers of the World* (Verso) by radical historians Paul Buhle and Nichole Schulman will be a welcome addition to many anarchist libraries. Published for the centenary of the founding of the IWW, the history of the organization has here been both scripted and graphically illustrated by seasoned and younger Wobbly and IWW-inspired artists. Contributors include: Carlos Cortez (former editor of the Industrial Worker), Harvey Pekar (author of American Splendor), Peter Kuper, Sue Coe, Seth Tobocman, Chris Cardinale, Ryan Inzana, Spain Rodriques, Trina Robbins, Sharon Rudahl, and the circle of artists involved with *World War 3 Illustrated*.

The second new book concerning the IWW is *Dancin' in the Streets: Anarchists, IWWs, Surrealists, Situationists & Provos in the 1960s*. This Charles Kerr publication collects dozens of selections from IWW magazines *Rebel Worker* (Chicago) and *Heatwave* (London) of the 1960s. Combining an original radical perspective rooted in a critique of capital with influences from Surrealism, jazz and poetry—among other things—the beatnik milieu that made up these editorial groups contributed to innovative social criticism that displayed artistic and playful creativity, and was a precursor to the Situationist International's emphasis on "the revolution of everyday life." Includes long biographical introductions by the editors, Franklin Rosemont and Charles Radcliffe.

Finally, one last book on anarchist history is *Anarchism in Hungary: Theory, History, Legacies*. Published by East European Monographs in conjunction with Columbia University Press, the authors examine the various currents of anarchism in fin-de-siècle Hungary.

Anarchist Theory & Criticism

One of the most influential anarchist works to be published in the late 20th century was Murray Bookchin's *The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy*. The book had a major impact on both anarchist and environmental movements of the 1970s and 1980s. Bookchin's unique insight—and the thesis of the book—was that "the very notion of the domination of nature by man stems from the very real domination of human by human." The ideas contained within this text later came to form the theoretical foundation for the Social Ecology movement. An intricate historical account of the emergence of hierarchical relations in society, the book placed anarchist thought in the forefront of the emerging ecology movement. AK Press has just re-released *The Ecology of Freedom* with a new foreword by Bookchin.

Although Noam Chomsky has acknowledged himself as an anarchist for several years, he never before produced a book which spoke directly to anarchist thought. Most of Chomsky's political writing has focused on critiquing contemporary forms of power—which has been extremely important for generations of activists and thinkers. His work historically has exhibited very clear and meticulously documented accounts of social injustice, capitalism, imperialism and domestic repression. This new book, *Chomsky on Anarchism* (AK Press), collects Chomsky's essays and interviews—both published and previously unpublished—that specifically deal with anarchism. It shows his commitment to nonhierarchical models of political organizing and his hopes for a future without rulers. Includes an introduction by editor Barry Pateman.

In their search for new ways of understanding hierarchy, domination and power, anarchists and others have produced numerous works that have deepened our understanding of how power works. One philosopher in particular, Todd May, best known in anarchist circles for his 1994 book *Toward a Political Theory of Post-Structuralist Anarchism*, is one such thinker. This year he published another book that specifically deals with the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, whose work has been essential to the development of post-structuralism, and especially post-structural anarchism. Deleuze is a notably difficult philosopher and dozens of books attempting to clarify and explain his ideas have been published. In *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction* (Cambridge University Press), May approaches Deleuze in a somewhat different manner. As in many of his other books, May seeks to not only present or clarify ideas, but to ask essential and important questions for the reader, demonstrating the applicability of complex and seemingly abstract ideas to everyday life. Arguing that Deleuze offers a view of the cosmos as a living entity that suggests ways of conducting lives in manners perhaps never even dreamed of, the book seeks to answer the question "How might we live?" and gives us important clues in the process.

Gramsci is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the Newest Social Movements by Richard Day will be published by Pluto Press in November 2005. Gramsci and the concept of hegemony cast a long shadow over radical political theory. Yet how far has this theory gotten us? Is it still central to feminism, anti-capitalism, anti-racism, anarchism and other radical social movements today? Unlike previous revolutionary movements, Day argues, most contemporary radical social movements do not strive to take control of the state. Instead, they attempt to develop new forms of self-organization that can run in parallel with—or as alternatives to—existing forms of social, political and economic organization. This is to say that they follow a logic of affinity, rather than hegemony. This book draws from a variety of different strands in political theory to weave together an innovative approach to contemporary politics. Rigorous and wide-ranging, Day introduces and interrogates key concepts, such as Hegel's concept of recognition, theories of hegemony and affinity, Hardt and Negri's reflections on Empire, and the theoretical and philosophical concerns of today's world—whether in the hallowed corridors of academia or in the politics of the streets. Ideal for all students of political theory, Day's fresh approach combines Marxist, anarchist and post-structuralist theory to shed new light on the politics and practice of contemporary social movements.

Changing Anarchism: Anarchist Theory and Practice in a Global Age (Manchester University Press), edited by Jonathan Purkis and James Bowen, sets out to reconfigure anarchist theory by describing contemporary anarchist practice and providing a viable evaluative and analytic framework for understanding it. The contributors are both academics and activists, and they raise salient questions regarding the complex nature of power, as well as resistance to it. Areas covered include: sexuality and identity, psychological dependency on technology, libertarian education, religion, protest tactics, artistic expression, among other matters.

This collection epitomizes the rich diversity that exists within contemporary anarchism, as well as demonstrating its ongoing relevance as a sociological tool.

The British anarchist writer Colin Ward has also produced a new book called *Anarchism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press). Colin Ward has been involved with the anarchist movement in England for many years, was at one time the editor of the British *Anarchy* magazine, and is the author of numerous books on anarchism, ecology, architecture, city planning, transportation and more. His *Anarchy in Action*, published in the 1970s, was one of the best introductions to anarchist theory and practice for many years. His new book—a small one at only 109 pages—seeks also to familiarize people not normally exposed to anarchist ideas with the traditions and dynamics of anarchism. Although a brief and straightforward introductory text, he covers the major ideas, history and personalities of anarchism from a variety of perspectives (theoretical, historical and international), giving greater coverage to specific key thinkers, such as Kropotkin and Chomsky.

Anarchism & the Arts

Anarchism has always had an impact on various movements in art— including film, the visual arts, music, architecture and other forms of cultural expression. A new edited volume, *'To Hell With Culture': Anarchism in Twentieth Century British Literature* (University of Wales Press) is comprised of essays that explore both the negative treatment of anarchism in British novels (Joseph Conrad and G. K. Chesterton) and sympathetic interpretations (Aldous Huxley, Alex Comfort, Ethel Mannin, Ralph Bates, Herbert Read, John Cowper Powys, et al). Additionally, the collection explores the presence of the anarchist tradition among contemporary British novelists, such as James Kelman, Mark Ravenhill and Niall Griffiths.

Another book that will be released later in the year describes the influence of anarchism on the graphic arts: *Phantom Avant-Garde: A History of the Situationists International and Modern Art* by Roberto Ohrt (Lukas & Sternberg).

The Prison System

The state has historically been imagined as the political antimony of anarchism, and the prison as one of the most symbolic and repressive methods of state-sponsored social control. Anarchists have long been involved with struggles against the prison system, and with attempts to illuminate the race- and class-based injustices that it perpetuates. However, the power of the prison as a form of social repression is not limited to domestic populations. The "new" so-called "war on terror" and U.S. government-defined "security concerns" have given the North American government renewed justification for non-traditional forms of imprisonment—especially for non-U.S. citizens. Non-U.S. citizens are prevented from using the rights and safeguard that non-aliens theoretically have to protect their civil liberties. Thousands of people—so called "enemy combatants"—are now imprisoned by U.S. officials throughout the world and are denied the most fundamental rights. The three books below describe this abuse of power, and the ways it is masked by the discourse of "national security."

America's Disappeared: Secret Imprisonment, Detainees, and the "War on Terror" (Seven Stories Press) is a slim but informative volume edited by Rachel Meeropol, an attorney who works with the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York City. The book assembles analysis of U.S. "anti-terror" tools—including the practice of torture as a counterterrorism tool, the administrative detention of migrants in the United States, the implications of designating a group of people "enemy combatants," and the preservation of Guantánamo as a space outside the law—and intersperses it with the testimony of detainees themselves.

Another new book that details imprisonment and abuse of foreign nationals is Mark Dow's *American Gulag: Inside Immigration Prisons* (University of California Press). Dow provides an in-depth study of the little-known secret and repressive prison system run for two decades by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. The book chronicles this institution's history of brutality and torture of recent immigrants occurring on American soil.

On the related subject of the Abu Ghraib prison abuse scandal, Lila Rajiva has written a book that looks at the response of the U.S. media and Congress to the revelations of abuse and torture, and relates this response to the larger context of U.S. global politics and ideology. *Language of Empire: Abu Ghraib and the American Media* (Monthly Review Press), illustrates how the media has colluded with the Bush administration in manipulating images of U.S. occupation of Iraq in such a way as to present it as a "clash of civilizations" popularized by Samuel Huntington.

Social Control

Related to the use of imprisonment as a means of social control is the increasing criminalization of dissent in recent years. At a time when the FBI is actively monitoring and interfering with individuals and groups who work for social change, it is timely that the book *There's Something Happening Here: The New Left, the Klan, and FBI Counterintelligence* (University of California Press) should be released. While Ward Churchill's books on the subject of COINTELPRO operations continue to provide an excellent resource on the subject, this book is a fine complement. The author analyzed over 12,000 previously classified documents and uncovered the riveting inside story of the FBI's attempts to neutralize both Left and Right political targets in the 1960s. Examining the FBI's infamous COINTELPRO project, Cunningham questions whether such actions were aberrations, or are evidence of the Bureau's ongoing mission to restrict citizens' rights to engage in legal forms of dissent.

States control their populations in many ways: imprisonment, education, propaganda and technology. Barbed wire, an invention that seeks to control

movement with pain is the subject of a fascinating new history by Reviel Netz. *Barbed Wire: An Ecology of Modernity* (Wesleyan University Press) surveys the development of this peculiar method of punitive social control during the period 1874 to 1954, and describes its use to control cattle during the colonization of the American West, and people in Nazi concentration camps and the Russian Gulag. Told from the perspective of the victim (whether it be human, animal or the environment), *Barbed Wire* presents modern history through the lens of the prevention of movement and the control of space.

Race

Paul Gilroy, one of the world's foremost intellectuals on race, has produced a new book called *Postcolonial Melancholia* (Columbia University Press). Gilroy's searing analyses of race, politics and culture have always remained attentive to the material conditions of black populations, and the ways in which blacks have defaced the "clean edifice of white supremacy." This book adapts the concept of "melancholia" from its Freudian origins and applies it not to individual grief, but to the social pathology of neo-imperialist politics. The melancholic reactions that have obstructed the process of working through the legacy of colonialism are implicated not only in hostility and violence directed at blacks, immigrants and aliens, but in an inability to value the ordinary, unruly multicultural world that has evolved organically in urban centers. Drawing on the seminal discussions of race begun by Frantz Fanon, W. E. B. DuBois, and George Orwell, Gilroy crafts a nuanced argument with far-reaching implications. Ultimately, *Postcolonial Melancholia* goes beyond the idea of mere tolerance to propose that it is possible to celebrate the multicultural, and live with otherness without anxiety, fear or violence.

Social Movements

One of the best-known social movements in the world today, Zapatismo has been thoroughly studied from a number of perspectives. One new book, *International Zapatismo: The Construction of Solidarity in the Age of Globalization* (Zed Books) attempts to understand the infrastructure of the global Zapatista solidarity network. The author, Thomas Olesen, seeks to understand which activities the network has engaged in, and to ask which factors have enabled this network to develop so successfully. Olesen also wonders about the long-term implications of this transnational network for new kinds of political action and international solidarity.

Another question that scholars and activists ponder is the gulf between social movement theory and social movement activism. Examining the causes and consequences of this disconnect between theory and practice is the focus of a new book entitled *Rhyming Hope and History: Activists, Academics, and Social Movement Scholarship* (University of Minnesota Press), edited by David Croteau, William Hoynes and Charlotte Ryan. The scholars and activists who have contributed to this collection explore solutions, weighing the promise and peril of engaged theory and the barriers to meaningful collaboration.

The Global Resistance Reader (Routledge) is another large collection that provides a comprehensive account of the phenomenal rise of the transnational social movements in opposition to the financial, economic and political hegemony of large international organizations such as the WTO, World Bank and the IMF.

Amy Spencer has written a popular history of the "do-it-yourself" movement called *DIY: The Rise of Lo-Fi Culture* (Marion Boyars). Since the 1990s, thousands of people have embraced the zine revolution and DIY music making. Spencer documents DIY culture from zine archives to SchNEWS, Queercore to Riot Grrl, Situationists to punk rock, and rebel radio to rave.

Finally, it is with great pleasure that we witness another IAS-funded project coming to fruition. Marina Sitrin, IAS grant recipient in 2003, has produced a Spanish-language book documenting contemporary voices of radical resistance in Argentina—*Horizontalidad: Voces de Poder Popular en Argentina* [*Horizontalism: Voices of Popular Power in Argentina*]. Sitrin has also participated at the IAS-sponsored "Renewing the Anarchist Tradition" conference and contributed to the IAS newsletter *Perspectives*. Her new book is composed of interviews with activists involved with the Argentine Autonomous social movements and their accounts of the neighborhood assemblies, movements of unemployed workers, and occupied factories that are all organizing in ways that are consciously directed toward democratic and autonomous forms of government, naming this politics *horizontalidad*. ✸

Words & Revolution

Regarding a Moratorium on "Freedom" & "Democracy"

by Alexis Bhagat

In November of 2004, just before Election Day in the United States, I spoke with a radio studio audience[1] in Brooklyn, New York about certain words that had become damaged through their use in the rhetoric of the so-called War on Terror. The audience agreed with me that above all, "Freedom" and "Democracy" were completely beyond repair. Most felt that the words should be utterly abandoned, but some nostalgic individuals were unable to go so far. We eventually reached consensus on a moratorium prohibiting the words "Freedom" and "Democracy" until the so-called War on Terror had expired. As this war is, according to its proponents, an endless conflict against a ubiquitous foe, our moratorium will in effect be permanent as well.

What happens to abandoned words? They are not like old cars or old appliances, which can be dissembled for spare parts. Words live through us, through our speech. They also live independently of us in some realm of abstraction where philosophers aim to dwell and poets aim to cause havoc; where they abandon their phonemes and form cysts of meaning; from where they regenerate. If we have need, the dear meanings once spoken as "freedom" and "democracy" will return again in different combinations of sounds. I dare say that holding onto meaningless sounds prevents the pronunciation of their successors.

In the interest of bringing these successors forth from our lips, I shall henceforth designate Freedom and Democracy, after the discoveries of Burroughs, as Virus F and Virus D. You make take this as a joke; however, I cannot reiterate enough that this is a grave matter. As viruses go, Virus F and Virus D are far more deadly than Influenza or Human-Immunodeficiency because, in addition to mobilizing biopower, they are backed by *firepower*—incendiary, atomic and financial—capable of wiping out a village or the planet wholesale. Thus, the very survival of planet Earth depends upon the containment, if not eradication, of these dangerous viruses, which have been spreading contagiously "like a seed upon the wind, taking root in many nations."[2]

For those who find all this to be utterly preposterous, I ask you to remember that words acquire meaning from their use.[3] If you disagree, if you believe that words have an *etymological* truth, of course you will find this preposterous. The possibility of restoring these defiled words will hold you in the past. Like the American peace activists longing for the isolation of the Progressive era, holding Old Glory emblazoned signs that say "Peace is Patriotic," you will hold on to some battered myths of Virus F and Virus D as the prize to be eyed. It boils down to tradition, attachment. There're all those great songs about Virus F, and the legacy of the Virus F Riders and the Virus F Summers. The anarchist movement has been long claimed that Virus D is a sham anyway and that we adhere to some purer root of Virus D. And of course there's the chant burned into our collective memory from the Battle of Seattle: "This is What Virus D Looks Like!"

Virus D looks like fixed elections, looks like white supremacy, looks like wars of aggression. Virus D looks like the sovereignty of deception. Virus D looks altogether virulent.

In light of this virulence, it's useless to say that the politicians and the disciplined media and all the people who repeat politicians and the disciplined media (i.e., *most people*) are *mis*-using the words. They are *using* the words. Incessantly. On Inauguration Day 2005, a friend noted that Virus D, Virus F and the related term 'liberty'[4] were repeated like an incantation. We decided to attempt an audio intervention, to replace, for example:

> *It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.*

with

> *It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of religious fundamentalist movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending equality in our world.*

or,

> *It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture in the world, except for in Haiti and other nations populated by Africans or former African-slaves.*

But the fact remains. The utterance. The event. Virus D and Virus F were the words spoken, and through that use, they acquired new valence. This redefinition of words is integral to the injection-molded revolution underway, which like the conversion of an industrial quarter into a luxury co-op district, leaves

historical shells intact while inserting alien content within. This revolution reinserts the Great Chain of Being into the capitalist global order. *God in the Highest* is back on His throne, expressing His will by means of Virus D in the name of Virus F.

The principal strategies of this revolution have been myth-making and creative wordplay. As the Russian Futurists understood—reflecting during another revolution—new myths are the wellspring of new words, and new words are necessary to give form to conceptions that will hold a revolutionary order from slipping back into old regimes. Yet this revolution has taken wordplay far beyond the boldest dreams of the Futurists, the Dadaists or their descendants. The transformation of broadcasting into a subtle appendage of power has been well documented, enabling an unprecedented control over consensual reality. Less discussed is that *any* revolution overturning the constitutional republican order must entail a revolution in language. Indeed, the original republican revolution occurred as much through words as through arms; through deflecting the flow of power from Heaven to Crown with great pieces of paper (e.g., the English *Magna Charta.*) When *God in the Highest* and His appointed Kings were removed from power, a massive network of writing was put in His place. We could call the constitutional republican order *Writ-ocracy*, an age announced by declarations, signed and enshrined, ushering in the rule of legislators, the writers of laws. Mythically, the legislators are Common Men working out the Common Good and serving the Common Interest.

The Common Man myth has strict rules for the channeling of inspiration, that breath from the Muses. Within *writocracy,* any governor inspired to directly *speak* the law without first subjecting it to long sessions of re-write would be declared a "dictator" and promptly subdued by force of arms. The principal strategy for sneaking around this was "no-means-yes."[5] In no-means-yes, the submissive legislators proclaim *the exact opposite* of their intention. "Save Amer-

An excerpt from *KASPAR Volume 1* by Peter Schumann

ica's Trees!" "Help America to Vote!" "Provide Appropriate Tools!" Confused by sorting out these mixed messages, no one notices that the legislators are actually *all taking dictation!* The institutions of *writocracy* are preserved as they are being injected with new myths to empower the hearers of the word of God.

We should perhaps ask why it was that Virus F and Virus D so easily took to their new injections? Virus D was born as a perverse egalitarianism, a ruling compact among ancient slave-owners, resurrected by modern slave-owners and their slave-trading neighbors. And let us not forget that Virus F is a strange hybrid of two roots which ought never to have been grafted together in the first place—*frei* and *dominus*. *Dominus* meaning to be held in possession by a Lord. *Frei* meaning to be not in possession, not enslaved, unfettered, unbound. Lovely *Frei* from the Teutonic *frio*, from the Aryan *priyo*, which means dear or beloved. Both of these viruses required strong membranes that would bind essential contradictions together behind a smooth surface without rupturing.

I have spoken to many people this past year about useful words to propagate if we eliminate Virus F and Virus D. Besides the ever popular, *autonomy*, often repeated terms include *swarm*, *mob* and *free association*. These terms take their meaning from forms of *being-together*. In a regime where acquiescence depends upon alienation, propagating such terms, and more importantly, living out their relationships, continues to be fundamentally insurgent. We should also look to emergent ways of being-together produced by empire and globalization, and also *the languages they bring into contact*; from the night-time languages in territories where English, Spanish and French are the tongues of the day; and from the hybrid slangs of the metropolises. *Posse.*[6] *Encuentro. Satyagraha.*[7] Even *juche*[8] could make a good tonic when taken with a shot of anti-authoritarianism.

And we need good tonics to resist the contagion. Deforestation. Smallpox blankets. The decimation of the buffalo. Gatling guns on unarmed Philipinos. Hiroshima. Nagasaki. Depleted uranium. All these are precursors, say the victorious revolutionaries. They are just getting ready "for the greatest achievements in the history of Virus F."[9] What a plague. Let's get out of here! *Ona move.*[10] *Mitakuye Oyasin.*[11] ✸

Endnotes

1. As part of Tianna Kennedy's ongoing radio-art project, Stubblefield's Black Box at the Free103point9 Gallery for Transmission and Intermedia Art in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.
2. "Through much of the last century, America's faith in freedom and democracy was a rock in a raging sea. Now it is a seed upon the wind, taking root in many nations." George W. Bush, Inaugural Address, January 20th, 2001.
3. As the Latin grammarians would say, "*verba valent usu*," echoing the Sanskrit grammarians dictum "*yogad rudhir baliyah.*"
4. The 2005 Inaugural Address included 7 instances of "free" and 27 instances of "freedom," only 2 instances of "democratic," 1 of "democracy" and 15 instances of "liberty."
5. "No-means-yes" also happens to be a favorite party game of the class of men the legislators represent.
6. Derived from the legal term *posse comitatus* or "power of the country," a *posse* officially refers to a deputized force of armed men. Popularized by American cowboys-and-Indians movies, the term was redefined by the hip-hop culture of the 1980s. More fluid than the related terms *crew* and *gang*, *posse* playfully refers to a tentative association of a group of young men.
7. A Sanskrit neologism, roughly translated as "The insistence of truth," coined to describe the political philosophy of the non-violent Indian nationalist movement.
8. The Korean word for "self-reliance" is the ironic political philosophy of North Korea, a dictatorship whose existence has always depended completely upon a stream of support from Moscow and Beijing.
9. George W. Bush, Inaugural Address, January 20th, 2001.
10. A saying of John Africa, founder and spiritual mentor of Philadelphia's MOVE organization, later enshrined by supporters of the MOVE organization and Mumia Abu-Jamal.
11. A Lakota saying on the interrelatedness of all things, roughly translated as "all my relations," which has become common in certain subcultures as a catchall proclamation, not unlike *insha'allah* in its use.

Make Art Not War—Josh MacPhee

Equality & the Avoidance of Politics

by Todd May

One way to characterize anarchism would be to say that it is a politics of radical equality. To say this, however, is not enough. The equality valued by anarchists is not the same thing as the equality valued by, say, liberals. The difference between the two lies not only in the content of the equality. It lies in what might be called the theoretical structure of equality. For liberal theory, equality is something granted, presumably by the state. It is the responsibility of the state to ensure whatever equality there is to be. Whether that equality is a matter of equal liberties, equal opportunity, equal resources, or whatever, the movement of equality in liberal theory starts with the state and ends with the people.

Anarchism can be seen as starting from the other end, from the people. Equality is an assumption that people make about themselves and one another. Political action begins from there. Demands that are made, whether upon the state, corporations, or individuals are made *starting from*, rather than ending with, an activity of equality. This reversal of direction is not merely a theoretical point. It has any number of ramifications for political activity. One obvious one is that anarchists are more concerned than either liberals or Marxists with what is often called process. Anarchist process seeks to construct forms of political deliberation that ensure that everyone is treated by everyone else as an equal, and, alongside that, that everyone can consider himself or herself an equal. The importance of equality in political deliberation is a direct consequence of thinking of equality as part of the beginning of political activity rather than its goal.

One theorist who has rigorously considered equality as a matter of beginnings rather than results is Jacques Rancière. Although his writings are just beginning to appear in English, he has, for many years, thought through the implications of equality for political theory. A former student of the Marxist Louis Althusser, Rancière broke with his former teacher after the events of May '68 in France over Althusser's privileging of theoretical over other forms of practice. Since then, equality has been a touchstone of Rancière's political writings.

Rather than focus on his view of equality, I would like in this short piece to turn to Rancière's analysis of how political philosophy often avoids equality. Or, since for Rancière politics is nothing other than acting from the presumption of equality, the focus will be on his analysis of how political philosophy has avoided politics. Essentially, in his view, it happens in three ways, each of which is best displayed in a famous philosopher. There is archipolitics, exemplified by Plato; parapolitics, exemplified by Aristotle; and metapolitics, exemplified by Marx.

Archipolitics seeks to give political expression to the arché, or founding principle, of a community. For Plato, everyone has a proper place in the community, just as every part of the soul has its proper place. Justice, for Plato (or, technically, for Socrates) lies in the harmony of the parts. These parts are not equal, however. Specifically, there are three parts to a harmonious community: the money-makers, the guardians, and the rulers. In Socrates' imagery, these are the bronze, the silver, and the gold. Although Socrates argues that each is required for the harmony of the city, it is clear who is privileged and who is not.

Archipolitics is not a theory of politics, in Rancière's view, because it does not give expression to the presumption of equality. In fact, it is an active avoidance of that presumption. By giving everyone a place, it both hides the inequalities it fosters and leaves no room for the presumption of equality to operate.

Aristotle's parapolitics is more complex. On the one hand, Aristotle professes an embrace of equality; on the other, he concedes that the best should rule. Aristotle's resolution of this dilemma is to have each form of government go against its natural principle. Thus, for instance, an oligarchical government, to be successful, must act on behalf not only in its own interests but also in the interests of those it governs. Rancière sees a continuation of parapolitics with Thomas Hobbes, for whom the individual can be assured of protection only if he or she alienates that individuality to the sovereign.

Parapolitics recognizes politics, in contrast to Plato. By acknowledging the value of equality, it opens the possibility for politics. However, it shuts the door just as quickly as it opens it. Equality, although recognized, is too dangerous to be enacted. It is, we might say, to be honored in the breach.

Metapolitics, Rancière argues, does not reduce politics to something higher, as Plato does and Aristotle half-does. It reduces politics to something behind it, to a real movement of which politics is merely the surface expression. Here one can see the Marxist operation. Politics, as expressed in movements of people acting out of the presumption of equality, does not have its own particular integrity but rather is parasitical on what is really driving it: economic exploitation. The politics of equality is grounded on some-

thing else; in order to see the real stakes one must move from surface expression to underlying causes.

Anarchists will see here the critique of a Marxism that seeks to reduce all forms of domination to the single form of exploitation. Rancière also sees the Marxist domination of the intellectual class. If the real stakes are taking place behind the backs of the actors, then it is only an intellectual that can diagnose what is really happening. Those who act out of the presumption of equality know not what they do; they must be told by someone who sees beyond that presumption.

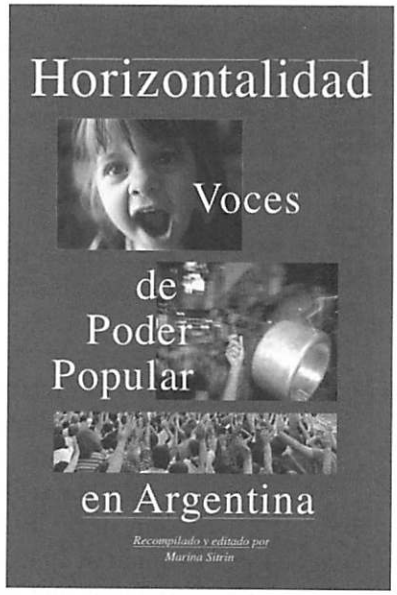
One can see these three forms of the avoidance of politics everywhere. For instance, the Bush administration seems to opt for archipolitics. One may see that behind the President's message soon after 9/11 that what citizens can do to contribute to the war on terrorism is to shop. Parapolitics lies in all the ambivalences that characterize many who speak in the name of democracy. Metapolitics appears in the constant analyses of what is really going on behind the expressions of equality that people make when they strike, demonstrate, speak out, organize, form alternative social arrangements, question authority, and recognize those who are said to be The Other as one of their own.

What Rancière reminds us is that a true politics avoids these traps, avoids the avoidance of politics. It keeps the concept of equality, of what Rancière sometimes calls the equality of everyone and anyone, at the center of his political thinking. He opts to see politics where it lies rather than to theorize it outside or behind or beneath the struggles that articulate it. In this sense, his thought can become a contemporary touchstone for recent developments in anarchist theory. ✷

Endnotes

Rancière's primary works on politics in English are *On the Shores of Politics* and the more theoretical *Disagreement*. Chapter 4 of the latter book deals with the avoidance of politics.)

Horizontalidad
Voces de Poder Popular en Argentina



This book is the story of a changing society told by people who are taking their lives and communities into their own hands. It is spoken in their own voices. It is a story of cooperation, vision, creation and discovery. It is a history that is told by people in the various autonomous social movements, from the occupied factories, neighborhood assemblies, arts and independent media collectives, to the indigenous communities and unemployed workers movements.

Rather than a contextualized history, this book reflects and delves into what people are doing, what motivates them, how they are relating to one another, and how they have changed individually and collectively in the creation process. It is not so much a movement of actions, but rather a movement of new social actors, new subjects, and new protagonists.

Horizontalidad was printed in the recuperated factory of Chilavert in Buenos Aires, Argentina. To order copies of the book, or contribute to its Latin American distribution please contact Marina at Marina.sitrin@nyu.edu. Books can also be purchased through AK Press, who will be publishing an English version of the book in May of 2006.

Anarchism in Bolivia:
Through the Writing of Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui

A Mestizo's Identity
Concerning a 1929 Anarchist Manifesto

by Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui
translated and introduced by Alejandro de Acosta

Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui is a contemporary Bolivian subaltern theorist, who, unlike many of her colleagues, is influenced by anarchism and indigenous Quechua and Aymara cosmologies more than by Marxism. She was a longtime member of the *Taller de Historia Oral Andina* [Workshop on Andean Oral History], which published pamphlets by indigenous intellectuals as well as longer oral histories.[1] Cusicanqui has also written historical studies of Bolivia[2] in which she emphasizes conceptions of time deriving from indigenous cosmologies and the radical political perspective known as *katarismo.*[3]

Together, these historical studies and oral histories document the struggles of urban and rural peoples: *mestizo*[4] and indigenous peasants struggling to retain or regain communal lands and the collectivist economic form of the *ayllu*[5]; *mestizos, cholos,* and *criollo* citizens working as handicrafts people and struggling in anarchist unions. In the article translated here, Cusicanqui documents an attempt by one anarchist to propose the unity of the two struggles. She shows that the urban cholo's indigenous background produces an identification with peasant struggles that was lacking in many of his companions, and which makes it possible for him to propose this otherwise unlikely alliance.

In another important text, *"Violencias Encubiertas"* [Hidden Violences] Cusicanqui proposes an analysis based on a striking combination of anarchist politics and indigenous conceptions of time to critique the acculturating mission of the Bolivian state and the mainstream Left's complicity with it. In the U.S., certain forms of *mestizaje* have been held up as subversive new forms of subjectivity. But Cusicanqui demonstrates that in Bolivia, and by extension many other "post-colonial" states, the process of mestizaje, or more generally the hybridization of subjectivities, is controlled by the state, programmed by its institutions as part of the long-term destruction of indigenous knowledges and cosmologies. Nevertheless, there is a role for mestizos and others of mixed cultural backgrounds to play in political struggles: this article and the manifesto included with it are a significant gesture in that direction.

I hope that this translation contributes to rethinking some common anarchist ideas concerning cultural differences and political commitment, and presents new working concepts of historical time and revolution, as well as offering a richly historical and concrete case of the idea of a "multiple self" whose multiplicity is not a block to action but its very motivation.

To the memory of Catalina Mendoza & Nieves Munguía

The document I will analyze is a significant example of anarchist activity in our country before the Chaco war.[6] Its author, the mechanic Luis Cusicanqui, was among the most creative and persistent anarchist ideologues. He animated the *Grupo de Propaganda Libertaria "La Antorcha"* from the beginning of the 1920s, and later the *Federación Obrera Local de La Paz.* He was the secretary general of the latter union in 1940, when libertarians had already suffered the violence of state repression and the politics of cooptation and neutralization of Toro and Busch.[7]

We should not regard Cusicanqui's trajectory as exceptional. Many working class men and women also interwove manual labor with a wide humanistic self-education as well as the everyday tasks of agitation and propaganda. They composed texts of philosophical and doctrinal reflection, and ventured into essays and theater, neither deserting their jobs nor becoming "professional" politicians or ideologues. That is why his political philosophy is closely woven into his everyday experience. In this experience, comradery [*convivencia*] and solidarity at work alternate with confrontation and suffering before the oppressor's tyranny.

The document reveals Cusicanqui's character as an agitator. In it we can observe the combination of experience and reflection so characteristic of anarchist writings, and, precisely because of that combination, so distant from contemporary political rhetoric. It is a document addressed to the countryside, written in the

Artwork from www.katari.org

first person. However, it was not written from the countryside, but from the city. Could it be a romantic gesture, a paternalistic approximation of the reality of Aymara peasants? Could it be a matter of demagogic impersonation? Or was the document truly written by an Indian, simply translating Indian thought? A rearguard indigenist might affirm, seeing Cusicanqui's photograph that, yes, one has but to see his face to know that he was Indian.

But things are not so simple. Cusicanqui, as a result of his education, because of two entwined tongues that permanently did battle in his brain,[8] because of his familial trajectory, was a mestizo, or at least an acculturated Indian. In these brief notes, I will attempt to elucidate, however partially, this aspect of anarchist thought and history in Bolivia, as it appears in light of this singular text and its author's personal stamp.

Throughout the entire document, we must attend to the "I" and the "we": usually, the collective "we" refers to the *Indian*, though sometimes Cusicanqui also uses the word *campesino*, peasant ["campesino" refers to "*campo*," countryside].

Let us begin with the title: "The Peasant's Voice" does not so much indicate the content of the text as it eludes

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it. The identification is clearer in the lines that follow, though it is stated through opposition: "our challenge to the great *mistes* [white men, or mestizos identified culturally as white] of the State." *Miste, misti*, State = *misti*: that is, we, the Indians, against our enemies, the *mistis* and their state.

It is important to clarify that the term campesino, in the decade of the 1920s, did not convey the ideological hodgepodge [*K'umunta*] that ineffable Revolutionary Nationalism put into it.[9] Among the misti classes it was simply a term adopted as a euphemistic synonym for Indian (that is, by and large, how it continues to be used today) because, perhaps, of the misti classes' shame before others or before themselves due to such a clearly colonial relation. In any case, this shame was likely a hidden motivation for its official use after 1952. That is why it continues to evidence a K'umunta, or linguistic servitude [*pongueaje*].

But Cusicanqui neither speaks nor constructs his sentences as a misti. For him, the use of the term "campesino" seems to have both a rationalizing and an organizing meaning. It is an attempt at precision that becomes transparent through its context. For example, when he writes, "peasants of the commune or of the *hacienda*;" "Indian" would be the broader generic identification wherein shades and differentiations of locality and activity are no longer necessary. "Peasant," on the other hand, would designate Indians of the countryside, as opposed to those of the city. In this case, it would refer specifically to those that work and live in communes or haciendas. The same is true when he speaks of shepherds [*pastores*], using an exemplary construction: "The poor peasant sets out to be a shepherd, and in a year's time has all his livestock snatched away." (See the appended manifesto).

Here, the term "poor" is appended to peasant, in a sense that is compassionate, perhaps even paternalistic. But it is also evident that, while resignation and everydayness accompany these uses of peasant, "Indian" is the term chosen when it is time to present epic truths—historical truths, I would call them—in his text or narration. For example:

> *"We have suffered the most wicked slavery possible in the republican moment that offered us independence—*

The Voice of the Peasant[24]

Our Challenge to the Great Mistes of the State Who are the only true thieves and criminals of the present day

For more than one hundred and thirty years we have suffered the most wicked slavery possible since the republican moment that offered us independence. It cost us life and Indian blood to free ourselves from the Spanish yoke. It made us howl for more than four hundred years, four centuries. The club danced wildly, blows fell on our backs in those years of barbarism, and now, in the very century of freedom, the brutality is redoubled.

If in those times we worked without pay for the Spanish lord, it is the same today with the criollos, who make us work from sun-up to sun-down without a cent for the hard work. When Spanish justice was blind, deaf, vengeful, we helped the "Mistes" to bring about freedom, only so they could take away our little plots and oppress us: see these injustices of today, peasants of the communes and of the haciendas.

The pants-wearing criollos, lash in hand, abuse us, woman, man, child and elder, just as they enslave us. What will we say of the sage Lawyers and other petty officials? Oh! These are the greatest thieves and bandits, who rob us, Law in hand, and if we say anything we are beaten and on top of that we are sent to prison for ten years, and meanwhile, they cast out our wife and children, and finish by burning our little houses and we are targets for the bullets of these honorably learned men...

Now, we ask: where are the peoples' rights? Who do the Governors call people? ... We, the Indians enclosed in the Andean steppe of América entirely because of the work of our oppressors: the Bolivian Indian has his hypocritical sympathizers in monks and the clergy, but behind all of it, our complete disappearance is forged in the heart of civilization, which hands out gallows laws...

The Identity Card: what good is it for us Indians, seeing as we are beasts of burden, nothing more? How is it that can we contribute by complying with the sarcastic law called rent tax? Our elders left

it cost us life and Indian blood to free ourselves from the Spanish yoke.

Watch out, Indian brothers of the American race: spilt blood will be the harbinger of the revolution overthrowing this vile society, cursed a thousand times over ..."

Epic moments par excellence: independence and the future revolution (a revolution explicitly announced as Indian) are diametrically opposed. The oppression of "four hundred years" at the hands of Spanish colonizers has superimposed on it another oppression, even more humiliating for being deceptive: that of living in a republic of formal citizenship in which, however, one suffers "the most wicked slavery possible in the republican moment."

In fact, here we ought to add an historical detail: the time of this manifesto was one of the most critical moments in a long phase of expropriation and communal resistance, which would come to a head in the holocaust of the Chaco war. The means that the landholding oligarchy employed in order to perpetrate these expropriations appear to have been familiar to Cusicanqui, perhaps lived in the flesh by him or his close relatives.

"The pants-wearing criollos, lash in hand, abuse us, woman, man, child and elder, just as they enslave us. What will we say of the sage Lawyers and other petty officials? Oh! They are the greatest thieves and bandits! They rob us, Law in hand, and if we say anything we are beaten and on top of that we are sent to prison for ten years, and meanwhile, they cast out our wife and children, and finish by burning our little houses and we are targets for the bullets of these honorably learned men..."

The chronology of resistance also offers a proof of the identification Cusicanqui makes between the lived experience of the peasants of the high plateau and that of the manual workers of the cities. He mentions, among others, the rebellion of Zárate Willka in 1899 and the massacre of Jesús de Machaca in 1921, side by side with "the latest events of Cochabamba, Potosí, Sucre." Another text signed by Cusicanqui clarifies this last reference.

"This year the situation has become more distressing. Because of the threat of war with Paraguay, many Indian workers demonstrated in resistance to a conflict that they knew to be intentionally provoked by capitalists and politicians. The consequence is the repression in Oroco, Coch-

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us common lands and today we find ourselves reduced to common slaves. Is that the work of our civilization? Why do we pay twenty cents for a box of matches? Seeing as today we find ourselves without warm clothing, without food, without even a match and we are reduced to returning to the primitive era called, by our governors, legislators, a savage era? Why do you, the civilized, make us regress to the savage era?

Why do you not allow us to acquire the necessary animals for our hard work, with no tax, so that in that way we could tend the earth, for the good of all humanity?

As we are, we cannot have a team of oxen, nor a necessary mule, without previously paying duties, tolls, registration fees on each head of cattle, and moreover the whims of the authorities of our leaders... Why do the father priest and the mista impose forced holidays in our county, threatening horrible penalties? ... Knowing that ultimately we are in utter misery as a result of the daily obstacles of their bastard and criminal laws...

Military service: going to die in the Chaco, with no remuneration. Migrant labor: working ten days for free with our own tools and food. Second-rate servitude [*postillonaje*]: providing all of our cruel masters' needs at our expense; that is, those very few of those known to the state. We go to the managerial services and as the last straw come from Algeri at the end of the year, to pay four to eight hundred *bolivianos*—look at this shameful amount! The poor peasant sets out to be a shepherd, and in a year's time has all his livestock snatched away. Servitude [*pongueaje*]: handling his bunch of dried dung, wood broom and, on top of that, food and then to sleep in a doorway, being ready all night for it to open and when it does not, a good beating, and then to be hired out to whoever, our services exchanged for big sums and we do not see the wages even in our dreams. Why did the governors not make the servant [*pongo*] happy with the Remuneration Law? Today he is nothing—the barbarous idiotic Mulattos of the Rotary Club's Zetas have the say here.

We the eternal martyrs feel the rawness of the scars that you opened on our ancestors. Here is your work: Mosa, Ayoayo, Jesús de Machaca, Yayi, Lakapampa, Ataguallani, and the latest events of Cochabamba, Potosí, Sucre and the martyr of Guaqui, in the heart of the district you have torn the limbs, like a bloodthirsty beast, of our brother Prudencio Callisaya; you bullying soldiers have no right to call yourselves civilized. You are barbarian criminals of the twentieth century, mutilators and destroyers of humanity. Watch out, Indian brothers of the American race, that spilt blood will be the harbinger of the revolution overthrowing this vile society, cursed a thousand times over. Our caciques bought and assassinated by the "mistes"... Blood must be spilled as before because we are tired of the present domination, we know all too well the Vampires of the dominant state and its dirty tricks; if the poor mestizo does not guide us to liberation, we the Indians will make torrents of copper blood run in America Bolivia. ✸

(Signed) *Luis Cusicanqui*

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abamba, Potosí, with some indigenous communists assassinated by the hangmen of Siles, and others imprisoned: Cusicanqui, imprisoned at the foot of the majestic Illimani, in the canton of Cohoni, and M.O. Quispe, imprisoned in Yungas."[10]

Clearly, for Cusicanqui, these events of repression against the workers' movement of the cities must be situated in the same line as the confrontations of Indian society against the state and the landholders. According to his own words, the demonstrators are "Indian workers," and their leaders, "indigenous communists." That is to say, the collective identity attributed in this text to the urban craftsmen, the exclusive "we" of Cusicanqui,[11] as opposed to the inclusive "we" (who would be the Indian) coincides fully with the protagonists of Willca Zárate's rebellion, or that of Jesús de Machada, at least in the context of confrontation with a common enemy.

That is to say, it is a matter of a shared identity, defined by opposition, that a collective subject is generated. This subject includes Indian peasants and farmers, as well as mestizo craftsmen and manual workers. The first line of solidarity between them would be the struggle against the misti-State; a caste state, which stands for colonial oppression as well as the exclusion of the working majority—and urban craftsmen are not free from this exclusion. We find here a complex elaboration and interlinking of anarchist doctrine and lived identity, experienced in an everyday manner by men such as him, inhabitants of the junction between two worlds. Ideologically, it was possible to build a bridge between the anti-statism of anarchist doctrine and the historical anti-statism of Indian communities in the colonial context.[12] This bridge is clear, for example, in the argument he wields against the identity card. But, existentially, the indignation emerged from the same shared experience: that of discrimination and exclusion.

That is why Cusicanqui's wide, inclusive identity (his Indian identity) gives rise to the most resounding and heartfelt words of his manifesto. All of the moral indignation, the creative rage of the text is concentrated precisely in those phrases where the enemy is identified as the Indian's enemy, or where he denounces the paradoxes, even more contemptible, of a criollo hypocrisy and double morality lived by a false world of citizens (republican, educated). An example: "Why did the governors not make the servant [*pongo*[13]] happy with the Remuneration Law? Today he is nothing—the barbarous idiotic Mulattos of the Rotary Club's Zetas have the say here."[14]

Likewise, his indignation is repeatedly directed against the "bastard, criminal laws" that (as is the case of the Exvinculation Law of 1874) were promulgated under guise of apparent equality and citizenship, with the hidden goal of legalizing the violent plunder of communal lands. Although we cannot go into detail here, it should be mentioned that a similar perception of criollo legislation can be found in the internal ideology of the movement of *Caciques-apoderados*[15] led by Santos Marka T'ula.[16]

Here we find a new space of encounters between the experience of Indian communities and anarchist doctrine. The notion of law as a tentacle of the state conjoins doctrinal anarchist interpretation (which posited the existence of a moral law incarnate in free individuals) with the communal action that unmasked the colonial nature of the state and recognized law as a "deception," as we find explicitly indicated in many documents produced by the *Cacique* movement.

Let us return once more to the chronological ordering of resistance, where, as we said, we find in the same sequence episodes of peasant resistance and mobilizations of urban craftsmen. The other event, the "most recent," was the murder of Prudencio Callisaya, which occurred nine years earlier, in 1920, by order of the powerful landowner of Guaqui, Benedicto Goytia:

> *"... and the latest events of Cochabamba, Potosí, Sucre and the martyr of Guaqui, in the heart of the district you have torn the limbs, like a bloodthirsty beast, of our brother Prudencio Callisaya; you bullying soldiers have no right to call yourselves civilized. You are barbarian criminals of the twentieth century, mutilators and destroyers of humanity."*

A series of events, an apparently chronological series, is reversed here by a backward movement. Is this movement a lapse or imprecision? I do not think so. For Cusicanqui, the vital proximity of the Guaqui murder was likely a combination of two phenomena. In 1920, this deed, publicized by the press and denounced in Parliament, must have hurt his sensibility, and outraged his conscience, which was already on the alert for situations of oppression and injustice. This early impression would lead him to write, in 1924:

> *"Illampu, Illimani... I contemplate the two colossi. I pay them a tribute of admiration and I speak to them as though to two giants, living witnesses of the great tragedies of my race (...) Oh! If you could speak to me of what you have seen! Illampu, Illimani, tell me the story of the*

conquerors' persecution, exploitation, and annihilation of my race, the race to which I belong. Speak, you mute witnesses, you impassable monsters! Let us know the history of the great rebellions of the Indians against their cruel masters, the rage of the people against its oppressors."[17]

The impression left by the assassination of Callisaya must have been intensified by the encounter that Cusicanqui had in 1928 with Santos Marka T'ula. The cacique leader went to the *Federación Obrera Local de La Paz* in search of solidarity and support for the peasant cause, according to the testimony of the comrades Teodoro Peñaloza, Max Mendoza, and Lisandro Rogas.[18]

Certainly, the composition of *The Peasant's Voice* was heavily influenced by this direct contact between anarchist leaders and Indian authorities, linked together in a perception that, for Cusicanqui, was firmly tied to previous experiences and convictions. Not only the style of the composition, wherein the influence of the mother tongue is clearly noticeable, but also the chronological reversal of the manifesto, allow us to conceive of an "invasion" of Indian logic into the thought of the anarchist ideologue.

Moreover, rage is timeless. As in any ethics, the judgment that emanates from this event is projected across time as a moral teaching and evaluation. Even today, reading the verdict on the murder of Prudencio Callisaya,[19] it makes one indignant to realize that, after he was assassinated in the *Guaqui cuartel*, at the hands of Col. Julio Sanjinés (son-in-law of Benedicto Goytia) his relatives discovered the crime and began a long trial, which concluded in enormous frustration. At many times throughout the trial, they attempted to show the delinquent character of the deed; three times they were subjected to the painful legal procedure of autopsy and appealed to the Superior District Court with reliable proofs. All in vain: the complicit and bastard justice that their caste had created when it assumed its republican face never touched Sanjinés and Goytia.

Solidarity with Callisaya is, then, fraternal, almost a kinship tie. It is anger in the name of an assassinated brother. Blood ties are also revealed in other phrases that clarify the inclusive identity assumed by Cusicanqui: "We the eternal martyrs feel the rawness of the scars that you opened on our ancestors. How is it that we can contribute by complying with the sarcastic law called rent tax? Our elders left us common lands and today we find ourselves reduced to common slaves? Was that the work of our civilization?"

And the final condemnation, now from the doctrinal vein of anarchist evolutionism: "Today we find ourselves without warm clothing, without food, without even a match and we are reduced to returning to the primitive era called, by our governors and legislators, a savage era. Why do you, the civilized, make us regress to the savage era?"

The past is therefore dignity and communal life, but also regression, stagnation caused by oppression, by the rupture of the autonomous development of the colonized society. Here the amalgam of anarchist doctrine and the experience of oppression become more evident. The Indian (the victim who is identified frequently, in the text, with the peasant, with the particularist and exclusive identity) is he who, chained to the yoke of oppression, comes to embody a forced, imposed involution that would lead to stultification, mean behavior, and humiliation. Against this moral regression, the future revolution, the *emancipation* (a term dear to the anarchists) would permit access to universality, without the renunciation of one's own history, culture, and collective creativity. But later, we find an allusion to an alliance with "poor mestizos"—the ones who, as opposed to the mistis and their state, could be possible interlocutors of the emancipatory proposition.[20] To whom is this phrase directed? Other comrades, craftsmen, anarchists like him, more Westernized, who considered the Indian as a hindrance to social progress? What is clear is that, because of the threatening tone of the text, the Indian demand prevails over any other consideration of doctrine:

"Watch out, Indian brothers of the American race: spilt blood will be the harbinger of the revolution overthrowing this vile society, cursed a thousand times over. Our caciques bought and assassinated by the "mistes" (...) blood must be spilled as before because we are tired of the present domination, we know all too well the Vampires of the dominant State and its dirty tricks; if the poor mestizo does not guide us to liberation, we the Indians will make torrents of copper blood run in América Bolivia."

It is not possible for us to elucidate this point in greater depth, because the manifesto, and the political proposal it embodies, is ideologically constructed from the point of view of opposition as the source of identity. They tell us little or nothing explicitly about the characteristics of the future society hoped for by Cusicanqui. However, we can catch a glimpse of the basically humanistic character of his postulates: the paradox of oppression in a liberal state consists in that it deceitfully calls for a recognition of the rights of all, as workers and as citizens, but in fact denies even the human condition of the oppressed.[21]

"Now, we ask: where is the right of peoples? Who do the Governors call people? ... We, the Indians enclosed in the Andean steppe of América entirely because of the work of our oppressors: the Bolivian Indian has his hypocritical sympathizers in monks and the clergy, but behind all of it, our complete disappearance is forged in the heart of civilization, which hands us gallows laws."

It could then be that the future society, in its widest and most inclusive sense, translates to this idea: no longer Indians (colonized), but human beings, equal in their rights inasmuch as they are workers, and free to build their own destiny. Was there also recognition of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the society? If we

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take into account the constant effort of anarchist ideologues to link lived experience with the doctrine gathered from the classics, we can perhaps find an affirmative answer in the proposal of a "federated" society: "Politically, there should be a wide governmental decentralization, under a federated system, respecting the independence and autonomy of every last village and citizen; free expression of thought and of the press; this diversity of thought, tendencies and affinities would make the sciences and arts evolve."[22]

For Luis Cusicanqui, anarchist and Indian, emancipation was not therefore incarnated in a messianic hope,[23] but rather in the collective historical action of manual laborers (craftsmen and Indian farmers) for whom anarchism comes to be the expression of authentic universality.

Chukiawu, April 1998. ✷

This essay was originally published in the Bolivian magazine *Contacto* (Año 2 No. 31/32) in 1988, under the title *"La identidad de un mestizo: en torno a un manifiesto anarquista de 1929."* An additional note identifies Cusicanqui as a member of the *Taller de Historia Oral Andina* and adds: "This work was originally presented in the Fifth Conference on Bolivian Studies, Altiplano Region, June 1988."

Alejandro de Acosta would like to thank Diego de Acosta for invaluable help with this translation.

ENDNOTES

1. *Los artesanos libertarios y la ética del trabajo* ["Libertarian craftsmen and the ethic of labor"] is of particular interest to anarchists.
2. One such study is *"Oprimidos pero no vencidos": luchas del campesinado aymara y qhechwa de Bolivia* ["'Opressed but not defeated': struggles of the Aymara and Quechua peasantry in Bolivia"].
3. *Katarismo* was a Bolivian ideological current that began in the late sixties. In La Paz, indigenous Aymara intellectuals who had entered the universities sought to understand the effects of colonialism in history as well as in everyday life. As Aymaras from the countryside, they sought to reaffirm the subversive current of indigenous thought and practice that resisted not only the Western project of domination and acculturation but also the misguided liberal project of the assimilating nation-state. See Javier Sanjinés, *Mestizaje Upside-Down.*
4. A note on the "racial"/cultural nomenclatures used in the text: conventionally, a *mestizo* is the child of an indigenous parent and a parent of European descent. More generally, *mestizaje* is the process of cultural mixture or hybridization concurrent with the cohabitation and mixtures of peoples. In the present context, it typically denotes acculturation to Hispanic norms. *Criollos* are those of European descent. *Cholos* were originally designated as the child of an Indian and a *mestizo*; the term is used more generally for anyone of mixed or primarily indigenous heritage who lives in the city and is assumed to be more acculturated (though this is precisely what Cusicanqui contests in this essay). Due to the inherent instability of racial classifications, and power relations generally, each of these terms has other uses in other parts of Latin America. Finally, as in the United States, the question of the nomenclature of indigenous peoples very much continues to be a controversial one in much of Latin America. Cusicanqui opts for "Indian," but this term should perhaps be interpreted on analogy with "Black" in the context of the U.S. Black Power movement, or, with less need for translation, "Indian" as it continues to be used by some radical native Americans in the United States.
5. The *ayllu* were the basic political, cultural, and economic unit of indigenous life in the Andes, dating from pre-Inca times. They were, in essence, extended kin groups, but were not always limited to ties of consanguinity. Importantly, they were self-governing units based on collective land ownership and agriculture—precisely the sort of "primitive communism" that has always captured the imagination of anarchists.
6. The Chaco war was fought between Bolivia and Paraguay over control of the Chaco Boreal region from 1932 to 1935. Indigenous men in Bolivia were forcibly drafted *en masse* and more died from diseases such as malaria than fighting. [Tr.]
7. David Toro Ruilova, president of Bolivia from 1936 to 1937; Germán Busch Becerra, president from 1937 to 1939. [Trans.]
8. An even more eloquent proof is the appended document. As is known, Cusicanqui was the son of an indigenous peasant and a mestizo descended from caciques of the *ayllu Q'alaq'utu* of Pacajes. Aymara was his first language and he spoke it fluently.
9. According to a well-known text by Luis H. Antezana, Revolutionary Nationalism was the *ideologeme* or central ideological paradigm of the state in 1952. Its irradiation capacity was based in the flexible ideological field opened up between its two poles: Nationalism vs. Revolution. See "Sistemas

y procesos ideológicos en Bolivia," in Zavaleta (ed.) *Bolivia hoy*. Siglo XXI, Mexico, 1983.

10. Emphasis ours. The reference to "indigenous communists" is clearly to an anarchist communism. This text is a report sent by Cusicanqui to the editorial board of the Urugayan anarchist newspaper *El Hombre* (Montevideo, October 1, 1929) under the pseudonym "Aymara Indian." He relates the repressive actions of the government, including his own deportation. It was in fact the diffusion of *The Peasant's Voice* that brought about his imprisonment.
11. In the grammatical structure of Aymara, there are two types of first person plural: the inclusive we (*jiwasa*), and the exclusive we (*nanaka*). The first refers to situations in which the subject includes the interlocutor, while the second refers to a "we" that excludes the interlocutor.
12. Though this does not imply a conception of Andean communities as "societies against the State," as with the Amazonian societies studied by Clastres, but rather, specifically, societies without states, societies that the colonial invasion rid of their own political state structure. See Pierre Clastres, *La societé contre l'Etat*, Paris: Minuit, 1974.
13. A *pongo* is an indigenous person subject to *pongeaje*, a system of forced labor prominent in Bolivia as well as Chile, Ecuador, and Peru. [Trans.]
14. The racial qualification "Mulatto" in reference to the oligarchy of the Rotary Club is puzzling. Linguistic revenge? An allusion to someone in particular?
15. The term *cacique* is a general term used throughout Latin America for an indigenous leader. The movement of *caciques-apoderados* dates from 1914, when the Bolivian authorities refused to recognize the authority of hereditary indigenous leaders. Working from La Paz, they demanded the return of stolen communal lands and the abolition of the draft, as well as rural schools (as competence in Spanish was a crucial tool in dealing with the government). [Trans.]
16. See Taller de Historial Oral Andina, *El indio Santos Marka T'ula, cacique principal de los ayllus de Qallapa y apoderado general de las comunidades originales de la República*. THOA, 1984; Silvia Rivera, "Pedimos la revisión general de límites: Un episodio de incomunicación de castas en el movimiento de caciques apoderados de los Andes bolivianos," presentation for the *Simposio sobre Reproducción y Transformación de las sociedades andinas, Siglos XVI-XX. Social Science Research Council, Quito, 28-30 July 1986*; Zulema Lehm, "*La lucha comunaria en torno a la contribución territorial y a la prestación de servicios gratuítos durante el período republicano (1920-1925)*," unpublished manuscript.
17. *El Hombre*, Montevideo, April 10, 1924.
18. "*Breve diálogo sobre la relación entre el movimiento anarquista y el movimiento indio*," in *Historia Oral* 1, La Paz, November 1986.
19. *Archivo de La Paz – UMSA. Fondo Corte Superior de Distrito*. 1920.
20. Certainly, there were also anarchists of this type, in Bolivia and elsewhere. But there was also an *Ezequiel Urviola* in Puno, and an itinerant Paulino Aguilar, leader of the *Federación Indígena Obrera Regional Peruana* until his deportation by the Leguía government in 1928. They were also key points of reference for Cusicanqui. In his private archive there are interesting samples of the correspondence between Cusicanqui and Aguilar.
21. To consider the other as "not people" had been, according to Jan Szeminski, a constitutive trait of the confrontation between Spaniards and Indians during the rebellion of Tupac Amaru in 1780-1781. This confirms the continuity of the colonial event in the republican stage. See *La utopia tupamarista*, Lima: PUC, 1984, p. 194.
22. "1886 – May 1st – 1938. Manifesto of the Federación Obrera Local. To the working class in general." Archives of the THOA.
23. A messianism embodied by many mestizos of the south of Peru, as Flores Galindo has shown, by founding their struggle on the return of the Inca. See, for example, "*Los sueños de Gabriel Aguilar*," in Alberto Flores Galindo, *Buscando un Inca: identidad y utopia en los Andes*, La Habana: Casa de las Américas, 1986.
24. This document was found among the private papers of Luis Cusicanqui, published in the form of a manifesto, with his handwritten signature at the end. Through references obtained in other documents, we know that it was distributed in May 1929, and brought about his imprisonment and the persecution of other anarchist organizers such as Modesto Escobar, who was also closely involved with propaganda activities in the countryside.

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A Brief History of Anarchism in Bolivia

by Zulema Lehm A. and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui
translated and introduced by Melissa Forbis and Cale Layton

This excerpt from "Anarchist Unions in Bolivia 1920-1950" is from a forthcoming translation and update of *Los Artesanos Libertarios y la Ética del Trabajo,* by Zulema Lehm A. and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui. The book was originally published in 1988 by the *Taller de Historia Oral Andina* (Andean Oral History Workshop) in La Paz, Bolivia. This segment is drawn from a chapter on the history of anarchism in Bolivia, which serves as the backdrop for the book. The remainder is based on interviews with participants in trade unions (tailors, cooks, carpenters, florists, builders, masons, and mechanics) from the period 1920-1950 in La Paz. These trade unions were a mix of *mestizos* and indigenous peoples, men and women. The interviews document how this unification was perceived as a threat and resulted in state repression of union members.

The anarchist movement was a key actor in La Paz in the first half of the twentieth century and this book counters claims that characterize Bolivia as a place where organizing efforts were scarce or Marxist-led. In reality, the traditional Marxist unions perceived these diverse sectors of the working class as unorganizable. Successful self-organization of anarchist craftspeople undermined traditional theories of working class organizing. In fact, the radical union organizing documented by Cusicanqui and Lehm represents the growth of a particular Bolivian anarchism that responded to discrimination along the race, gender and class lines marking Bolivian society.

"We know that we are what we are: idealists, dreamers of a better world, regardless of whether the rest of the world accompany us, tire of the struggle or betray us. People are how they *can* be, not how we want them to be or how we wish they were."

—Letter from José Tato Lorenzo to Luis Cusicanqui, May 18, 1942

The apex of the anarchist doctrine's influence in Bolivia was between the latter part of the 1910s and the outbreak of the Chaco War of 1932. The testimonies presented in this book confirm this assertion, despite the fact that only two of our interviewees participated directly in the earliest phases of the development of libertarian ideas—Desiderio Osuna and Santiago Ordóñez. In any case, many of the people we interviewed fondly remember figures like Luis Cusicanqui, Domitila Pareja, Jacinto Centellas and other craftspeople. These were the real pioneers in spreading anarchist thought amongst the workers of La Paz and other urban centers in Bolivia.

In their youth, they contributed—alongside many others involved in the social struggles of the day—to the intense pursuit by the urban workers to find suitable ideologies and organizing models to better respond to the ever more oppressive conditions of exploitation that accompanied the consolidation of the liberal capitalist economic model and the successive crises that characterized it.

During this period, communication and the circulation and sharing of new ideas increased greatly with others from beyond Bolivia's borders. These new social doctrines provided universalizing anti-establishment elements to help workers interpret the unprecedented situations being experienced in the mines and in the cities. The waves of migrations provoked by the abrupt booms and crises occurring in the numerous productive centers of the region contributed to the changes. The consolidation of the great tin mines in the *cordillera* (the Andean mountain range), the exploitation of saltpeter on the Pacific coast and the construction of new rail lines into the interior of the country during the Liberal Party administrations [1899-1920] combined to generate an intense coming and going of workers of many different nationalities and cultural origins.

The formation of trade unions and workers' organizations with anti-establishment ideologies—groups that went further than the social service framework of the mutual aid associations of the nineteenth century—was a direct result of the changes of this period. For example, in 1906, the *Unión Obrera 1º de Mayo* (May 1st

Workers' Union) appeared in Tupiza. This union upheld "socialist principles" and declared itself openly against the abuses and pillaging of the large mining companies in the south of Bolivia. The Unión Obrera 1º de Mayo, formed mainly by craftspeople and artisans, edited the newspaper *La Aurora Social* and maintained a workers' library that included classic texts by such anarchist thinkers as Proudhon, Reclus, Bakunin and Kropotkin.[1] These books were Spanish translations probably obtained in Argentina.

Around 1911, Jaime Mendoza painted a rich and multicolored social history of the mines of Uncía and Llallagua where mestizo[2] workers and artisans from the cities and rural towns mingled with indigenous unskilled workers (*peones*), immigrants and repatriated workers from Chile.[3] Mendoza accused the repatriated workers of inciting discontent and labor conflict.[4]

In a recent study, Gustavo Rodríguez clarifies the participation of saltpeter workers from the coast in the social agitation at the end of the decade of the 1910s. A succession of a "new type" of strikes and riots in the Bolivian mines during the two-year period from 1919 to 1920 coincided with the repatriation of more than 4,000 "*pampinos*"—Bolivian saltpeter workers who inundated the labor market and were accused of inciting insubordination among the other workers.[5] Although Rodríguez attributes an equally important role in the spreading of new doctrines and ideas to the "intellectuals" and to these workers who had been deported from Chile, he neglects to mention that the "intellectuals" were generally artisans living in the cities and mining towns. Thanks to their literacy and their ability to organize their work schedules with relative freedom, the artisan/intellectuals could educate themselves through reading and discussion groups where they would discuss books, newspapers and pamphlets that arrived from outside Bolivia. The mining proletariat and the artisans were not as different as one might imagine—the miners circulated intermittently between mining and artisanal activity on their own account.[6]

These intellectual craftspeople were able to understand and spread an important amount of ideas and social doctrines through literature that arrived from countries such as Argentina and Chile, where anarchist and socialist ideas were firmly entrenched in the workers' organizations.[7]

The situation that Rodríguez describes—of growing social agitation in the mines of Corocoro and Uncía—intensified and became more widespread due to the world price crises[8] of 1920-1921. The crises impacted heavily on both workers and artisans, due to the shrinking job market and the reduced demand for goods and services, intensifying discontent among broad layers of the population. An example of the culmination of this situation was the miner's strike in Uncía-Llallagua at the beginning of 1923 that threatened to spread to other mining and urban centers. The actions in Uncía were driven by the recently founded *Federación Obrera Central de Uncía* (Central Workers' Federation of Uncía, FOCU), an entity that included not only the miners, but also several local crafts unions and guilds. One example of the influence of the artisans in the federation was that a carpenter, Guillermo Gamarra, was the head of the federation driving the events of 1923.[9] The most important demand of the strike was that both the state and the mining companies recognize the federation. The conflict resulted in the declaration of a state of siege and the arrival of federal troops in the region. On June 4, 1923 there was a terrible massacre perpetrated by four units of the Bolivian army, resulting in an untold number of dead and injured.[10]

The propaganda effect of the strike and the massacre in Uncía was of a magnitude unknown up to that time—especially given the atmosphere of social agitation and ideological excitement that existed in the principal centers of worker and artisan concentration in the country. In fact, under the protection of the state of siege, the Saavedra government extended the repression to other unions and workers' federations, such as the unions in La Paz and Oruro, which were struggling to break the framework of the mutual associations and were combating the clientalist manipulation of Republicanism and the Liberal Party.[11]

The Pioneers

During this period in La Paz, there were also study circles and propaganda centers that provided a voice for the worker-led protests during the events in Uncía. These included the *Centro Obrero de Estudios Sociales* (Workers' Center of Social Studies, COES) and the *Centro Obrero Libertario* (Libertarian Workers' Center, COL). These cultural groups had the common characteristic of being made up exclusively of artisans and manual laborers. They provided support and ideological orientation to the recently formed workers' collectives and unions.

The COL brought together workers

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of both anarchist and socialist tendencies,[12] but was dominated by the former. The brothers Santiago and Desiderio Osuna, Nicolás Mantilla, Luis Cusicanqui, Jacinto Centellas, Guillermo Palacios and Domitila Pareja were all active in the ranks of the COL. These craftspeople formed a central core around which new study and propaganda groups circled, including the *Centro Cultural Obrero "Despertar"* (Workers' Cultural Center "The Awakening," the Osuna brothers), the *Grupo Libertario "Redención"* (Redemption Libertarian Group, Palacios) and the *Grupo de Propaganda Libertaria "La Antorcha"* (Libertarian Propaganda Group "The Torch"), which was perhaps the most influential Bolivian anarchist group of the 1920s.

The Antorcha group was inspired by the participation of Luis Cusicanqui, Jacinto Centellas and Domitila Pareja. Alongside other workers, these men and women made up an active core of propagandists that contributed enormously to the establishment of anarchist thinking in the city of La Paz. The Antorcha group was founded on September 9, 1923. Within a few months, its members were the victims of repression following the confiscation of flyers printed up commemorating the first anniversary of the Uncía massacre. Cusicanqui, Centellas, Pareja and Guillermo Palacios were all detained because these flyers fell into the hands of the government. The three men were exiled to the Río Cajones region, and it took them almost a year to return to La Paz.[13]

On their return, Cusicanqui and Centellas participated in the Second Workers' Congress, which took place in La Paz in August 1925. They joined other anarchist craftspeople like the Osuna brothers, Pablo Maráz, Tomás Aspiazu, Luis Abaroa and Félix Conde; at this time, the ideological differences between the anarchists and the socialists became clearer.

During the Workers' Congress, they joined committees and participated in the plenary sessions—sessions that were marked by heated debate with Marxist and socialist leaders like Guillermo Maceda, Carlos Mendoza Mamani and the Ordóñez brothers. These debates were to become a persistent characteristic of the syndicalist struggle of the day, as Teodoro Peñaloza relates in his testimony. Congress president Rómulo Chumacero, a tailor from San Luis Potosí, was also very sympathetic to anarchism. He helped to spread anarchist thinking during the late night activities at the *Escuela "Francisco Ferrer Guardia,"* an anarchist school in Sucre where he was the director.[14]

By 1926, the anarchist propaganda cells had multiplied and extended their reach throughout the country. In La Paz, besides the three previously mentioned groups, the *Agrupación Comunista Anárquica "Sembrando Ideas"* ("Planting Ideas" Anarcho-Communist Group) and the *Grupo "Brazo y Cerebro"* ("Arm and Brain" Group) began operating. In Oruro, the *Centro Obrero Internacional* (International Workers' Center, COI) and in Sucre, the Ferrer Guardia school also began to function. The Antorcha group maintained a certain level of influence over the cells of workers and artisans in Corocoro, Tupiza and Poopó.[15] In March 1926, the newspaper *Tierra y Libertad* appeared in Sucre, directed by Rómulo Chumacero. In the following year, the Antorcha group would begin editing its own newspaper *La Tea*, with the active collaboration of anarchist cells in Argentina, mainly through the solidarity labor of comrades such as Tomás Soria, Antonio Fournarakis and Armando Triviño.[16]

A notable example of these international solidarity links is the trip that Fournarakis made from Buenos Aires to La Paz in 1927. This veteran propagandist of libertarian ideas had organized the *Unión Anarquista Balcánica Sud-Americana* (South American Balkan Anarchist Union) in Buenos Aires. The purpose of the union was to erase national borders and to replace them with an international alliance of all the anarchist groups of the continent. In January 1927, Fournarakis made contact via letter with Luis Cusicanqui, and in February, he decided to embark on a tour through several countries spreading the word about anarcho-communist ideas. He was able to fund the tour by giving conferences, participating in literary evenings and helping to organize political meetings in each of the cities he passed through.

In March, he arrived in Tucumán, Argentina where he announced that he would visit La Paz "in spite of everything and regardless of the cost, except in the case of death or prison." In June, he arrived in La Quiaca at the Argentina-Bolivia border, and decided to avoid the border by walking to Tupiza in Bolivia. He had no passport or official documents since these are "requirements that the state and the bourgeoisie demand of us." Once in Tupiza, he solicited the assistance of Mario Fortunati (Tomás Soria) and Cusicanqui to travel the final leg to La Paz. He stayed only two months in La Paz, after which he returned to Córdoba, Argentina where he helped to organize the support network for the Antorcha group's newspaper.[17]

Anarcho-Syndicalism and the Struggle for the 8-Hour Day

All the organizing and propaganda activity of the anarchist cultural centers resulted in the formation of combative libertarian unions like the *Sindicato Central de Albañiles y Constructores* (Central Union of Masons and Builders) in 1924, the *Unión de Trabajadores en*

Madera (Woodworkers' Union, UTM) in 1925, the *Federación de Artes Mecánicas y R.S.* (Federation of Mechanical Arts) in 1925, and the *Federación de Sastres y R.S.* (Tailors' Federation) which was reorganized in 1927. Two factors, which were reiterated throughout the testimonies collected, contributed decisively to the rapid spreading of anarcho-syndicalist doctrine and organizing forms amongst the workers of the different worker/crafts sectors of the city. One was the explicit rejection of the participation of intellectuals of either a petit bourgeois or ruling class background in workers' organizing. The other was an active campaign for the 8-hour day. Together, these factors helped confer on anarchism the character of an anti-capitalist social doctrine; one that was able to articulate the demands of long-marginalized sectors through a fundamentally working class identity, which was based in the dignity of work and the right to citizenship.

While the rejection of the so-called intellectual class was a common gesture of both anarchist and Marxist workers,[18] the fight for an 8-hour day was a task fundamentally taken on by the anarchists, who were grouped together in the main unions and libertarian and propaganda groups.[19] From individual actions, like that of the tailor Luis Salvatierra in 1921, to the massive demonstrations led by the Unión de Trabajadores en Madera and the Sindicato Central de Albañiles y Constructores during the period from 1926 to 1929, the call for an 8-hour day was a constant motive for agitation. It was developing as much in the streets as in the workplace, especially since the positive legislation put forth by the Republican governments of Saavedra and Siles was systematically disregarded by the factory owners.

Characteristics of the *Federación Obrera Local* (Local Workers' Federation)

One contribution to the gradual acceptance of the 8-hour day was the founding of the *Federación Obrera Local* (FOL) in 1927, answering a call from the UTM. In the beginning, the FOL united five of the most combative crafts unions in the city,[20] and firmly situated its actions within the framework of the theoretical and organizational principles of libertarian syndicalism. The FOL adopted the system of a federated organization where the upper-level directors, revocable at any time, were subject to the direct democratic decision making of their base. This style of organizing allowed the FOL to adopt a highly flexible structure when confronting state repression. Due to the flexible nature of the direction of the union, the FOL could rapidly replace its leadership when it suffered imprisonment or detention. The testimonies of José Clavijo, Santiago Ordóñez and Amed Soliz in Chapter Four of this book illustrate this characteristic, and emphasize the process of worker self-formation that was undertaken by the FOL and by each affiliated union or federation, through literary evenings, conferences and study groups. Teodoro Peñaloza recuperates this process of self-education, likening the FOL to an authentic workers' university.

Union autonomy and the drive to bring dignity to manual labor were reinforced by the use of direct action as a fundamental tactic of worker confrontation with the state and the business owners. These practices were based theoretically in the anarchist belief in "*apoliticismo,*" which declared that the participation of political parties—whether of the right or the left—degraded the revolutionary impulse of the unions. This was one of the great themes of debate between the anarchists and the Marxists, and it led to a growing demarcation and autonomy from the intellectuals and professional politicians who were attempting to get involved with the unions in order to control them. The following appears in a document found amongst the papers of José Mendoza Vera (the likely author of the writing):

> *"The bourgeoisie sends us an innumerable supply of outside counselors who only ever try to twist the rhythm of our actions. These special envoys, who are extremely well rewarded, appear frequently in the ranks of social struggle in the conflicts between capital and labor... At times, they represent themselves as novice writers, disenchanted with their bourgeois surroundings, desiring only to put their intelligence at the service of the poor... And one day, without ever knowing how they do it, we see them leap over the platforms and sit down at the editorial table of one of our newspapers, slipping into our organization and speaking out in our meetings... At first, it appears that the cause has won new converts... But the day comes when self-denial is swapped for supplication, hope for disenchantment, sacrifice for pain; one's feet bleed from so much walking through the* abrojos *[thistle-like plants], the spirit weakens, the load becomes too heavy... Beaten, the forgotten original personality reappears in them: the centrality of bourgeoisie breeding. They are, once more, that which they were—they preach practicality over idealism, utilizing their experiences. They create new schools as an instrument of castration without ever renouncing the [revolutionary's] uniform that they stole from us... Facing them and other enemies, we are forced to make old themes new; using those themes now to provide the flavor of something new. Thus, we affirm that a politician and a libertarian socialist cannot be one and the same person; they are completely opposed. The ideals of the former are born of a need to govern, while the ideal of the latter is born of another need—to be free. One arrives in the government via the path of politics, through elections or by force, either way, torturous paths. To arrive at liberty, one must opt for revolution, the direct route, snatching from the state that which it previously stole from society, and there you have two concepts that there is no human or divine way to harmonize."*[21]

Anarchism in Bolivia: Through the Writing of Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui

The document concludes signaling that *apoliticismo* is "not inhibition, it is action and affirmation," and it reveals a conviction deeply rooted in the anarchist movement, as much at the theoretical level as at the level of daily practice. It is nothing less than the libertarian interpretation of the well-known refrain of the First International: "The emancipation of the working class must be conquered by the working class themselves." This idea was applied to the particularities of the Bolivian national situation, alluding to the barriers that workers erected to oppose the representation of manual laborers by members of the "parasite class." The FOL members defined the parasite class as *q'aras*.[22]

Finally, the FOL proposed and brought into practice the equality and organizational autonomy of women workers via the creation in 1927 of the *Sindicato Femenino de Oficios Varios* (Women's Union of Assorted Occupations), and the development of a series of labor demands amongst the women's unions.

The Workers' Convention of 1927

The fight between anarchists on one side and Marxists and socialists on the other culminated during the Third Workers' Convention held in Oruro in April 1927. According to historian Guillermo Lora, the conflictive atmosphere that dominated the meeting was "favorable ground for anarchists' maneuvering and this allowed the libertarians to acquire enormous, although momentary, influence." However, Lora affirms later on that the declaration of principles that emanated from the congress would have been a document of "indisputable Marxist affiliation that can be considered an antecedent of the future Pulacayo Thesis."[23]

Within the eschatological conception of history maintained by the author, surely he found no other manner to interpret a document that fundamentally proposed a syndicalism *independent of all party interference*, in accordance with the feelings of a majority of the delegates from the organization's base. During the event, the efforts of the Republicans to interfere in deliberations of the congress were denounced. The workers also openly rejected the participation of intellectuals like Oscar Cerruto and Tristan Marof who, together with a large student delegation, presented themselves to help "orient" the working masses. After a heated debate, and thanks to the mediation of Rómulo Chumacero (who at that time was aligned with Marof), the intellectuals were finally allowed to enter the congress and participate in the deliberations.

The conclusions of the Workers' Convention, as much organizational as ideological, revealed the fight that had developed at its core. Among the few points of consensus was an agreement on a series of measures in favor of the rights of the indigenous and the promotion of a women workers' organization. Representatives of both of these sectors were present in the congress. The conclusions that reveal an anarchist influence correspond rather to internal organization: the Convention adopted a federation structure based on the organization of the *Consejos de Taller y de Fábrica* (Shop and Factory Councils), which when grouped into industrial or trade unions, would comprise higher-level councils in each state (*departamento*). The meetings of these state-level councils gave rise to the formation of a National Council, which functioned as the directorate of the *Confederación Boliviana de Trabajo* (Bolivian Confederation of Labor), founded during the congress.[24] The libertarian influence was also expressed by the adoption of direct action as a principal method of struggle to obtain the demands of the workers. However, the Workers' Convention did not exclude the possibility that these workers' councils might enter into an alliance with "proletarian parties," surely at the insistence of the socialist attendees of the congress.[25]

Even if the ambiguities of these documents don't permit us to speak of an "indisputable" ideological affiliation, there was consensus around one of the central proposals of the anarchists: that of maintaining union independence from the political parties. On this point, a strong shop floor sector, led by Antonio Carvajal, made their "apolitical" position known, agreeing on major points with the anarchists. An article in the weekly newspaper for workers that Carvajal managed, reported the following:

> *"On the occasion of the III Workers' Convention, which gave an independent syndicalist front to the organization of the Bolivian proletariat, the word "syndicalism" has been popularized... Syndicalism means that the workers organize themselves in trade unions or craft unions with no intermediaries... In their sermons, the socialist and communist politicians preach that the bourgeoisie is dangerous, but they don't say that they are the new replacements for this hateful task. They only preach the change of executioners; with one politics or the other, there will always be governors and governed—making the inequality amongst living beings last forever."*[26]

But the central initiative of the event, that of giving the workers' organizations a national headquarters, was not approved—due as much to internal dissent generated by the workers identified with

various currents of social thought, as to the repression directed against the organizations' principal leaders. In August 1927, the La Paz press reported the news of the imprisonment of Rómulo Chumacero, as a result of the July communal uprising in Chayanta. For the first time in Bolivian history, a demonstration of rural indigenous peasants (*campesinos*) was attributed to the "pernicious influence of *red* socialism."

In reality, the main leaders of the uprising, Manuel Michel, Augustín Saavedra and Saturnino Mamani, attended the Oruro congress as part of an indigenous delegation that participated in the event. The press, however, exaggerated the "communist" character of the uprising—which had its own goals and organizational forms—with the goal of justifying the harsh government repression against the communal movement and the workers' organizations. One Republican Party newspaper editorialized:

> *"By the ample information that we give today, the reader will see how far the revolutionary activities of communism have gone. The indigenous sector was adopted as one of the elements of the subversive movement, and taking advantage of their ignorance and naiveté, [the communists] made them come up with the idea of a major territorial claim....The famous Ferrer School, which has been functioning in this city with the pretext of fomenting the culture of the workers and of the indigenous class, has also been one of the focal points from which the revolutionary inspirations have arisen."*[27]

Meanwhile, in La Paz, anarchists and Marxists returned to their respective organizations—the FOL and the FOT (*Federación Obrera del Trabajo*, Workers' Labor Federation)—and the ideological gap between the two groups continued to grow. The documented testimonial evidence indicates that in this fight, the anarchists were a strong majority in La Paz and Oruro, at least until 1930. There were also important anarcho-syndicalist concentrations in Potosí, Huanuni and Corocoro. ✷

Excerpted from *Anarchist Trade Unions in Bolivia 1920-1950*, translation and expanded edition of *Los Artesanos Libertarios y la Etica del Trabajo* by Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui and Zulema Lehm A. La Paz: Ediciones THOA, 1988. This document is still in revision process with its authors and may be slightly changed in its final form. [Trans.]

Endnotes

1. See *La Aurora Social* no. 6 (27 October 1907), no. 7 (30 November 1906) and no. 9 (31 January 1907). This notable workers' newspaper was consulted in the library of the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
2. A word used to describe a person of mixed indigenous and Spanish ancestry. [Trans.]
3. Before 1887, Bolivian territory extended to the Pacific and included most of the coast of the Atacama Desert and the port of Antofagasta. The discovery of rich nitrate deposits in the Atacama Desert and rising border tensions led to the outbreak of war between Chile and Bolivia (1879-1883). Chile's victory in this war resulted in Bolivia's loss of its outlet to the Pacific. [Trans.]
4. Jaime Mendoza, "En Las Tierras de Potosí," *Puerta del Sol*, (La Paz, 1976) p. 176.
5. Gustavo Rodríguez, "Industrialización, Proletarización y Cultura Minera (Bolivia 1825-1927)," p. 36. Lecture presented to the VIII International Symposium on Economic History, Buenos Aires, October 26-29, 1987.
6. According to Zulema Lehm, the fluctuating character of the mining workforce expressed itself in "a relative lack of differentiation between the two poles classically known as workers (dispossessed) and artisans/craftspeople (property-holders)." *Historia Oral y Movimiento Obrero: el testimonio de José Orellana*, second edition, La Paz: Presencia, January 5, 1986.
7. See Carlos M. Rama, *Historia del Movimiento Obrero y Social Latinoamericano Contemporáneo*, LAIA, Barcelona, 1976.
8. Especially tin prices. [Trans.]

9. Guillermo Lora (*Historia del Movimiento Obrero Boliviano, 1923-33, Tomo III*, La Paz-Cochabamba: Los Amigos del Libro, 1970). This worker, who Lora considered a "Marxist" implying that he was "proletarian," was not only a carpenter by trade, but was also an evangelist and anarchist sympathizer according to testimony from Desiderio Osuna. Interview 5 October 1985. This combination of seemingly irreconcilable convictions is fairly common amongst the libertarian leaders of the period, perhaps due to the similarity between the figures of the preacher and the propagandist and the fundamentally ethical character of anarchist doctrine.
10. Rodriguez, loc. cit. p.47.
11. Since 1908, a Liberal Party-inspired *Federación Obrera* (Workers' Federation) existed in La Paz, grouping together the principal mutual societies of the city. *Estatuto Orgánico de la Federación Obrera de La Paz*, La Paz: Imprenta Velarde, 1912. In 1921, the *Federación Obrera Internacional* (International Workers' Federation) was organized out of that entity. In 1918, the FOI became the *Federación Obrera del Trabajo* (Workers' Labor Federation, FOT), uniting the progressive workers and artisans. Cf. Moisés Álvarez, cited in Trifonio Delgado, *Cien Años de Lucha Obrera en Bolivia*, pp. 65-66. La Paz: Isla, 1984.
12. The concept of political partisanship seems anachronistic for these first years of the workers' anti-establishment action. Different currents and doctrines coexisted freely among the workers united by these centers under the common bond of their opposition to the traditional workers' organizations. However, Lora affirms that the COL was the result of the fusion of the COI and the "clandestine communist youth," and that their leaders, including Dario Borda and Rigoberto Rivera, "evolved toward Marxism." This assignment of partisanship and affiliation to workers' organizations is frequent in Lora's writing—usually citing later behavior of their leaders. In this way, he frequently confused his readers by attributing the word "communist" exclusively to a Marxist tradition, which hides the fact that the anarchists were calling for "libertarian communism." By 1923, there is evidence of the anarchist sympathies of both Borda and Rivera that contradict Lora's suppositions. See Guillermo Lora, op. cit. pp. 59 and 105. See also letter from Dario Borda to the Secretary of the COL, 18 November 1923, Private archive of Luis Cusicanqui (subsequently referred to as "PALC").
13. Tomas Katari, "La Odisea del Grupo Libertario La Antorcha" in *Humanidad: Periodico de Actividad Contemporánea*, (official organ of the FOL), La Paz, 4 May 1928. Thanks to the connections of these Bolivian anarchist groups with foreign groups, the anarchist press in a number of neighboring countries intervened in the campaign for their liberation. For example, *La Protesta*, Lima, Peru, August 1924 and *El Hombre*, Montevideo, Uruguay, 15 August 1924 and 15 February 1925.
14. In 1924, on announcing the appearance of his newspaper *Tierra y Libertad*, Chumacero pointed out the following in a letter to Luis Cusicanqui: "Effectively, the brave soldier, Ricardo Flores Magón, citizen of the anarchist republic of South America, had the great dream of giving to his people LIBERTY together with LAND." PALC, letter from 21 April 1924. Later, Chumacero would be attracted to the personality of Gustavo Navarro

(Tristan Marof) and he affiliated with the socialist party. As usual, Lora redraws this latter activity to make it seem that the 1925 Workers' Congress was dominated by socialists and Marxists. Lora, op. cit. pp. 11-13. We have received valuable appraisals about the activity of the Ferrer School from Don Gunnar Mendoza.

15. N. N. Zeballos, "El Anarquismo en Bolivia," in *La Antorcha*, Buenos Aires, 12 March 1926. Also from the correspondence of Luis Cusicanqui, PALC.
16. *Tierra y Libertad: Organo al servicio del proletariado nacional y de todos los explotados en general*, Sucre, vol. 1, no. 3 (28 March 1926); *La Tea, Periódico Anarquista, organo de la agrupación "La Antorcha,"* vol. 1, no. 1 (November 1927). The internationalist Lora makes a particularly tendentious observation about the Argentinean anarchists who supported the libertarian activities in Bolivia out of a sense of worker's solidarity: "The anarchist organizations were, to a great degree, the work of foreigners amongst whom it is obligatory to mention the following: Fournarakis, militant of the FORA..., the Chilean shoemaker Armando Treviño..., the Peruvians Francisco Gamarra, Navarro and Paulino Aguilar..., the Spaniard Nicolás Mantilla..., the Mexican Renjel..., the Argentine Huerta." (Lora op. cit. p.63). Lora also tried to describe Fournarakis as a candidate for a leadership position in the FOL and he lied about the nationality of Mantilla, who was a tailor from La Paz and linked to the libertarian cultural centers from very early on. The disinformation could not have been more flagrant, given that all the "foreigners" mentioned were involved with to the FOL and the libertarian cultural centers at a time when both had already developed into an important activity.
17. Letters from Antonio Fournarakis to Luis Cusicanqui, PALC: Buenos Aires 14 January 1927; Tucumán 24 March 1927; La Quiaca 2 June 1927 and 28 September 1927; Córdoba 23 February 1928.
18. In a pamphlet written by Carlos Mendoza Mamani, and cited by Lora, the communist leader refers to intellectuals with the following words: "Of all the groups that form the petit bourgeoisie, the intellectuals and the students believe in playing a revolutionary role. In the different leftist poses they assume, they see themselves as the leaders of the revolution, as those who should be in charge and direct the workers and peasants, incapable of organizing themselves, in their struggles." Lora, however, considers this position as proof of Mendoza's sectarianism, whose only positive element would be that of "freeing syndicalism of artisanal control." An artisan himself, Mendoza did nothing more than express a generalized feeling of the workers and artisans of the period—their refusal to be led by intellectuals from outside the world of work no matter how mentally "proletarianized" they considered themselves to be (cf. op. cit. pp. 395-96).
19. The fact that the first protagonists of this conquest were mostly craftspeople not proletarians is a theme that will be analyzed thoroughly in the epilogue.
20. Besides the four already mentioned, there was the *Unión de Trabajadores de la Zona Norte* (Workers Union of the Northern Zone) comprised of the workers of the cardboard and matches factories. Interview with Desiderio Osuna, 5 October 1985.
21. *"Apoliticismo e Inhibición."* Undated, unsigned manuscript, private archive of Petronila Infantes.
22. An Aymara word, used historically to denote those considered colonizers, exploiters and/or rich. [Trans.]
23. Lora, op. cit. pp. 21-31.
24. *Reacción, Semanario Obrero*, vol. 1, no. 3 (May 1927) Oruro, p. 6.
25. Lora, op. cit. pp. 30-31.
26. *Reacción, Semanario Obrero*, vol. 1, no. 3 (May 1927) Oruro, p. 2. Carvajal has earned the bitterest criticisms from Guillermo Lora (op. cit. pp.23-4). On the other hand, Lora praises Trifonio Delgado for his resistance to the "intellectual tutelage of revolutionaries or professional politicians" (op. cit. p. 94).
27. "Las actividades comunistas en la clase indígena," in *El Tiempo*, Sucre 4 August 1927. The reader can consult the following for more information about the rebellion in Chayanta: Silvia Rivera and the THOA team, "Ayllus y Desarollo en el Norte de Potosí," unedited manuscript and Eric Langer, "The Great Southern Bolivian Indian Rebellion of 1927: A Microanalysis," speech at the 46th International Congress of Americanists, Amsterdam, July 1988.

Argentina, December 19th & 20th, 2001
A New Type of Insurrection

by Colectivo Situaciones
translated and introduced by Nate Holdren and Sebastian Touza

Que se vayan todos! Four Spanish words became part of the universal language of rebellion after a multitude of Argentineans occupied the streets the evening of December 19th, 2001. The words were thrown at every politician, functionary, economist, journalist and at nobody in particular, cutting a threshold in history, a before and after for Argentina that would manifest in a wave of resonances around the world.

The revolt surprised analysts, always ready to judge the new with reference to their old interpretive grids. But for many of its protagonists, it had long been foretold. Argentina had been one of the testing grounds for neoliberalism since 1975, shortly before a dictatorship, initially commanded by General Jorge Videla, institutionalized the repression of revolutionary activism while launching a package of economic reforms that began undoing labor rights and welfare state policies that had been the result of decades of workers' struggles. Over 30,000 people were tortured, murdered or disappeared by the regime.

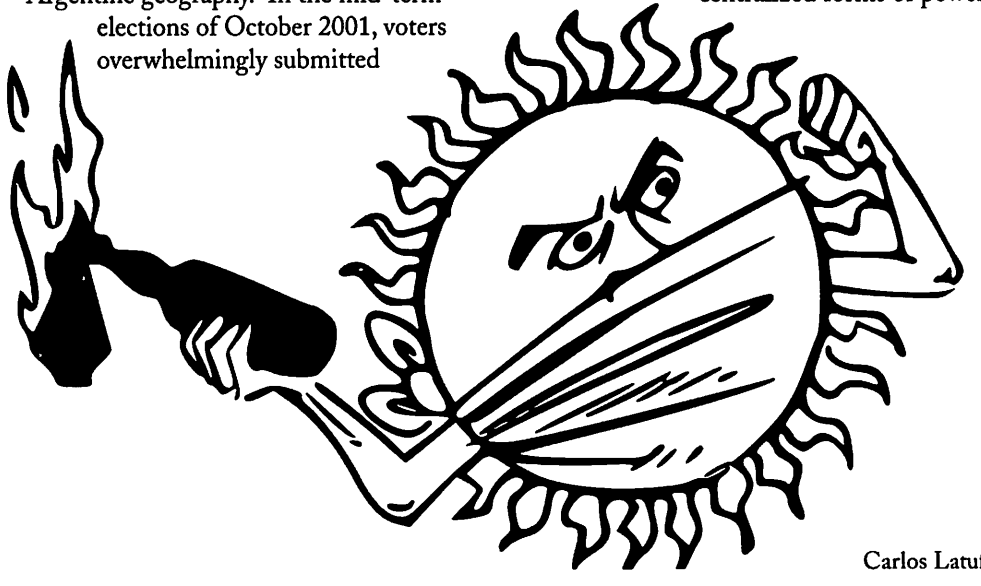
Eight years later, electoral democracy finally returned. The repression and the military's large-scale process of social engineering had been successful in demobilizing the population. Neoliberal reforms could now be imposed by consensus. In the 1990s, president Carlos Menem and his finance minister Domingo Cavallo, in alliance with the labor bureaucracy, undertook sweeping structural adjustment reforms, privatizing nearly every state-run company at every level of government, deregulating labor and finance markets, pegging the peso to the dollar, and leaving nearly forty percent of the population unemployed or underemployed.

During the Menem era, a new generation of activists and new forms of protest slowly emerged. H.I.J.O.S., the organization of the children of the disappeared, came about in 1995 and introduced creative ways of denouncing the unpunished torturers of their often-revolutionary parents, and preserving their memory. In 1997, unemployed workers began protest roadblocks. Their multiple movements, known as *piqueteros*, spread throughout the country very quickly. All attempts of the Peronist government to co-opt the movement proved unsuccessful. To find alternatives to the recession, barter clubs were created in different parts of the country, giving rise to a massive underground economy based on the principle of solidarity.

In 1999, Fernando de la Rúa became president with a promise of change, but kept the neoliberal reforms intact in the name of preserving "governability." When the failure to repay the (now massive) foreign debt brought the national economy to the verge of collapse, de la Rúa recruited Cavallo.

By July 2001, the pace of events had become dizzying. The numerous *piquetero* movements, which so far had acted mostly in isolation, started coordinating entire days of roadblocking throughout the vast Argentine geography. In the mid-term elections of October 2001, voters overwhelmingly submitted spoiled ballots, and voter abstention rates were unprecedented. In November, Cavallo froze withdrawals from bank accounts to prevent a drain on reserves that would force the government to unpeg the peso from the dollar. People from all walks of life suddenly found themselves without money to meet their most basic needs. On December 19th, 2001, the people of Argentina took to the streets in protest.

The following is an excerpt from an English translation of Colectivo Situaciones' book *19 y 20: Apuntes para el novo protagonismo social* (2002) that will be published under the title *19th and 20th: Notes for the New Social Protagonism* early next year. It captures with vivid eloquence the street actions of December 19th and 20th, while exposing the inadequate analyses of the events which fail to acknowledge the agency, autonomy and creativity of the mobilized masses. The two days of street fighting, and the alternative forms of life that appeared afterward—including neighborhood assemblies and factory occupations—reveal what Colectivo Situaciones calls the "thought of the multiple," a form of thinking of the multitude that rejects all centralized forms of power.



Carlos Latuff

Colectivo Situaciones is a group of militant researchers based in Buenos Aires who began working together two years before the uprisings they explore in *19 y 20*. The collective came into being motivated by the search for a form of intervention and knowledge production that 'reads' struggles from within, a phenomenology and a genealogy that moves away from the modalities established by both academia and traditional left politics. This method springs from the recognition that "as much potential as thought and practice have, they cannot reach their full potential if not based in a concrete situation."[1]

Colectivo Situaciones has published several books and pamphlets on different aspects of Argentina's *new protagonism*, including the unemployed workers movement MTD of Solano, the peasants' movement Mo.Ca.S.E. and H.I.J.O.S. Their research has extended to forging collaborations with local radical experiments in places like Bolivia, Mexico, Peru, Chile, France, Uruguay, Brazil, Italy, Spain and Germany. Some of these affinities are documented in articles, working papers and declarations, which can be found on the collective's website: http://www.situaciones.org.

Insurrection Without a Subject

The insurrection of December 19th and 20th did not have an author. There are no political or sociological theories available to comprehend, in its full scope, the logic of those more than thirty uninterrupted hours. The difficulty of this task resides in the volume of personal and group stories, the phase shifts, and the breakdown of the representations that in other conditions would have been able to shape the meaning of these events. It becomes impossible to intellectually encompass the intensity and plurality linked by the pots and pans[2] on the 19th, and by open confrontation on the 20th. The most common avenues of interpretation collapsed one by one: the political conspiracy, the hidden hand of obscure interests, and because of that all-powerful combination, the crisis of capitalism.

In the streets it was not easy to understand what was happening. What had awakened those long-benumbed energies from their dreams? What might all the people who were gathered there want? Did they want the same that we, who were also there, wanted? How to know? Did knowing matter?

First in the neighborhoods of Buenos Aires, and then in the Plaza de Mayo, all sorts of things could be heard: "Whoever does not jump is an Englishman"; "Whoever does not jump is from the military"; "Execute those who sold the nation"; "Cavallo motherfucker"; "Argentina, Argentina"; and the most celebrated from the night of the 19th, "Stick the state of siege up your asses."[3] Then, the first articulation of "All of them out, none of them should remain." The mixture of slogans made the struggles of the past reappear in the present: against the dictatorship, the Malvinas/Falklands war, the impunity of the genocides, the privatization of public companies, among others. The chants did not overlap, nor was it possible to identify previously existing groups among the crowd gathered there. All, as a single body, chanted the slogans one by one. At the same time, the contemporary *piquetero* methods of barricades, burning and blocking urban arteries, appeared in all the streets.

Words were superfluous during the most intense moments of those days. Not because the bodies in movement were silent—they were not—rather, words circulated, following unusual patterns of signification. Words functioned in another way. They sounded along with pots and pans, but did not substitute for them. They did not remit to a specific demand. Words did not transmit a constituted meaning, they just sounded. A reading of these words cannot be done unless the new and specific function they acquired is understood: they expressed the acoustic resources of those who were there, as a collective confirmation of the possibilities of constructing coherence from all the fragments that were beginning to be recognized in an unanimous and indeterminate will.

The fiesta—because Wednesday the 19th was a fiesta—gradually expanded. It was the end of the terrorizing effects of the dictatorship and an open challenge to the state of siege imposed by the government, and at the same time, there was celebration for the surprise of being protagonists of a historical action, even without being able to explain to each other the particular motivations of the rest of the participants. The sequence was the same all over the city: from fear and anger to the balcony, the rooftop, the street corners, and once there, to the transmutation. It was Wednesday; 10:30 p.m. for some, 10 p.m. for others. And on the patios and in the streets a novel situation was occurring. Thousands of people were living through a transformation at once: "being taken" by an unexpected collective process. People also celebrated

the possibility of a still-possible fiesta, as well as the realization of potent social desires, capable of altering thousands of singular destinies.

Nobody tried to deny the drama of the events. Joy did not negate each individual's experience of concern and struggle. It was the tense eruption of all these elements at once. Archaic forms of ritualism were adopted, a simulation of exorcism whose purpose—an anthropologist would say—seemed to be the re-encounter with the capacities of the multitudinous, the collective and the neighborly. In a matter of minutes, each had to make decisions that are usually difficult to carry out: moving away from television; talking to oneself, and to others; asking what was really going on; resisting for a few seconds the intense impulse to go out on the streets with pots and pans; approaching rather prudently, and then, letting oneself be driven in unforeseeable directions.

Once in the streets, the barricades and the fire united the neighbors. From there, they moved on swiftly to see what was happening in nearby corners. Then it was necessary to decide where to go: Plaza de Mayo or Plaza de los Dos Congresos, and in each neighborhood, to start finding targets that were more at hand: Videla's house or Cavallo's. The multitude divided itself, in each neighborhood, and dealt with all the "targets" at once. Acts of radical spontaneity sustained themselves in collectively organized memory. Thousands of people acted with clear and precise goals, enacting a collective intelligence.

At dawn, another scene began to be played. While some were going to sleep—some at 3 a.m., others at 5:30 a.m.—others held discussions about what was happening and what would come next. Many continued to organize, with the objective of not allowing Plaza de Mayo to be occupied by repressive forces, given that officially, the state of siege was still in place.

By then, the confrontation—which had not yet been unleashed in all its magnitude—began to be prefigured. On the 20th, things presented themselves in a different way. The square became the greatest object of disputes. What took place there, right after midday, was a true battle. It is not easy to say what happened. It is not easy to remember other occasions on which such an air was breathed in the plaza. The violence of the confrontations contrasted with the absence of apparent meaning among the participants.

Young people openly confronted the police, while the older ones were holding on and helping from behind the frontlines. Roles and tasks were spontaneously structured. Plaza de Mayo revalidated its condition as a privileged stage for community actions with the greatest symbolic power. Only this time, the representations that accompanied so many other multitudes who believed in the power of that massive pink building so jealously and inefficiently defended by the police did not materialize. There were detainees, injured, and many dead as a result of the brutal police repression. Officially, they spoke of thirty fatalities in the whole country, but we all know there were more.

The city of Buenos Aires became redrawn. The financial center was destroyed. Or maybe, reconstructed by new human flows, new forms of inhabiting and understanding the meaning of store windows and banks. The energies unleashed were extraordinary, and as could be anticipated, they did not deactivate. The events of the 19th and 20th in the city of Buenos Aires were followed by a feverish activity of *escraches*,[4] assemblies and marches. In the rest of the country, the reaction was uneven. But in every province, the repercussion of the events combined with previous circumstances: roadblocks, looting, protests and uprisings.

Words & Silences: From Interpretation to the Unrepresentable

With silence and quietude, words recovered their habitual usages. The first interpretations began to circulate. Those who sought the immediate political readings of the events faced enormous difficulties. It is evident that no power (*poder*[5]) could be behind them. Not because those powers do not exist, but because the events surpassed the capacities of any mechanism of control that anyone could have sought to mount. The questions about power remain unanswered: Who was behind this? Who led the masses?

These are ideological questions. They interpolate ghosts. What is the subject who believes itself to be seeing powers beyond life looking for? How to comprehend the existence of this conspiratorial subjectivity, that believes the only possible sense of the events is the one played out by already instituted powers? If these questions had any value in other situations, they were never as insipid as on the 19th and 20th. The separation between the bodies and their movements and the imaginary plans organized by the established powers became tangible like never before in our history. Moreover, these powers had to show all their impotence: not only were they unable to provide a logic for the situation, but even afterwards they did not come upon anything but to accommodate themselves in the effects of the events. Thus, all the pre-existing interpretative matrices, overturned, caricatured, were activated to dominate the assemblies that wagered on supporting the movement of the 19th and 20th.

The diagnoses were many: "socialist revolution," "revolutionary crisis," "anti-democratic fascism," "reactionary market antipolitics," "the second national independence," "a crazy and irrational social outburst," "a citizens' hurricane for a new democracy," "a *mani pulite* from below"[6] or the Deluge itself. All these interpretations, heterogeneous in their content, operate in very similar ways: faced with a major event, they cast their old nets, seeking much less to *establish* what escapes through them than to verify the possibilities of formatting a diverse movement.

The movement of the 19th and 20th dispensed with all types of centralized organizations. They were not present in the call to assemble, in the organiza-

tion of the events, nor in the aftermath, when it was time to interpret the events. This condition, which in other times would have been experienced as a lack, manifested itself on this occasion as an achievement. Because this absence was not *spontaneous*. There was a multitudinous and sustained rejection of every organization that intended to represent, symbolize or hegemonize street activity. In all these senses, the popular intellect overcame the intellectual previsions and political strategies.

Moreover, not even the state was the central organization behind the movement. In fact, the state of siege was not as much confronted as it was *routed*. If confrontation organizes a symmetric opposition between two entities, routing highlights an *asymmetry*. The multitude disorganized the efficacy of governmental oppression with the explicit goal of controlling the national territory. The neutralization of the powers (*potencias*) of the state on the part of a multiple reaction was made possible by the condition of—and not the shortage of—the inexistence of a call to assemble and a central organization.

In addition, some intellectuals—very comfortable with the consistency of their role—feel that a multiplicity in action, which destabilizes all solidity upon which to think, threatens their authority.

But perhaps we can get even closer to some hard novelties of the movement of the 19th and 20th.

The presence of so many people who do not usually participate in the public sphere, unless it is in the capacity of limited individuals and objects of representation by either the media or the political apparatuses, de-instituted[7] any central situation. There were no individual protagonists: every representational situation was de-instituted. A practical and effective de-institution, animated by the presence of a multitude of bodies of men and women, extended later in the motion of *"all of them out, none of them should remain."*

In this way, without speeches or flags, without words unifying a single logic, the insurrection of the 19th and 20th was becoming potent in the same proportion that it resisted all facile and immediate meanings. The movement of the 19th and 20th blew up a series of negative beliefs about the capacity for resistance of the men and women who, unexpectedly, gathered there. Unlike past insurrections, the movement did not organize under the illusion of a promise; current demonstrations have abandoned certainties with respect to a promising future. The presence of the multitude in the streets does not extend from the spirit of the 1970s. This was not about the insurgent masses conquering their future under the socialist promise of a better life.

The movement of the 19th and 20th draws its logic from the present, not from the future; its affirmation cannot be read in terms of programs and proposals about what the future of Argentina should be. Of course there are shared longings, yet they did not let themselves be apprehended into single "models" of thought, action and organization. Multiplicity was a key element for the efficacy of the movement: it gained the strength possessed by an intelligent diversity of demonstrations, gathering points, different groupings, and a whole plurality of forms of organization, initiatives and solidarities. This active variety permitted the simultaneous reproduction of the same elaboration in each group, without the need of an explicit coordination. And at the same time, this was the most effective antidote against any obstruction of the action.

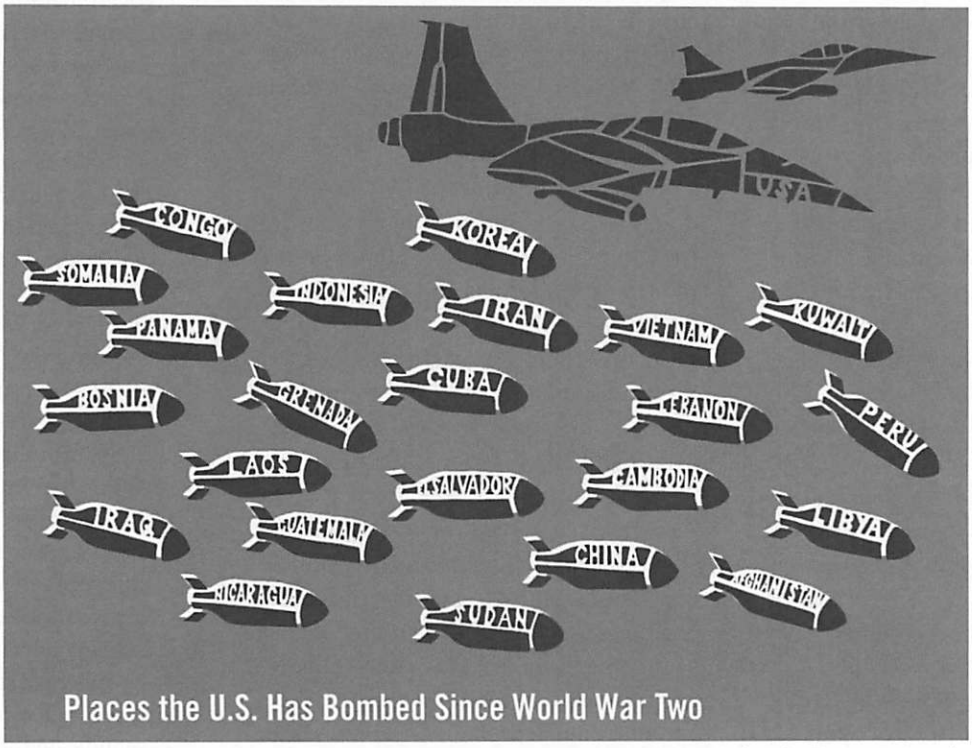
Consequently, there was no senseless dispersion, but an experience of the multiple, an opening towards new and active becomings. In sum, the insurrection could not be defined by any of the lacks that are attributed to it. Its plenitude consisted in the conviction with which the social body unfolded as a multiple, and the mark it was capable of provoking on its own history.

Endnotes

1. Marina Sitrin, "The Shock of the New: An Interview with Colectivo Situaciones," *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory*, Vol. 7, no. 2 (2003): 8.
2. Loud banging on saucepans or *caceroles* by large crowds has been a common practice in the recent uprisings in Argentina. This activity is called a *cacerolazo*. The suffix *-azo*, in this case, means "insurrection." *Cacerolazo*, then, translates literally as "insurrection of the sauce pans." [Trans.]
3. The state of siege refers to the emergency measures taken by the Argentine government in an attempt to put a lid on unrest. [Trans.]
4. The word *"escrache"* is Argentinean slang for "exposing something outrageous." *Escraches* started as colorful street demonstrations organized by H.I.J.O.S. in front of the homes of people involved in human rights violations during the dictatorship. During and after the rebellion, numerous spontaneous *escraches* were organized by people whenever they spotted a politician in a public place, such as a restaurant, café, or on the street. [Trans.]
5. In Spanish there are two words for power; *poder* and *potencia(s)*. Their origins can be traced, respectively, to the Latin words *potestas* and *potentia*. In general, *poder* refers to transcendent forms of power, such as state power, and potencia refers to power that exists in the sphere of immanent, concrete experience. T o maintain this distinction, we indicate the original term between brackets when the use is unclear or changes from prior usage. The words "potent" and "impotence" should be read as derivatives of *potencia*. [Trans.]
6. *Mani pulite*, literally "clean hands" in Italian, represented a national investigation into government corruption in Italy during the 1990s. Because the campaign took place at the same time Argentinean newspapers were unveiling one corruption scandal after another, the expression was quickly adopted by journalists and politicians. [Trans.]
7. In order to preserve the resonances that indicate a power opposite to that which institutes or that which is part of a constitutive process, we have chosen to use the expression "de-institute" as a translation of the Spanish word *destituir*, which makes reference to the power that unseats a regime. [Trans.]

Four Questions for Anarchist Art

by Josh MacPhee



Places the U.S. Has Bombed Since World War Two—poster design both stenciled and silkscreened and distributed around the world via art shows, sales, and pasting on the street, 2002.

Anti-authoritarians have been extremely successful in using art and spectacle in recent years, whether to re-energize the protest movement in Seattle with both puppets and window smashing, or to fight dam construction in India with complex ceremonies and direct action theater. Historically, art has played an important role in revolutionary movements, and the Left has a long tradition of cultural resistance, particularly in the graphic arts. The graphics collective *Atelier Populaire* played an integral role in the student-worker uprising in Paris in May 1968. Amilcar Cabral has written extensively on the central role of culture in the African liberation movements in the 60s and 70s.

Surprisingly most of this history seems lost to the Left itself, and we are far more likely to have a corporation mine our own visual history to create advertisements than to study and understand the history ourselves. Indeed, art and culture are rarely the focus of debate for anarchists and anti-authoritarians. As art has become increasingly rarefied in our society, and relegated to museums and expensive galleries, we have tended to spend decreasing amounts of time thinking about it. As a result, our definition of "Anarchist Art" is usually by default simply art created by an anarchist, whether it is a clip-art graphic, a heavy metal song, agit-prop street theater or an abstract painting.

Rather than being content with shallow, unconsidered, or simply absent of perspectives on art, I think it is extremely important that anarchists develop complex ideas about how art and culture operate in society, influence emotions and ideas, and are part of

Magon—stencils of Ricardo Flores Magon painted in San Francisco, 2003.

movements for social change. For over ten years I have been actively producing art and graphics for anarchist projects and publications, attempting to develop anti-authoritarian concepts and ethics in my art practice, and put forward radical ideas through art created for and on streets across the United States. Like any other anarchist agitator, I want to debate the effectiveness of my actions, but as a movement we don't to have the proper tools to assess cultural work. (Generally speaking, I have received little critical response to my artwork from other anarchists.) Developing such conceptual and critical tools is as complicated as it is vital, since culture and art are qualitative, not quantitative. You can count the bodies that came to a protest or the amount of money raised by a fundraiser, but there is no clear scale by which to measure the effectiveness of a cultural product or event.

So what would a new and more nuanced perspective on "Anarchist Art" look like? If anarchist art isn't just art made by anarchists, what is it? I'm not proposing that there should be a strict definition, or that we should set as our goal the ability to decide what is, or isn't, anarchist culture. But we do need to think through the implications of our activities, whether we are producers, users, or just viewers/listeners of art. Anarchists should think about the effectiveness of the culture we produce, and maybe even question why we produce an endless parade of text-heavy newspapers and pamphlets instead of beautiful posters, street art, or videos. I propose that we could ask the following questions about any particular art piece or activity, in order to help illuminate the role(s) it does or might play:

Leaf on TV—stencil painted on abandoned television, Chicago, 2001.

1 *Is it anti-authoritarian in content?* Does it directly promote anarchism? Is it a portrait of Bakunin? An advertisement for self-management?

2 *Is it anti-authoritarian in form?* Is it a play put on by a theater troupe without a director? Is it a series of posters that have been collaboratively produced? Is it a directive telling the audience what to think, or does it pose questions or freely offer information to an audience?

3 *How does it enter the world? What is its audience?* Is it an expensive one of a kind art object in an exclusive gallery? Is it a reproducible and inexpensive print? Is it posted on the street for anyone to see? Is it a mural on the side of a neighborhood community center?

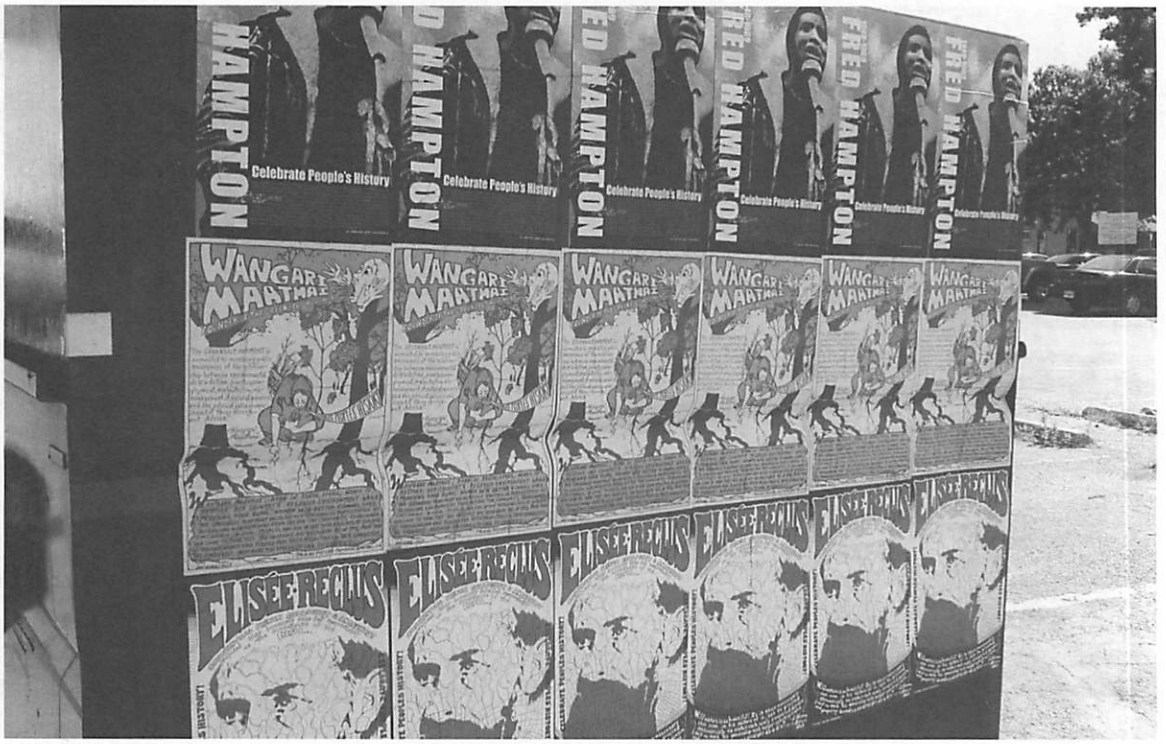
4 *Does it directly contest state or corporate power?* Is it illegal? Does it challenge capitalist social relations?

Are We Free Yet?—stenciled poster pasted in Brooklyn, 2003.

I've been trying to grapple with all of these issues in my own art practice over the past ten years. I used to take the first question very seriously, and thought that the content of my work had to be revolutionary: pictures of heroes, people protesting, shouts against U.S. imperialism. My poster "Places the U.S. has Bombed Since World War 2" and my Ricardo Flores Magon stencil are good examples of this kind of didactic political art. The Magon stencil clearly responds to the first question, it is a portrait of an anarchist. The bombs poster is as didactic as the Magon stencil, but not necessarily anarchist. What is interesting is that, unlike the stencil, it expects something of the audience; it asks them to challenge dominant conceptions of the role of the United States in the rest of the world.

Increasingly I've been reflecting back on this, and feeling that the questions that have oriented traditional revolutionary art, for instance the question of how to "properly" represent the working class, seem flat and increasingly meaningless. I don't want to create art that makes people think like me (or the political party of which I am a member). I want to make art that encourages people to think, period. It is a collective failure to reflect, grapple with complexity, and develop critical thinking skills that has undermined so many past movements for social change. In this light, question one becomes far less interesting than the other three.

Over time I have attempted to develop more work that asks questions rather than answering them. Five or six years ago I began attempting to create art that operates in radical ways but that isn't simply surface level anarchist propaganda. One of the first projects I came up with was a series of graphic leaf images that I stenciled in various shapes and sizes around Chicago. Most were larger than life 2' x 3' leaves, although some were smaller, like on the one painted on an abandoned television shown here. What I think made this project effective was its novelty and context. No one expected to see gigantic leaves painted in front of their apartment. They



Celebrate People's History poster series—pasted in Nashville TN, 2003. "Wangar Maathai" by Ally Beansprout; "Fred Hampton" by Claude Moller; and "Elise Reclus" by Shaun S.

weren't traditional graffiti, though they were spray painted, which clearly made them illegal. They weren't murals, and didn't operate in the way most community art projects do. They weren't an advertisement, and they weren't communicating a clear or simple message. All of this forced an audience to ponder this alien invasion in the visual landscape, and since there is so little in public view that demands that we think, this was a radical act in and of itself. Although not originally intended as such, the leaves also became an environmental statement. By haunting the cityscape they raised simple questions that are rarely asked publicly about why the primary green space in the city is becoming the pre-fab flowers and trees planted in road medians.

The "Are We Free Yet?" pill bottle is intended to operate in a similar manner. In this example, a larger than life object is directly asking the viewer a question, but it is unclear whether the question refers back to the "freedom" that drug companies claim their products provide, a much larger political question about our entire existence, or something more personal that viewers are to ask themselves.

I think these are good examples of why form and context are important to consider when looking at art's potential to radically transform an audience's consciousness or outlook. In the abstract, an image of a leaf is hardly radical, or even political for that matter. It is the how, why and where of the leaf that become important. In these examples, effectiveness demanded that I consciously reject anarchist content in order to catch the viewer off guard. In addition, because it is situated on the street, the work is free and accessible to everyone, but ironically this location makes the art illegal. Its very existence is evidence that someone transcended the boundaries of societally acceptable ways to communicate. Ideally, this contradiction should raise some pretty interesting questions for the viewer

Art installation at the 1926 Exhibition Space, Chicago, 2004.

about the nature of control, communication and public space.

Like the larger anarchist movement, which creates and re-creates increasingly inventive ways to collaborate, build and organize, radical artists need to recognize that our efforts are minimized when we work alone. I think my collaborative work has been even more important than my individual work. This has taken many forms. One example is the Celebrate People's History poster series, for which I've organized over 20 artists (so far) to create posters celebrating points in radical history. The posters are then printed and distributed as far and wide as possible, including being wheat-pasted on the street. Another collectively organized activity was a long string of large-scale social events. The first of these was the Department of Space and Land Reclamation in 2001, a weekend-long event encouraging artists and activists to enact projects that reclaimed the streets of Chicago in some way, whether through pirate radio broadcasts or by causing massive disturbances on the main commercial strip in downtown. Since that initial event, I've worked with an evolving crew of artists and activists to produce a huge volume of projects, some attacking problems like gentrification or the corporatization of daily life, others intervening in more traditional protest situations.

I've proposed the above questions partly because they relate to the evolution of my own work. I'm sure that anti-authoritarian artists who work in other ways would raise different questions. More public dialogue around our questions and problems can only help the entire movement to develop, and I would really love to hear from other artists and activists interested in developing deeper theory and practice around anti-authoritarian cultural production. We need to start sharing ideas and building new and exciting projects. I'm sure this is already going on in some places, and I want to participate. ✸

"Neither Butchers nor Lunatics"
New Anticapitalist Organizing in Beirut

by Mary Foster and Jerome Klassen

Over the last few years, a diverse anticapitalist movement has emerged in Beirut, Lebanon. This article is a roundtable interview with three young men who are active in this movement and publishing under the names Fouad El Shmaly, Imad Mortada, and Najeeb Shakeeb. Four women from the same political milieu were also invited to participate, but did not accept. The goal of the interview was to discuss anticapitalist organizing in Lebanon and the politics of solidarity. The interview took place in January 2005, and was updated in August.

Describe your main forms of engagement in social struggles in recent years.

El Shmaly: I've been involved in the campaign to boycott U.S. products, the "No War, No Dictatorships" campaign [a coalition of groups and independent activists against the war on Iraq and the Arab dictatorships], Indymedia Beirut [see www.beirut.indymedia.org], *Al Yasari* [Leftist] magazine, a national campaign to reduce the electoral age to eighteen, and a campaign for civil marriages.

Mortada: Over the past three years, I have been involved in Helem (Lebanese Protection for LGBTQ people; see www.helem.net), the Independent Media Center Beirut, the No War, No Dictatorships campaign, *Al Yasari*, Escanda [an autonomous collective in northern Spain; see www.escanda.org], animating children's workshops in Palestinian refugee camps (mainly clay animation), nonviolent antioccupation activities in occupied Iraq, and the Campaign to Boycott Supporters of Israel.

Shakeeb: The Palestinian Intifada in 2002 provoked a period of enthusiastic activism after decades of civil war and state oppression. I was in twelfth grade and helped to get my schoolmates involved, alongside university students, in protests to support the Intifada, boycott campaigns of U.S./Israeli products and supporters, and sending financial aid to the people of Palestine. Actions like the Open Sit-in in downtown Beirut lead to the foundation of IMC Beirut. People felt they were contributing to the struggle, having lost confidence in the regimes of the region to act.

Then the U.S. administration declared its intention to attack Iraq, and I participated in organizing the No War, No Dictatorships campaign. I have also been involved in building IMC Beirut, in a country where media is controlled by capital and political figures. We produced Leaded, Unleaded, a film on state repression, and are working on two media projects about Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. At the same time, I volunteer in the Palestinian refugee camps with the marvelous Al-Najdeh Association, which organizes social programs in the camps to address the immediate needs of women and children.

What changes in your political orientation have taken place during that time, and how do they relate to the political context in Beirut and around the world?

El Shmaly: My defection from the Lebanese Communist Party [LCP] was out of the conviction that the party no longer represents those it claims to represent, and that its policies are driven by the goal of getting a seat in parliament. The LCP was not able to recover from its postwar situation of being on the winning side militarily and the losing side politically (i.e., it had no share in the government or parliament). Eventually I realized that no existing parties in Lebanon represented my beliefs. The two nonsectarian (nonreligious) parties are undemocratic, and one is fascist. This type of defection—activists leaving traditional parties to become independent—is a growing phenomenon in Lebanon. For a few years now, people have turned to independent leftist groups, mainly campus based, as the most effective and convenient tool for social change. This is mainly due to the bankruptcy and inefficiency of the traditional parties.

You could say that the entire political scene in Beirut—at least until UN Security Council Resolution 1559—operates within a fixed framework, with few exceptions.[1] The ruling party/opposition framework offers no choice: there was no real difference between the financial policies of Salim El Hoss and Rafik Al Hariri, for example.[2] Both men considered privatization to be the only solution to the debt problem. A major element of the framework is the role played by Syria in Lebanese domestic politics. Because of this framework, social resentment does not yet have its true political representation. It is not allowed to materialize and it is diluted by the illusion of collective sectarian gain. Things are polarized along sectarian (religious) lines, which blur the social struggle.

Mortada: My politics have been shaped

by the reemergence of "think globally, act locally," as well as by the global days of action against the World Bank, IMF, WTO, and so on. These experiences have made me realize that being anti-imperialist does not automatically mean alliance. The divisions and diversity in the "movement" are raising questions at the personal, collective, local, and global levels. Are we all fighting for the same "another world"? Are the allies of today the persecutors of tomorrow? These issues are arising even within small groups.

My politics also developed on the level of horizontal, collective self-organization in relatively autonomous spaces/projects as an alternative to conventional "activism" circles (i.e., party structures). This shifted my attention to internal, autonomous space politics, and to raising questions about state dependency, especially when it comes to the "justice" system and our failure to create alternatives to police "justice" in cases such as rape, violence, and so forth.

Shakeeb: I'm young, and though I've always been on the Left, my political orientation has shifted with my experience and the actions I've been involved in. Four years ago, I was a Trotskyist, but I had difficulty reconciling the concept of the vanguard party and the Bolshevik heritage, on the one side, with freedom and socialism, on the other. My basic ideals and the things I found in Trotskyism were in conflict. I found answers later on when I started to read about anarchism and libertarian socialism, which are completely unheard of in this region.

What were the main expressions of solidarity with people in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine during this period? How has your anti-imperialist work related to that of traditional Lebanese anti-imperialist parties?

Anti-war march in Beirut, February 2003—Rawane (Indymedia Beirut).

El Shmaly: After the outbreak of the second Intifada, Beirut was buzzing with daily protests, marches, and sit-ins. Many political forces, including major Palestinian factions, joined together to start a large sit-in in downtown Beirut, protesting the Israeli invasions and supporting the Intifada. It lasted six weeks, relying mainly on independent activists and continuing after the political parties decided, at the end of three weeks, to call a halt. Open-air workshops, discussions, exhibitions, and marches were organized. Many campaigns started from that sit-in.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah erected a huge model of the Al Aqsa Mosque and loudspeakers opposite the sit-in. They played songs all day long, trying to hijack the action. This can be seen as typical of how the "ruling parties" react to the successful actions of others. It was also typical of traditional parties such as the LCP and the Progressive Socialist Party [the Druze party, or PSP] that they decided to stop the action when it started to annoy the government. When the government decided that things had gone far enough, that public tension had been released and that sufficient notice had been taken of events in Palestine, people were told to go home and that it was not healthy to stay on the streets any longer. The PSP did this because it was part of the government, but we have never been able to understand why the LCP always complies, why it fails in general to address the social challenges people face every day.

Traditional Lebanese parties do politics. Social change and equality are merely clauses in their constitutions. None

of them are truly committed or even involved in a real struggle for change.

Mortada: There was the Open Sit-In, which was joined by French, U.S., Canadian, and Spanish activists under the "tents of resistance" project. Numerous other actions included the first peaceful occupations of corporations involved in Israeli apartheid (Burger King and McDonald's); independent mass protests on "F15" and "M15," organized by the No War, No Dictatorships campaign, in which a queer pride bloc marched for the first time in Arab history (five members of Helem with rainbow flags and an "Out against the War" banner); and a boycott campaign involving publications, actions, and global networking. We also sent media activists to occupied Iraq to help establish IMC Baghdad, as well as report from there and engage in nonviolent antioccupation actions and monitoring. We organized the first protest action targeting an Arab embassy in response to Kuwait's involvement in the war on Iraq. This action culminated in the blockade of a highway connecting the embassy to the airport and UN house.

Our actions showed that an alternative to the conservative/compromising/less radical approach to struggle is possible. It escaped the confines created by the mainstream anti-imperialist movements. The space created by these parties excluded several minority (e.g., Kurds) and nonconformist groups (queers, radical feminists). Their approach was mired in borders, nationalism, and/or Islam. The difference between the two spaces went beyond a difference in political perspective to a conflict over mobilization strategies and [street] tactics. They were at opposite ends of the pole this time. We were no longer "the Left." It became clear that there is a need to reclaim the term "leftist" and demonstrate its inclusiveness for all struggles for total emancipation. Their "another world" is the opposite of ours.

Solidarity actions with the Palestinian struggle posed an important question: whether or not to link with the anti-Zionist, antioccupation, and antimilitarization movements and individuals in Israel. This is difficult because of the historical and current relations between the Israeli and Lebanese governments, as well as the emotions and memories of people in Lebanon who have suffered, and who are still suffering, from Israeli aggression (Lebanese and Palestinian). The mainstream parties worked in total denial of the existence of the state of Israel, and rejected all contact or collaboration with Israeli radical activists. The groups I was involved in used a "no borders, no nations" discourse. We refused to exclude any inspiring anti-imperialist/occupation/militarization/Zionist action on the basis of passport and nationality—let alone on the basis of the policies of the government of the radical activists who carried them out. This was a first in Lebanon. We made links with radical activists from Israel, who contributed to *Al Yasari* and IMC Beirut, and cyber coordinated many global protest days with us.

Shakeeb: Maybe these actions seem unimportant, but they were really significant compared to the level of activism here and the state of depression that ruled after the occupation of Jenin in April 2002. The No War, No Dictatorships campaign was truly remarkable, and not just because it brought together diverse leftist groups, social and environmental nongovernmental organizations, a queer group, and independents. It was also the explicit stance on war, occupation, and regimes, and the fact that we openly refused both Bush's imperialist ambitions and the oppression of Saddam and all the other regimes. "We defend neither butchers nor lunatics," we declared, as the Islamists, Arab nationalists, and traditional Left marched with pictures of Saddam, Arafat, Al Assad, and Lebanese president Lahoud.

What are the implications of your commitments to secularism, feminism, and queer liberation for your anti-imperialism?

Mortada: Directly, these commitments mean integrating people who fall into these categories into the struggle against

Anti-war march in Beirut, February 2003—Rawane (Indymedia Beirut).

imperialism. Indirectly, they require creating a dialogue within Lebanese society about the right of such beliefs and groups to exist and to practice freely.

In addition to the queer pride bloc, many of our marches were led by a front line of women. This was a statement against sex discrimination practiced socially and at the state level; it addressed the need for equality and women's participation in society. We also put out a solidarity statement linking the effect of imperialism and capitalism to the daily discrimination (amounting to oppression and even the denial of the right to exist) against queers, seculars, and women.

The backlash of Lebanese society against such ideologies and people is a matter of lack of exposure and information. The alternative anti-imperialist movements allow a closer look at these groups and ideas by presenting a positive public image linked to the hardships of everyday people in Lebanon under the "new world order."

What forms of state oppression have Lebanese struggles faced in the past several years, and what has the impact been on organizing?

El Shmaly: One of the first tactics used by the state after the war was a crackdown on labor unions—for example, dividing them and prosecuting their leaders. It then reduced freedom of the press, threatened to shut down newspapers and television stations, and finally closed down MTV [a Lebanese opposition station]. Other repression? Forbidding demonstrations and prosecuting those who defied this curfew. The existence of a strong and powerful secret service [moukhabarat], existing even in universities, which arrests people and gives them long detentions without trial. There is also mandatory military service. Direct military force—for example, in response to the "revolution of the hungry."[3] Police oppression against demonstrators—for instance, killing five and injuring many in May 2004, during a general strike in Beirut.

Mortada: We could add that arrests and interrogations that violate human rights are frequently reported. And MTV is not the only example of censorship—a queer Web site [www.GayLebanon.com] was also closed down.

Shakeeb: Excluding the time of civil war, when political militias were in control, the Lebanese state has a rich history of suppressing every voice of dissent. Starting from the strikes of factory workers, tobacco peasants, and fishermen, to students' actions, from the mid-1950s until now, the Lebanese state has crushed struggles with violence, including live bullets. The army is used for protesters, while internal security (police, armed with automatic rifles) is used to protect politicians. Then there are the security organizations or secret services. We live in a society highly monitored by countless Lebanese intelligence organizations, and even Syrian ones, which get involved in people's lives in order to preserve "order." What is especially dangerous is the fact that society accepts state oppression as normal. It is getting really hard to organize and act because society has unleashed the state "to disrupt, discredit, and destroy," to use COINTELPRO language.

What are some of the other main impediments to the growth of effective anticapitalist movements in Lebanon?

El Shmaly: There are many, including the ongoing dominance of traditional parties and factions in Lebanon, sectarianism, the control that religious institutions exercise over vast sectors of public opinion, and the continuous state of no war/no peace between the Israeli and Arab states.

The high level of polarization of the Lebanese public along the lines of the traditional parties and on the basis of religion makes it hard to create a popular movement. The state is still considered to be an institution in which sects are to share "the benefits," and almost every sect has its representation in this formula. University admission, jobs, health care, housing loans, and so on, are all subject to this balance of power. An organic relation between "subjects" and confessions is created; "citizens" do not yet exist in the eyes of the state. The heritage of the civil war still overshadows the country. Only two parties can be considered national: the LCP and the Syrian National Socialist Party, a semifascist party founded in the 1940s that calls for unity with "natural Syria." The sectarian division is still dominant demographically and geographically. Sectarianism and the Syrian influence are two of the most important factors halting any struggle for social justice.

Recently, the failing economy and the state's preaching that privatization is the cure for the huge national debt led to a discussion of how privatization is to be executed—not whether it is actually useful (even though, in previous experiences of privatization, the national debt kept rising). I consider Lebanon to be experiencing a mutated form of capitalism, one that is entangled with state capitalism and widespread monopoly by politicians and partisans, combined with severe levels of corruption. In such a situation, you are lucky if you can rally against co-

rruption, never mind capitalism.

What ties do you have with radical groups in other parts of the Middle East? Or in North America? What benefits do you see in having such links?

Mortada: IMC Beirut (the only active IMC in an Arab state) has created links among radical movements blacked out by mainstream media and mainstream political parties, not to mention smothered by the repression of governmental (or state) bodies. The boycott campaign against companies supporting Israeli apartheid established another pan-Arab bridge, which later extended to a worldwide network of activists.

These links permit solidarity actions with local groups facing repression, the exchange of information and expertise/experience, some mainstream media attention, and the possibility of posing a greater threat to local dictatorships (for example, anti-Lahoud protests, anti-Mubarak protests, and anti-Assad petitions). The presence of feminist and queer groups (Helem and Aswat) in some Arab states, and their greater visibility because of these links, has enhanced social integration that is still minimal, but promising.

Linking to North American struggles challenges the concept of the "clash of civilizations," the imperialist understanding of West and East, and Christian and Muslim fundamentalism. It bridges the gap between the South and the North, even if only on the activist scene. It also contributes to the awareness that local struggles are linked to global ones, especially those in industrialized countries. The interaction between activists from the Middle East and North America has generated a better understanding of Middle East politics, affecting the way radical North American groups organize on issues related to the Middle East. This better understanding was clear in international forums when activists from North America challenged the demagogues of mainstream political parties from the Middle East. It is creating a network of skill sharing and solidarity in facing oppression, repression, and capitalism.

Shakeeb: I am starting to get in contact with anarchists in Cyprus, Palestine, and Egypt. On the global side, I am in touch with people in France and North America. Developing links with people who think and work similarly is essential, not only because it strengthens bonds between radicals and dissidents, but because it has also allowed me (and my like-minded comrades) to learn from others' struggles and experiences, especially those who have a great heritage in autonomous, nonauthoritarian self-organizing.

What do you see as the responsibilities of anti-imperialists in North America?

Mortada: I think North Americans should be fighting Islamophobia without falling into Islamophilia and disregarding the continuous human rights violations dictated by political Islam. This can only be achieved with a clear understanding of the difference between Islam as a religion and political Islam practiced on the state and social levels. It involves presenting a counterimage of Islam and "Arabs" for the public, and creating a counterawareness to state propaganda.

North American governments are involved in a continuous aggravated attack on human and environmental rights, in their own countries and worldwide. It is the responsibility of North American activists to confront and impede this (with increased direct action intervention), including the system of border closures, interrogations, detentions, visas, and deportations. ✸

Endnotes

1. Resolution 1559 (September 2, 2004) calls for Hezbollah to disarm and Syria to leave Lebanon, but it is also seen as the latest U.S. tool to intervene in Lebanon. It has created a lot of polarization in the country.
2. Salim El Hoss served three terms as prime minister of Lebanon, the last ending in 2000. Rafik Al Hariri was prime minister from 1992 to 1998, and again from 2000 to 2004. He was assassinated in a car bombing in February 2005, thereby provoking—or used to orchestrate—a largely nationalist backlash against Syria, eventually leading to the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon. While the withdrawal has not brought a new dawn of democracy, nontraditional political initiatives such as Hayya Bina (www.hayyabina.org) emerged to challenge the reestablished sectarian order.
3. In the Baalbak and Hermill area in the northern parts of the Bekaa Valley, a poor and neglected area, people depend heavily on hashish cultivation as a livelihood. Such cultivation was banned after the war, with promises of "alternative crops," under pressure from the United Nations and Western states, mainly the United States. As usual, the money for the alternative crops did not arrive. Under the leadership of Sheikh Tofayli, a former secretary general of Hezbollah, they took up arms, attacking symbols of the state and taking to the streets. The army was sent in to deal with them. It ended with Tofayli calling on people to return to their homes, when the state promised amnesty (a promise that was not kept).

Mike Flugennock

Triptych
International Solidarity

by Mark Lance, Ramor Ryan, & Andréa Schmidt

Anarchists have long wrestled with questions of imperialism and anti-imperialism, colonialism and national liberation. In recent years, more and more anti-authoritarians have undertaken "international solidarity work" as a contemporary response to these issues.

International solidarity work often involves traveling to places where economic or military violence is blatantly deployed in order to maintain global injustices, and working to support communities struggling against those injustices. Rich political dialogues and conflicts often arise, and *Perspectives* asked three activists who have participated in this type of work in Palestine, Chiapas, and Iraq to share their experiences with us. Specifically, we encouraged them to reflect on the following questions:

> *What is international solidarity, and how is it different from humanitarian aid or human rights work? Why has it been important to you as an anti-authoritarian and anti-imperialist to undertake this work? What conflicts or questions arose while doing international solidarity work that you found particularly challenging?*

Mark Lance, Ramor Ryan, and Andréa Schmidt respond.

Chiapas
by Ramor Ryan

It was thrilling to wake up in Dublin on January 1, 1994, to the news of the Zapatista uprising in Mexico. It quickly became clear that this was a new kind of Latin insurgency that superseded the ideological straightjacket of the cold war era and embraced a whole new formulation of how to start a revolution. Subcomandante Marcos was standing in the central square of San Cristóbal talking a more enlightened form of liberation than had been articulated before. Gone was the old Leninist language and, as we learned soon enough, ways of organizing. For anarchists across the globe, it was as if all their Christmases had come at once. An apparently anti-authoritarian-leaning peasant guerrilla army was rising up against an international neoliberal trade agreement! With red-and-black flags! And with those old rifles and antiquated uniforms, they even had a passing resemblance to the Spanish anarchist militias of 1936!

I would have been out on the first plane to Chiapas ready to join the in-

Palestine
by Mark Lance

I began work in solidarity with the Palestinian national struggle at about the same time that my broad political views were beginning to take shape. In the mid-1980s, I was a philosophy graduate student at the University of Pittsburgh involved in work against nuclear weapons, apartheid, and U.S. imperialism in Latin America. Shortly after this, through a series of coincidences really, I became involved in Palestine solidarity work, while at the same time I was developing a general sense of myself as an anti-authoritarian, anti-imperialist, feminist, anarchist-communist. Or something along those lines.

My commitment to a broad radical politics has grown deeper and more sophisticated since then, and my work in solidarity with Palestine has continued. During the first Intifada, I worked with a number of small coalitions and the Palestine Solidarity Committee. Shortly after the start of the second Intifada, I helped found Stop U.S. Tax-funded Aid to Israel Now! (SUSTAIN). I'm currently on the

Iraq
by Andréa Schmidt

I went to occupied Iraq to find the Zapatistas, and found myself editing reports for the neo-Baath.

I was sent to Baghdad for three months as a delegate of the Iraq Solidarity Project (ISP), a grassroots collective based in Montreal. The ISP was setting up a permanent presence in Baghdad to provoke international awareness of Iraqi life under occupation and foster the outrage necessary to remobilize the waning antiwar movement in Canada. I took the opportunity to visit occupied Iraq out of the conviction that an anarchist stance involves a critique of and opposition to all forms of domination, which—in an era of deadly imperialist wars—demands a commitment to anti-imperialist struggles.

The ISP chose to anchor its presence at the International Occupation Watch Center in Baghdad, a center set up by a number of international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) during the summer that followed the U.S.-U.K. invasion of Iraq in 2003. These NGOs

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surgency, except the financial limitations of the Irish dole were such that it would be a full year before I finally got there. My mate Mick did manage to get out to Chiapas within two weeks of the uprising. His first letter back was exultant (there was no e-mail in those days): anarchists from all over Mexico, the United States, and indeed everywhere else were already converging on the rebel zone to seek out a role to play in this new, devastatingly exciting and urgent uprising.

I had caught the last few months of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, before they were deposed of power in February 1990. Picking coffee with a Sandinista collective and teaching English to a Sandinista class, I cut my teeth as an international solidarity volunteer. It was rewarding for me, but I had to leave my anarchy back at home—the Sandinista revolution was leftist and authoritarian, and harbored no anarchist faction. Indeed, it promoted a line that was distinctly unfriendly to such a current of thought. Nevertheless, there were elements of the Sandinista program—their anti-imperialism, their grassroots support for education and health, as well as their lack of ideological rigidity—allowed space for anarchists of my ilk (of which there were quite a few working in the country) to take part a little on the side.

The early 1990s saw me traveling further into this tumultuous political space of Latin America, involving myself in anticapitalist campaigns in Colombia (multinational exploitation) and Belize (union recognition for banana workers). But it was the Zapatista uprising that sealed my fate, and ensured my presence in Chiapas

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national steering committee of the U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation, which is an umbrella coalition of around three hundred Palestine solidarity groups.

The tension between Palestinian solidarity work and a broad anti-imperialist orientation has become quite clear to me. Of course in one sense such work is anti-imperialist, in that it is a struggle against one manifestation of imperialism. While Zionism[1] has an idiosyncratic history and specific goals that are independent of U.S. imperial ambitions—it is quite irrelevant to U.S. geopolitical projects who controls the Jordan Valley or the old city of Hebron, for example—Israel is the chief client of the United States in the Middle East, is the largest recipient of U.S. aid, and receives the consistent backing of the United States in international political contexts precisely because Israel is seen as a part of the U.S. imperial structure in the Middle East.

But the mere fact that one's work opposes a manifestation of imperialism does not mean that one is doing anti-imperialist work in the deeper sense–that is, work in which the guiding conception and purpose are opposition to the whole military, political, cultural, and economic imperialist system. And it is this deeper sort of anti-imperialism that is in tension with Palestinian solidarity work, for Palestinians in general have simply not signed onto an anti-imperialist agenda, much less a progressive anti-authoritarian one.

Little surprise, given that one would search hard anywhere to find a national grouping the majority of which were committed to a broad radical project, and in the case of a people suffering a

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included the Philippines-based Focus on the Global South, the Italian Bridge to Baghdad, and the U.S. monolith Global Exchange. The center's mandate was to document the ways in which the occupation was impacting different sectors and facets of life in Iraq: women, human rights, trade union activity, and oil. My responsibilities included office support and editing English versions of reports, as well as some independent reporting for community radio and print media—the sort of dispatches about life under occupation that have become the trademark of international activists working with the International Solidarity Movement (ISM) in Palestine.

Most important, the solidarity group in Montreal wanted to forge links with progressive Iraqi groups that could speak for "the Iraqi people," and with whom we could collaborate on joint campaigns against the occupation as well as the corporate pillage and privatization of the Iraqi economy, and for social justice in Iraq and Canada. In retrospect, I think that the group expected—as I, in my naïveté, also hoped—to discover a dynamic, nonsectarian movement projecting a discourse that appealed to internationals from a wide range of progressive Left tendencies, that would tell us what sort of tangible forms of solidarity it wanted to liberate the country and its people from occupation and to build genuine justice and democracy in Iraq: the Zapatistas in Babylon.

Instead, unease with the political foundations of the Occupation Watch Center surfaced on my arrival. The international NGOs that set up the office had hired Iraqi directors from the pool

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intermittently but unrelentingly for the ensuing ten years. Much of the time I involved myself in the Zapatista struggle working in the category designated "international solidarity."

In response to the Mexican military advances on the rebel zone, the Zapatistas put out a call in 1995 for volunteers to come and place themselves on the front line of conflict: human shields as such. Our group, the Irish Mexico Group, went one step further. We set up a solidarity encampment in one such frontline community, a cattle farm occupied by seventy Zapatista families called Diez de Abril, and attempted to consolidate a more interactive role in the community. Volunteers busied themselves in the fields and the classrooms, and brought in resources for development projects. The goal was to stand shoulder to shoulder as *companeros*, not solely as human shields. The harvest of this day-to-day solidarity work became apparent later in 1998, when the Mexican military violently invaded the community. After the first wave of volunteers got grabbed and deported by the authorities (thereby raising the profile of the incident to an international story), the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (Zapatista Army of National Liberation) offered the remaining volunteers a choice between joining them to confront the military together in the tactical self-defense of the community or leaving. The volunteers stayed. A level of trust and confidence between Zapatistas and foreigners had been forged that allowed for such an unusual intimacy of shared struggle.

The problem with international solidarity is that at its most effective, it's a tactical deployment, and as it develops into a long-term strategy, it loses its urgency. When the red alert is sounded and the urgent action communiqués are sent out, people can react with the appropriate militant agency. But protracted struggles have a tendency to last for interminable years, and international solidarity activists come and go. "*Campamentistas* are the people who leave,"

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near complete breakdown of their society, cultural survival and a modicum of rights within the current system are understandably higher on the agenda than world-systemic transformation. Of course there are exceptions: a small but significant Palestinian Marxist Left, both in Palestine and various parts of the diaspora, and elements of Palestinian civil society that attempt to make common cause with anti-imperial struggles over the world, from a variety of Left perspectives. But these elements are scattered and small, and often defer to the nationalist agenda. As for larger and more powerful forces, the goals of the Palestinian Authority (PA) are no more than a liberal state, and for many in the PA, not so liberal a liberal state. Other prominent groups in Palestine and among the refugees are Islamists of one stripe or another, and one needn't accept the caricatures of Islamists popular in the mainstream media to recognize that they are not part of a progressive anti-authoritarian struggle. In the United States, roughly half of Arab Americans and Muslims voted Republican in the last two elections, and a significant percentage of the Arab American Left is fully in the embrace of sectarian Marxism.

Given all this, there is no way to pretend that a broadly anti-imperialist, anti-authoritarian strategy has been adopted by the Palestinian people, and no way that any common project with a broad portion of the Palestinian population is going to be forged along anti-imperialist lines. So what does one do when confronting a conflict between the long-term projects one is committed to and the more immediate demands of a population suffering under a client regime of the United States?

There is, in my view, no good answer this question in the abstract. Everything depends on the particulars of the situation. In the case of Palestine, solidarity activism is required of us. Not only are we facing the imminent destruction of Palestinian society but U.S. citizens are directly financing and supporting it with

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of contacts that predated the U.S.-U.K. invasion. In Saddam's Iraq, only Iraqis trusted by the Baath regime were allowed any sustained contact with foreigners to the country, including the U.S. antisanctions activists who defied the U.S. embargo against travel to Iraq and cooperated with the restrictions imposed by Saddam's security apparatus in order to maintain their visa privileges. In postinvasion Iraq, international NGOs, humanitarian aid organizations, and the small crew of solidarity activists still in the country had to figure out how to navigate new and uncertain political territory with old and compromised contacts—and the Occupation Watch Center was faltering. Concern had been voiced by Iraqi acquaintances from an array of political tendencies to international volunteers that the office was perceived to be a neo-Baath propaganda project as the former regime struggled to regain power. In an atmosphere characterized by the deep mistrust that suffuses conflict zones occupied by foreign powers, activists from other political formations would not visit the Baghdad office.

International volunteers had relayed these concerns to the big shot NGOs funding and directing the project from outside the country. We argued that even if the perception was erroneous, it made building important relationships with wide sectors of the Iraqi population who had been persecuted and impoverished by the Baath impossible. And if the perception was correct, we were making an unforgivable mistake aligning ourselves with the remnants of a murderous regime, even if they spoke a good anti-imperialist and antioccupation line. When a response finally came from Global Exchange's California office, it denied any significance to the political context on this ground: given the illegality, injustice, and brutality of the U.S. occupation, the only thing that mattered was that there was an office in Baghdad documenting that brutality for the U.S. antiwar movement during the crucial period of Bush's reelection campaign. In essence, this was

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lamented one Zapatista, "and we can never leave." He was referring to the privilege of those who can step into a dangerous conflict zone for a finite time and then leave as the mood dictates. It is a poignant reminder of the inherent and inescapable inequalities involved, of the almost insurmountable contradictions therein, and a cause of understandable resentment for some of those at the coalface of the struggle.

Unavoidably, the space of international solidarity has been abused in many ways, even in the hallowed environs of Chiapas. Too many people climbed on the backs of the Zapatistas to promote their own nongovernmental organization outfit, or to garner salaries from international funders for posts that should have been occupied by locals or at least rendered unnecessary after a short length of time. Too many people used the space opened up by authentic international solidarity to write their beautiful journalistic pieces, craft their splendid dissertations,or make their startling documentaries—and then forget their impassioned *zapatismo* before moving

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our taxes, while the complicity of others in the global North is only marginally less direct. As long as it is possible to make progress—and from my vantage point, enormous progress has been made in the last three years—this places an immediate duty of human solidarity on us.

But there are specific problems with solidarity work in the case of Palestine, the largest of which is that there is simply no national leadership—no remotely unified voice—that one can work with. The problem is not the mere lack of a radical agenda. The PA is corrupt, sometimes brutal, always lacking in vision; it has no interest in working with activists, and might well try to sell out the rights of Palestinian refugees in exchange for control of a Bantustan. The only other faction in Palestine with widespread popular support is Hamas, and again, this is not a candidate for a coalition partner on both moral and practical grounds.

So what does one do? First, it is lucky that in this case, international law and the framework of international human rights are largely on our side. Whatever one's views about a two-state solution—

Kids in front of Caterpillar bulldozer—ISM Activist.

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a version of the "my enemies' enemies are my friends" argument I would hear over and over again from comrades and colleagues at meetings and public events when I returned to North America—an assertion coated in a veneer of human rights discourse for the liberal Left.

This debate clarified other weaknesses in the architecture of our solidarity mission. A motley crew of social democrats, Quebec sovereignists, Arab nationalists, former Marxist-Leninists, Iraqi Communists, human rights NGO-types, and anarchists, the ISP lacked political coherence. The group couldn't develop the capacity to articulate the political goals and parameters of the solidarity it wished to extend, much less determine which political groupings or even new Iraqi NGOs with which to forge links in Iraq. Beyond the fact that everyone in the group was "antioccupation," the most we could agree on was a basic human rights agenda that abstracted life and resistance in occupied Iraq from the conflicts that defined its political context. So even if we had encountered an emergent movement calling for the sort of solidarity a small collective could offer, delegates would probably have been limited to watching the occupation and reporting on human rights abuses perpetrated by the U.S. military. Monitoring human rights abuses is a valuable activity in a country where occupation forces shoot civilians at random, raid houses, desecrate sacred spaces and objects, murder people at checkpoints, and detain and often torture thousands of people. But it is not quite international solidarity. International solidarity activists do not purport to be neutral in the conflict, simply observing events. We take sides, commit to political alliances, and struggle alongside movements fighting for self-determination; we are complicit.

This is a moot point, because in the short period of time during which I worked in occupied Iraq, I was (with a couple of small and fragile exceptions) unable to recognize the sort of resistance to the occupation that I could or would

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onto their next career move. The Zapatistas moved to stem the abuses of the solidarity space by introducing the *Juntas de Buen Gobierno* (Good Government Committees) in 2003 to oversee all projects and outside involvement in the rebel zone. It has been a success, despite the increased bureaucracy and the 10 percent revolutionary tax levied on all solidarity projects in the autonomous municipalities.

Nevertheless, the Zapatistas have recognized and lauded the involvement of international solidarity within the rebel zone ("those born on other soil who add their heart to the struggle for a peace with justice and dignity," according to Marcos)—from restraining the excesses of military and paramilitary aggression as human shields to introducing useful development projects in the form of potable water systems, solar energy supplies, technologically appropriate means of communication, pirate radio stations, organic horticulture, and so on. From the other side, the Chiapas pilgrimage has become almost a rite of passage for activists from the global North. The influence and inspiration is apparent at every global mobilization and in every activist space. As renowned Mexican writer and political analyst Gustavo Esteva has pointed out, "Zapatismo is nowadays the most radical, and perhaps the most important, political initiative in the world."

As the Zapatista struggle enters its twelfth year of this phase of struggle, tactical and strategic mistakes have been made, and more will be made in the future. As learned from the ideological demise of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua (from leftism to neoliberalism in ten short years), it is folly to fetishize and offer unconditional support for a host organization or movement. This is why the Zapatistas demand not solidarity from their international consorts but allegiance to the idea and inspiration of zapatismo. Be a Zapatista wherever you are, they say. When asked, How can internationals best contribute to the Zapatista struggle? an old Zapatista said, "More Seattles."

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and the concomitant acceptance of a religiously defined citizenry in Israel—every aspect of the current situation has been condemned by the United Nations and international law—the 1967 occupation, the apartheid wall, the refusal to allow the return of refugees, the construction of settlements, extrajudicial assassinations, and home demolitions. Given this, we can point to neutral, nonpolitical standards that justify ending all support for Israel, thereby justifying the fundamental goal of solidarity work.

Second, Palestinian society is complex, diverse, highly educated, and often deeply connected to movements in the West. As I said, these connections are not organized or unified—the first Intifada saw some amazing efforts at bottom-up, anti-authoritarian control of society by civil society itself, but this phenomenon has been stamped out by a combination of PA authoritarianism and Israeli brutality—yet they do exist. So in all our work–especially educational work, but also direct action—it is possible to structure things so as to strengthen ties with progressive elements in Palestinian society.

In this way, we can even see ourselves as contributing in a small way to a longer-term anti-imperialist struggle, so that the connections and bonds of solidarity forged in the process of solidarity work will remain after the limited goals of either a meaningful Palestinian state or liberal democracy across historical Palestine are achieved. But it is also important not to fool ourselves. When we work with a people demanding national rights within the capitalist/nation-state system, we do so out of our ethical humanist commitments to end suffering, especially suffering that we and our nation contribute to. In doing that, we sometimes take away from longer-term projects of liberation.

Such are the compromises life forces on us.

Postscript

It is a fine illustration of the fluidity and contextualization of such politi-

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want to ally myself with. I couldn't see any emergent progressive Iraqi movements committed to building the type of social and political project that would allow the aspirations for self-determination of religiously and ethnically diverse Iraqis to be fulfilled. Nor did I encounter a movement capable of calling for and directing international solidarity efforts in the service of such a project. I found a proud insurgency fighting to regain the power that had been stolen from it by foreign crusaders; a militant Shiite resistance movement able to give voice to the frustration and dispossession of its adherents; a spectrum of political parties once persecuted under Saddam and now playing power politics in the Interim Governing Council installed by the U.S. occupiers; a self-defeatingly anti-Muslim Marxist-Leninist fringe group; human rights groups compromised by their complicity with the old regime and new NGOs seeking USAID funding or aligned with political parties; and rumors of Al-Qaeda. But I didn't find the Zapatista Army of National Liberation in Anbar, or even an Iraqi-led equivalent of the ISM to coordinate international volunteers to accompany Iraqis across the U.S. military checkpoints on the Tigris.

Was it unfair to look for them in a society torn apart by the legacy of a brutal and paranoid thirty-five-year-long dictatorship, shaped by colonial interests, and struggling to reconstitute itself under the shadows of its occupiers' helicopter gunships—all of which exploited religious and ethnic differences to undermine popular solidarity and shore up their own power? Yes, as unfair as to affirm that no such movement will ever rise up in Iraq, or isn't already there, quietly preparing.

The Occupation Watch Center closed in late 2004, collapsing under its unresolved political issues. And I left a still-occupied Iraq, preoccupied by questions.

As both anti-authoritarians and anti-imperialists, it is not good enough to voice support for any form or expression of resistance to U.S. occupation, no matter how sectarian its discourse or how

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If international solidarity implies that you are saying, I support a certain distant movement or organization, this defines the struggle as *other*. But as John Holloway points out, here, in the Zapatista paradigm, "it is not a question of solidarity with the struggle of others, but of understanding that the Zapatistas and we are part of the same struggle." So the Zapatistas turn the equation upside down: international solidarity becomes a means to export a rebel philosophy. Let zapatismo be an inspiration and encouragement to develop your own form of rebel autonomy. International solidarity is brought down from the grandstands of cheering third world anti-imperialist and national liberation struggles, to the playing field of actually building global autonomy.

This kind of stuff is music to the ears of anarchists and anti-authoritarians—constructing global autonomy, *horizontalidad,* and *mandar obedeciendo* (to govern obeying), surely blueprints for a global wide insurgency?! And then they return "home" to New York, Barcelona, Montreal, or Dublin, and it seems hopeless—like there is nothing to build on, no local autonomy, and no radical movements. Zapatismo seems like some quaint metaphysical construct conjured up in an exotically distant jungle where pipe-smoking poet gods and indomitable corn people hold an illusive holy grail of rebel hope that renders you spellbound until you leave the mystical space, and then disappears—like a sieve-fisted find.

Or as Old Antonio used to say—perhaps not. ✷

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cal work that shortly after the above was written, things appear to be changing on the ground. In part out of frustration at the utter lack of a national liberation strategy from above, as well as the deteriorating conditions of occupation, a genuine civil society coalition seems to be emerging in the occupied territories. A large and diverse group of people and organizations has recently come together around a call for boycotts, divestment, and protest. This group is consciously modeling this strategy on the work that went on in solidarity with the South African struggle. In many of the small villages, whose very existence is threatened by the apartheid wall, and that are receiving no meaningful support from the PA, popular committees are emerging on the model of the first Intifada. And they are communicating and attempting to develop a concerted activist agenda against the wall. All in all, solidarity work may soon become easier as a unified credible voice emerges in the occupied territories. ✷

Endnotes

1. "Zionism," as I use it, refers to any political program in support of a Jewish-only or Jewish-dominant state with political control over the region of Palestine.

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fascist its political vision for the future. But if we have not yet encountered a progressive antioccupation movement in a place like Iraq, what practice of international solidarity is viable? In postdictatorship societies, war zones, and occupied countries, how can foreign anarchists and anti-authoritarians help open up the political space for such movements to coalesce?

Perhaps it is best to remember in these instances that the most effective solidarity work is almost always done at home. Then we could get on with fostering the sort of anti-authoritarian, widespread, and militant opposition that could threaten imperialist corporate and state powers where they—and we—reside: safe within the walls of Fortresses North America and Europe. If we were successful, we *might* find that we would have contributed to cracking open the spaces for progressive social movements to emerge.

"Walking, we ask questions," say the Zapatistas. As Anbar burns and Babylon is divided up for ease of oil exploitation, the questions persist, and I wish we were running. ✷

Zapatista support base communities work together to build a community water system.
© Timo Russo / GlobalAware

Reclaiming a "Hidden" Tradition
Is Anarchist Economics Hitting the Mainstream?

by *Eric Laursen*

Anarchist economics emerged with a bang in 1846, upon the publication of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon's *System of Economical Contradictions, or The Philosophy of Poverty*, in which the French revolutionary thinker laid out a transformative program based on mutual aid. The book was immediately influential—so much so that a year later, a young German academic named Karl Marx wrote a scathingly dismissive reply entitled *The Poverty of Philosophy*. Ever since then, both Marxist and neoclassical free-market economists have been trying to bury anarchist economic thought, if not simply wish it out of existence.

Why the hostility? Many of the key anarchist theorists, including Peter Kropotkin, Mikhail Bakunin, and Elisée Reclus, shared Marx's—and Adam Smith's—faith in the improving effect of scientific progress on human society. And they shared with Marx a more or less implicit faith that rational, scientific reasoning would lead to a unified model of a just social order.

But the anarchists were willing to look for intimations of that new order in places that Marxists—and neoclassicists—refused to explore. Marx and Adam Smith both saw the future as something that would develop out of the industrial capitalism of their day, regardless of whether the bourgeoisie or the proletariat found itself in charge, but the capitalist system in the mid-nineteenth century still occupied a relatively limited number of people. Even in Europe, most people still lived and worked on the land, not in wage-based, large-scale industrial establishments. It wasn't clear, either, that large-scale industrial capitalism, organized on a hierarchical model, had to dictate the form of the future society. So the anarchists also looked to forms of organization that had no connection with capitalism for their models: to peasant communities, artisans' cooperatives, workers' self-help societies, and even to stateless institutions like the International Red Cross—what we would call today nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

A review of:

Political Economy from Below: Economic Thought in Communitarian Anarchism, 1840-1914 by Rob Knowles (New York: Routledge, 2004).

Banking on Death: Or, Investing in Life: The History and Future of Pensions by Robin Blackburn (London: Verso, 2003).

This wasn't just because they had a broader conception of what was historically progressive, argues historian Rob Knowles. The anarchists believed that economic ideas must be informed by everything that goes on in the real world. The community's preferred social structure must come first, and economic organization should be made to fit that structure—not the other way around. "For communitarian anarchists," Knowles writes, "the economy was not only underpinned by their ethics but it was thoroughly embedded in social life, such that human life could not be perceived as being in any way separate from economic ideas."[1] Marx, too, believed he was basing his model of the economic world on life as people really lived it, but for the most part, he took large-scale industrial capitalism to define the way people lived, even though for most people at the time, it didn't. To the extent that contemporary social structures didn't conform to the model most suitable to a large-scale industrial economy, he assumed, they ultimately would have to do so. Anarchists, on the other hand, didn't take any of this as a given. Instead, they argued that economic progress could and should be achieved in a way that's most supportive of people's preferred method of social organization. Something other than mass industrial capitalism was possible, they thought, and was perhaps immanent in existing methods of worker cooperation and communal agriculture.

Just because industrial capitalism prevailed in twentieth-century capitalist and Marxist societies doesn't mean that real alternatives didn't exist, then or now, and today this anarchist view may be catching on. State socialism has been devastated by the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the capitalist transformation of China. The social democratic and welfare-statist solutions that once seemed to many middle- and working class Europeans and Americans like the best alternatives are also slowly being abandoned by the same political parties and mainstream labor organizations that put them in place. Contemporary economists on the left, even some from orthodox Marxist backgrounds, are therefore beginning to look beyond the state for new ways to realize a socialist society. In doing so, they're echoing some of the themes laid out by the nineteenth-century anarchists and expanded upon since then.

Scholars are also reacquainting themselves with the work of social scientist Karl Polanyi, who like the anarchists, argued that "man's [sic] economy, as a rule, is submerged in his social relationships,"[3]

And over the last twenty years, the rise of a new school of "critical realism" in economics has rebelled against the dominance of abstract modeling in favor of a new assertion that social structures "exist only by virtue of human activity, in total."[4]

Critical realism may be reopening economic discourse to anarchism, Knowles, an Australian academic, says in his new book, *Political Economy from Below: Economic Thought in Communitarian Anarchism, 1840-1914.* It's a history of anarchist economic thought in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, grounded in a careful understanding of the basic differences between anarchism, mainstream Marxism, and neoclassicism and organized into chapters focusing on seven thinkers who together forged the main current of communitarian anarchist thought on economics: Proudhon; the Russians Bakunin, Kropotkin, Alexander Herzen, and Leo Tolstoy; and the French Reclus and Jean Grave.

The Marxist paradigm shows signs of cracking open, too, judging from Robin Blackburn's new book, *Banking on Death: Or, Investing in Life: The History and Future of Pensions.* An impressive study of the history of pension funds by an editor of the *New Left Review*, it ends with a series of proposals for achieving public control of capital through ownership of stock by investment funds controlled by occupational and locally-based organizations. The latest in a line of "pension fund socialists," Blackburn barely acknowledges anarchist economics, and the organizations he describes would be conventional, state-sanctioned ones.

He parts company dramatically with the Marxist tradition, however, by recommending that ownership of capital be transferred not to the state itself, or to the workers in their workplaces, but to a decentralized network of institutions with which workers share a variety of close "affinities" and over which they can exercise more direct control. That's a major change for an orthodox social democrat like Blackburn, and a strong indication that in Marxism's moment of crisis, some of its adherents may be venturing onto the path that the anarchists paved.

Dr. Robert Knowles

Knowles calls *Political Economy from Below* an attempt to retrieve a "heterodox" tradition of theory about economic structure that's been written out of the standard economic histories of the past hundred years, and that he encapsulates in three basic principles: it's 1) freely constituted, 2) embedded in society, and 3) places ethics before the actual economy itself. These principles all apply, Knowles argues, to the seven thinkers he focuses on.

Knowles gives himself a bit too much credit. To an anarchist, these thinkers' ideas are not "heterodox"—in fact, they constitute a large part of the canon. Their writings are hardly a "hidden" tradition to the many people who have studied their work over the years, learned and found confirmation of their own experience in it, but Knowles' book performs a vital job of historical restoration, distilling a deep reading of each of these theorists into a history of the ideas that formed a new way of looking at society.

His analysis shows how anarchist thinking was grounded in direct observation of the mechanisms of production and consumption meshed with social organization among French artisans and factory workers, and Russian peasants. It locates the origins of green anarchism and deep ecology in Reclus' writings on geography and human society. Knowles also underlines the large but half-forgotten influence of anarchist thinking on mainstream political and social thinking in the nineteenth century—pointing out, for example, how the social Darwinist Herbert Spencer admitted in an early edition of his first major work, *Social Statics,* the "right to ignore the state."[5]

Anarchism as an intellectual tradition is too often reduced to the work of a small collection of dead white males, but the seven Knowles has chosen to spotlight still have some important things to say to us. That's partly because, as Knowles points out, we know so little of their work.

The list of writings unavailable in English is astounding: Proudhon's *De la capacité politique des classes ouvrières*, in which he drew out his "mutualist" economic ideas most fully, plus plenty of other key texts; Reclus' *L'homme et la terre*, a massive work of "social geography" that includes his most important

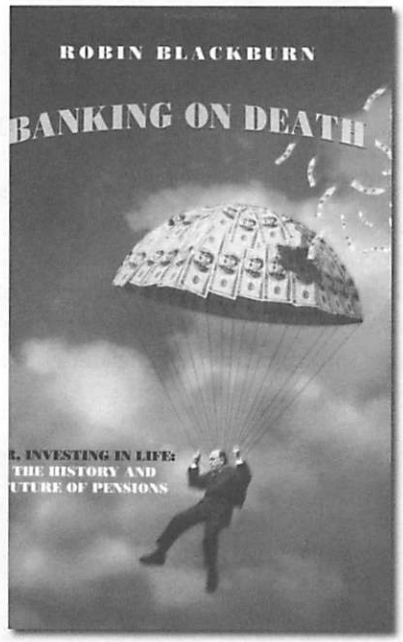
observations about a future anarchist society; three of the six volumes of Max Nettlau's exhaustive history of anarchism; nearly all of Kropotkin's voluminous letters; and Grave's *La société future*, which contains his most probing economic thinking. Millions of readers and scholars who do not speak their languages have received at best a partial and sometimes distorted idea of what these theorists really said about economics (and a lot of other things).

Knowles benefits from having read all or parts of these works in the original. He's quite possibly made a fuller study of Proudhon's economic writings than any other scholar in the anglophone world, and his nuanced discussion of this pivotal figure is important and eye-opening. He's also made extensive use of one of the world's best archives on anarchism, the collection of the International Institute for Social History in Amsterdam.

Knowles' research yields a picture of nineteenth-century social and economic thinking that's very different from the one in mainstream textbooks. He makes a solid case for integrating Herzen and Tolstoy into our understanding of nineteenth-century anarchism (mainstream historians generally portray the one as a liberal democrat and the other as an uncategorizable religious utopian). He clarifies our picture of anarchists like Proudhon and Kropotkin, who are often dismissed as weak theorists, lumped in with utopian imagineers like Fourier and Saint-Simon. Knowles shows that they observed the workers' world of their day more closely than Marx, who tended to study the economy from the top down, starting with the specific institutions and practices of the capitalist class. Anarchists instead looked from the bottom up, beginning with the structures and practices that working people themselves put in place to provide for their common needs.

Thus Proudhon, for example, observed the cooperative groupings that artisans and industrial workers in Lyon and other cities formed. Herzen studied the development of autonomous municipalities in Italy. Herzen, Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Tolstoy learned from life in the *obschina*, or Russian peasant communities, with their cooperative practices and tradition of local self-government. And Kropotkin and Reclus drew innumerable lessons from their observation of artisan communities in France, Switzerland, and Russia.[2]

Looking more broadly, they observed



the spread of the mutual aid principle from labor unions and fraternal societies to credit unions and agricultural cooperatives and even to extranational organizations like the English Lifeboat Association as evidence that people could band together both locally and across borders to meet each other's needs without the state. Reclus wrote of how cooperative societies were "constituting more and more vast organisms, in a manner to embrace the most diverse functions, those of industry, transport, agriculture, science, art and pleasure which struggle hard to constitute a complete organism for production, consumption and the rhythm of aesthetic life."[6]

Marxists dismissed some or all of these developments as either obsolete remnants of precapitalist life or camouflage for the capital-owning class's economic dominance. But Knowles points out that contrary to both Marx and the neoclassicists, the vast majority of workers in nineteenth-century Europe were not yet mass-production factory denizens, capitalist production was far less centralized than today, and many workers still possessed some degree of ability to shape the emerging industrial world. They were skillful at creating community services for themselves based on mutual aid, which pointed to an alternative route to economic development outside the state-oriented structures that Marxism and neoclassicism prescribed.

What all of Knowles' thinkers shared was the belief, based on observation, that an alternative economic order that fulfills more people's needs more equitably has always been possible without first passing through an "advanced capitalist" stage—the common assumption of both Marxists and neoclassicists. Bakunin's anarchism appealed to "petty producers" in Andalusia and southern Italy for whom "it was not ... a last chance choice," Knowles writes, but "a positive and living concept through which they could glimpse a chance of emancipation from the authority and power which was overwhelming them. It was not a reversion to a past mode of existence but rather a means of moving forward to a new way of life and freedom."[7]

Blackburn, the solid social democrat, takes a very different, top-down approach in *Banking on Death.* His major perception is that Americans and also many Europeans now live in a regime he calls "grey capitalism." While corporate CEOs, investment bankers, and lawyers control the deployment of productive resources, the biggest percentage of actual share owners are, in fact, workers. Pension funds representing the retirement assets of millions of workers actually hold the lion's share of the corporate ownership structure. They don't often exert real control, because corporate governance rules are rigged to keep the chief executive in the driver's seat. Nevertheless, Blackburn argues that worker ownership of pensions could supply the leverage that begins the transition to socialism.

Like Marx, Blackburn believes socialism starts with acceptance—not rejection—of capitalism as it is: "Socialism could only be built on the basis supplied by developed capitalism"[8] Kropotkin or Herzen, observing the multigenerational communal life of the *obschina*, might have searched for ways to reintegrate the task of elder care into their own communities. Blackburn instead looks at the superstructure of pension institutions that the corporate culture has created as the locus of class struggle, and considers how they can be converted into vehicles for true worker control of the means of production.

He's not the first to see the potential of pensions. Peter Drucker, for decades America's number one guru of corporate management theory, gave it a name nearly 30 years ago in a book titled *The Unseen Revolution: How Pension Fund Socialism Came to America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976). Blackburn's own proposals take off from the Meidner plan, a scheme hatched in Sweden in the 1970s to create a form of public stakeholding in corporations. "Within two or three decades a full-blooded Meidner scheme would have made the 'wage-earner funds' the masters of the economy,"[9] Blackburn writes. Corporate interests united to defeat the plan, however, and the few wage-earner funds that were created were wound up in the mid-1990s.

Blackburn's variation on the Meidner plan centers on pension funds, which would receive a "capital levy" of shares from corporations and could then use the income to fund a range of activities such as making investments in "social infrastructure, or research and development, or urban renewal, or education and training."[10] The pension funds could subscribe to a public bond issue used to build schools or bankroll a program to address a serious social problem. Whatever they opted for, the objective would be twofold: to gradually diminish the role of wealthy individuals and capitalists in economic decisions, and to "reconnect the mass of citizens and employees with the process whereby strategic economic decisions are made."[12]

Blackburn calls his scheme "complex socialisation"—a "transitional stage" from pure capitalism to socialism. It could also be called a "new" New Deal, a way to address the problem that the state's ability to regulate capital is limited by the fact that capital is still owned by the capitalists. Far greater transformation is possible, Blackburn implies, if society achieves real collective ownership of capital itself.

But as Proudhon could have told him, the status of "owner" has a nasty way of changing one's behavior—of creating new capitalists. Most pension funds, even public employee funds with some degree of worker control, invest pretty much the same way as corporate funds that are controlled by management. In any case, corporate leaders have not reacted well to pension funds' attempts to assert themselves in company affairs. For the last two and a half decades they have been working on numerous fronts to contain and eliminate the power of big pension funds. Today, companies are converting their pension funds into 401(k) retirement savings accounts and fighting to do the same with public pension funds through their allies in Republican-controlled state legislatures.

Grey capitalism, if anything, is moving backward, not forward to the workers' paradise. *Banking on Death* is an energetic attempt to explain how one of the most prevalent institutions in contemporary capitalism—the pension fund—could be used to initiate a transition to socialism. But it doesn't add up.

What's interesting, however, is where Blackburn places the center of gravity in his proposals. Instead of the state, he aims to transfer ownership to a decentralized collection of affinity groups that could be focused on anything from workplaces to neighborhoods to issue or consumer groups. Socialists have traditionally been suspicious of schemes that devolve authority and ownership to the local or regional level, thinking they're too easily dominated by property owners. Blackburn concludes that entrusting the people's wealth to bureaucrats is not enough: economic control must be democratized. He therefore proposes that control of the pension funds be integrated with credit unions to create a "'new model of social investment and community entrepreneurship.'"[11]

"The investment of fund resources could help to promote the ability of communities to respond to the challenges of flexibility in a global division of labor in constant flux," he writes, "The institutions which I have been sketching... would encourage those bound together by a sense of place, of profession, or a common past or future, to help them devise their own solution." That being the case, regulation of Blackburn's pension funds would not have to be a state function either. "If civic monitoring is lodged within civil society itself, it will have a much greater chance of being effective."

Unlike classic state socialists, too, Blackburn stipulates that affinity with a particular pension or social fund should be voluntary. He also specifies that direction should come from some level below the state: "Progressive advocates should be encouraged to spell out a positive vision for their community and region, and for their relationship with the world."[13]

Why the corporate world would go along with such a scheme, Blackburn doesn't convincingly explain. What's remarkable, however, is that he makes the effort to envision a more "libertarian," decentralized brand of socialism.

Does Blackburn's vision suggest that corporate control of the state—firmer and more encompassing than ever—is finally driving mainstream Marxists to seek alternatives resembling the ideas the anarchist movement has been generating for 150 years rather than traditional state socialist prescriptions? Or is it a last-ditch effort to map a way out of the corner into which state socialism is being painted by today's rampantly reactionary capitalist state? His book doesn't tell us. But to arrive at the future scenario he describes in *Banking on Death* required getting past some longstanding social-democratic prejudices.

Nor does Knowles try to argue that the fluid, contingent tendency in eco-

nomics that he found in his subjects' writings is the "right" framework for addressing today's problems. What both of these works point to, however, is the need to explore beyond the state and institutions fostered by the state for ways to organize an economy whose object, as Knowles writes, is "the well-being of all, without exception and without favor or privilege."[14] Proudhon knew it in 1846. A century and a half later, some of his enemy Marx's followers may be coming around. ✷

Endnotes

1. Knowles' chapter on Kropotkin includes numerous examples of the "anarchist prince's" astonishing foresightedness, from his schemes for self-sufficient urban gardening to his expansion of the concept of the "commune" to include communities of interest without geographic boundaries.
2. Rob Knowles, *Political Economy from Below: Economic Thought in Communitarian Anarchism, 1840-1914* (New York: Routledge, 2004) 3.
3. Karl Polyani, *The Great Transformation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), 46, quoted in Knowles, p. 84.
4. Knowles, *Political Economy from Below*, 77. For a selection of critical realist writings, see Tony Lawson, *Economics and Reality* (London: Routledge, 1997), and Steve Fleetwood, ed., *Critical Realism in Economics: Development and Debate* (London: Routledge, 1998).
5. In a chapter of the 1850 edition, later omitted. Reprinted as a pamphlet, *The Right to Ignore the State* (London: Freedom Press, 1913). Cited in Knowles, *Political Economy from Below*, footnote, 92.
6. Elisée Reclus, *L'évolution, la révolution et 'idéal anarchique* (Paris: P.V. Stock, 1898), translated by and cited in Knowles, *Political Economy from Below*, 346.
7. Ibid., 294.
8. Blackburn, *Banking on Death: Or, Investing in Life: The History and Future of Pensions* (London: Verso, 2003), 524.
9. Ibid., 15
10. Ibid., 473.
11. Ibid., 477.
12. Jim Stanford, *Paper Boom* (Ottawa: 1999), pp. 382-3, 385-412, quoted in Blackburn, *Banking on Death*, 515.
13. Blackburn, *Banking on Death*, 515.
14. Knowles, *Political Economy from Below*, 491.

Operaismo, Autonomia, and the Emergence of New Social Subjects

by *Stevphen Shukaitis*

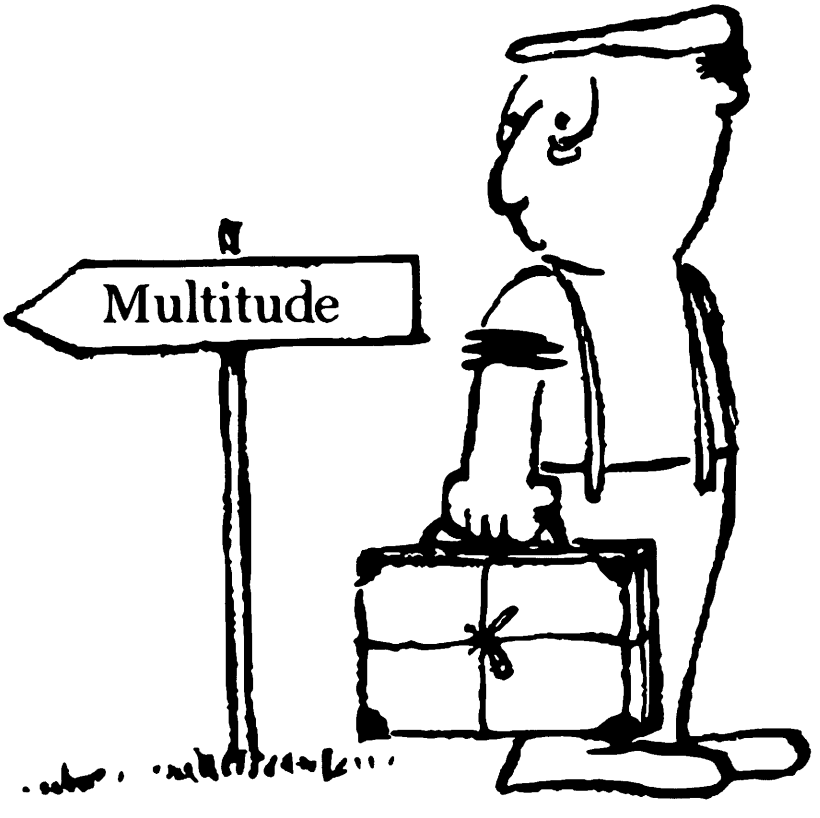
A review of:

Storming Heaven: Class Composition and Struggle in Italian Autonomist Marxism by Steve Wright (London: Pluto Books, 2002).

Grammar of the Multitude by Paolo Virno. Trans. Sylvère Lotringer (New York: Semiotext(e), 2004).

State Work: Public Administration and Mass Intellectuality by Stefano Harney (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002).

During the past several years there has been a growing interest in autonomist Marxism. Fueled by the publication of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's celebrated and reviled text *Empire* (2000), new attention has been brought to the Italian current of *operaismo* [workerism],[1] which has long been neglected within discussions of Marxism in the English speaking world. This essay will explore some of the concepts of autonomist Marxism, focusing on autonomist Marxists whose works have not received as much attention or readership, in particular: Steve Wright's *Storming Heaven: Class Composition and Struggle in Italian Autonomist Marxism*; Paolo Virno's *Grammar of the Multitude*; and Stefano Harney's *State Work: Public Administration and Mass Intellectuality*. Although it would be difficult to a provide a complete overview of these texts, it is nevertheless useful to summarize them in relation to the currents of thought from which they emerge, precisely because many of the ideas developed in Italy during the political laboratory of the1960s and 1970s run parallel to the very same concepts underpinning much of the organizing within the global justice movement: the rejection of rigid notions of class and of the working class as the privileged revolutionary subject; self-organization; an analysis of capital's articulations over the entire social fabric; engaged withdrawal from relations of domination; the primacy of resistance and social collectivity as preceding its appropriation by capital; and the formation of new collective identities and subjectivities in struggle.



Italian autonomist Marxism, with its curious and contradictory relationship to orthodox Marxism, has for the most part been overlooked by English-speaking audiences whose main reference point for Italian Marxism is Gramsci. David Graeber has argued that Marxists and anarchists have often focused on different issues, with Marxists analyzing the workings of capitalism and mechanisms for seizing power, while anarchists have been concerned with ethical forms of practice and organization that prefigure the world we desire. It is in this way that autonomist Marxism could be most useful to anarchists; even if its focus remains centered on labor, it is one that is tuned to the changing nature of labor, and contains conceptual tools that can be used in ways that often might be resisted by the very individuals who have theorized them. This review will explore these ideas, in particular that of the multitude and the notion of exo-

dus, and what they could mean for radical organizing.

Class Composition and Unrealized Implications

Turning first to *Storming Heaven: Class Composition and Struggle in Italian Autonomist Marxism* by Steve Wright we can contextualize historically and socially many of the concepts of operaismo. Wright traces the emergence and development of operaisti thought and practice from the mid-1940s to its dissolution in the late 1970s. His book serves as a corrective by placing Negri's work in the context of the movements he was involved in, and drawing out underappreciated voices. This is especially important as operaisti concepts did not emerge from the work of isolated theorists but from those engaged in the ongoing processes of organizing.

The neglect of many of the voices from operaismo that Wright draws attention to—such as those of Panzieri, Tronti, Alquati and Bologna—is due to the lack of translation of their materials into English. Wright's book is the first and only text in English to provide an overview of the evolution and development of operaismo, a task that it handles quite successfully. While the detailed history reads at some points like an extended version of a "who's arguing with whom" in the radical left, it is important to be able to trace the development of these ideas. It is the setting of Italy's "economic miracle" in the 1950s and the decisions of the Italian Communist Party to emphasize state capitalist development combined with the ideological fallout from the 1956 Soviet invasion of Hungary and massive immigration from southern Italy that created a grouping of workers who were not willing to work within the confines of existing party and union structures. It is these emergent populations and the industrial unrest they fermented that would congeal the figure of the mass worker in the theorization of the operaistis. The figure of mass worker is characterized by labor which is: (1) massified, or the performance of simple repetitive labor; (2) located in the immediate process of production; and (3) individually interchangeable but collectively indispensable to the workings of capital.[2]

Wright brings together the vast array of operaisti practices by looking at their emergence and development in relation to the concept of *class composition*. He uses class composition as a unifying focal point for the development of the Italian extraparliamentary left, starting with organizations like Potere Operaio to more dispersed forms of organizing grouped together under the network of Autonomia. The idea of class composition describes the effects, circumstances and behaviors resulting from the development of the working class in specific conditions of labor, and the ways in which the subjective experiences of a population shape and relate to their circumstances. For Italian autonomist Marxists theorizing about their situation, the concept of class composition was central because it highlighted what Wright describes as: "the importance it placed upon the relationship between the material structure of the working class, and its behavior as a subject autonomous from the dictates of both the labor movement and capital."[3] While earlier operaisti texts focused exclusively on labor within the factory walls, operaismo's theorization of work broadened beyond this narrow view of the factory itself to the unleashing of new forces of antagonism on the streets in 1968 and the Italian "hot autumn" of 1969, during which students and new social forces emerged into popular consciousness.

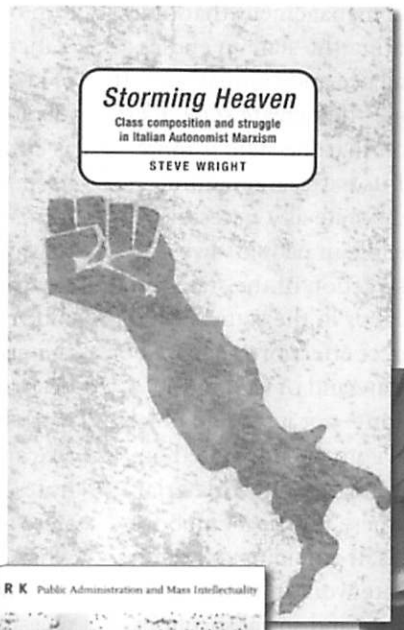
It is these newly emerging social forces that worked their way into operaisti theories of the *social factory*. Tronti described the idea of the social factory as: "At the highest level of *capitalist development*, the social relation becomes a moment of the relation of production; the whole of society becomes an articulation of production; in other words, the whole of society exists as a function of the factory and the factory extends its domination over the whole of society."[4] Here, the production of surplus value and its extraction no longer occurs only within the factory walls but is diffused through the social milieu. The diffuse nature of production, as described by a concept like the social factory, meant that the privileged revolutionary position of the industrial working class would be ceded to support for all struggles that intervened in broader social reproduction. This means that various forms of social struggle, from student organizing to feminist movements, are not resistance outside of what could be considered class struggle but are all interventions in reclaiming the common resources and social energies that capital is continually trying to siphon off for its own uses.

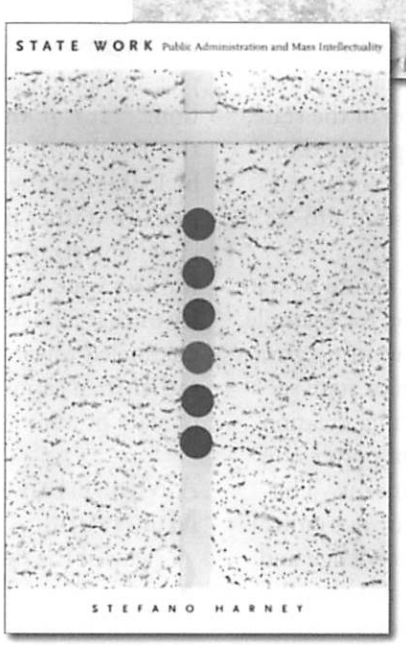
Operaisti, morphing their practices in accordance with the changing nature of social and political production, came to argue that the primary objective of organization is to "maintain the continuity of open struggle."[5] This represents a shifting away from the dead ends created by the constraints of orthodox Marxist theorization, as well as socialist and communist party discipline. However, this does not mean that the new concepts developed by operaisti theorists always found their way into practice immediately. Refocusing away from Marxist orthodoxy and workerism in a negative sense (focus on workplace struggle to the neglect of all others) took some years to be worked out effectively. For example, throughout the 1970s, operaisti theorists often embraced the struggles of others (such as feminist campaigns like Wages for Housework) only to the extent that they agreed with and extended arguments of the operaistis. And as the social antagonisms unleashed in the 1970s were beset by factionalization and disagreement, massive state repression in response to such acts as the kidnapping and murder of Prime Minister Aldo Moro by the Red Brigades would tear apart the project of operaismo for some time.

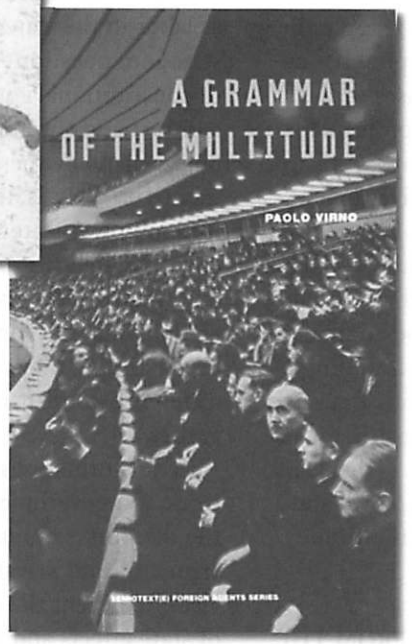
The Multitude in the New 17th Century

Turning to Paolo Virno's book *The Grammar of the Multitude*, his main argument is that the concept of the multitude is the important category of analysis for

our contemporary age. He draws out this analysis starting from the distinction between the people and the multitude found in the writings of philosophers Thomas Hobbes and Baruch Spinoza. In a periodization that makes this allusion all the more present, he argues that "we are living in a new seventeenth century, or in an age in which the old categories are falling apart and we need to coin new ones."[6] Unlike the unitary figure of the people, the multitude never reaches a point of synthetic unity that justifies the existence of a state (or is used by governing elites to rationalize their actions through state power).







For Virno, the multitude is "the form of social and political existence for the many,"[7] it "becomes a historically determined way of being, ontology revealing itself phenomenologically."[8] In other words, for Virno the concept of the multitude is a new form and possibility of political organization found within experiences and existences created by current transformations of existing socioeconomic realities. The conditions that multitude emerges from are those in which the categories and boundaries that politics previously coupled such as those of labor, action and intellect become blurred, hybridized and collapse into each other. The multitude in these conditions "affirms itself, in high relief, as a mode of being in which there is a juxtaposition, or at least a hybridization, between spheres which, until very recently . . . seemed distinct and separated."[9] The breakdown of categories of political thought and the changing nature of social and political life result in conditions of the multitude where there is a perpetual feeling of never being at home, which leads to seeking new forms of refuge from the vague uncertainty of the world. In the diffused workings of the post-Fordist economy, production shifts from mass standardized factory lines to dispersed, decentralized, and flexible forms of manufacture. Virno argues that in these conditions people seek refuge in the common places of language and communication, or in what Virno describes as "the public life of the mind in which we all take part." The emergence of the multitude in this way has two senses, both describing an increased usage of the concept for analysis and organizing, as well as the recent conditions and changes in the world system are creating new possibilities for forms of politics identified as the formation of multitude as a political project. The rapidly changing nature of society, the economy and the world order, rather than preventing the possibility of liberatory projects has created new possibilities for forms of organization and the self-organization of populations beyond the limits of state power.

In some ways Virno's theorization of the multitude's emergence seems more fitting precisely for his greater degree of caution and attention to what might be called "the dark side of the multitude," or the common created by a publicness of fear. Virno argues that "if the publicness of intellect does not yield to the realm of a public sphere, of a political space in which the many can tend to common affairs, then it produces terrifying effects . . . [it] translates into *an unchecked proliferation of hierarchies* as groundless as they are thriving."[10] The conditions of fear and apparatuses of security are not just atomizing, but can create common spaces and forms of the multitude experienced paradoxically as a servile and oddly depoliticized space.

Virno locates the emergence of the multitude in relation to the changing nature of labor and production, where existing reservoirs of skills, knowledge, and experience have become welded together and essential to the productive process. For Virno, these characteristics united by linguistic experience increasingly take on the form of performance, and as such "not only characterize the culture industry by the totality of contemporary social production . . . [it] becomes the prototype of all wage labor."[11] It embodies immaterial labor (which encompasses cognitive and affective labor), service work, and all forms of work focused on creation

that is more an idea or relation than a physical product and is distinguished in that its end product is ephemeral (such as images, relations or ideas) rather than tangible. Virno argues that the emergence of flexible production techniques was the response of capital and the state to resistance to the Fordist assembly line, not just in Italy but also in many other parts of the world.

For Virno the challenge is not to return to some previously imagined era, but to develop from the networked and communicative capacities of the emergent multitude new forms of social creativity and non-representative democracy that can be taken into exodus, to reapply the skills and knowledge that capital has appropriated into the apparatuses of the economy and the state into projects for the self-liberation of the many. As Virno argues: "Nothing is less passive than the act of fleeing, of exiting. Defection modifies the conditions within which the struggle takes place, rather than presupposing those conditions to be an unalterable horizon;" and through finding new forms of exodus, one finds that "exit hinges on a latent kind of wealth, on an exuberance of possibilities . . . [that] are allusions to what the true *political*, and not servile, virtuosity of the multitude could be."[12]

Laboring In and Away from the State

Moving the usage of these concepts in a different direction is Stefano Harney in his book *State Work: Public Administration and Mass Intellectuality*, which draws from operaismo as well as performance and cultural studies, labor process theory, and public administration to construct a cultural theory of labor in the state, or "state work." From this perspective he hopes to find "how to glimpse the state as it transforms labor into work, and in the shimmers of that image, catch the society of producers making the state."[13] Harney makes this distinction between the concept of labor and work to describe a world making *activity* as opposed to the particular quotidian forms that practically embody labor.

Drawing from his experiences of working in the Antiracism Secretariat of the Ontario Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs from 1992-1995, Harney explores the techniques of public administration and management that hide the labor of creating the state in endless chains of equivalence and comparison. It is these techniques that create *state effects*, or the impression that the state is more than the sum of its parts, and naturalize the idea of the state as a necessary organizing principle in people's lives. To look at the construction of the state from the position of labor in the state "would have had the direct effect of voicing labor as labor in the state and of calling the state into question—not just as an object of constitutional construction based on contract and sovereignty but a material object made by these practical embodiments."[14] That is, it would open avenues for looking at state work in terms of the collective identities and social surpluses involved in the construction of the state, as elements that can be appreciated in terms of how they might be socialized differently to disperse the state altogether.[15]

Transformations in the nature of state work and government labor, for example, the discourses around "reinventing government" and privatization of state services, represent the continuing creation of state effects and forms of power now created through different means. This angle allows Harney to draw out radical potential from forms of knowledge and practices where one might not expect to find them, such as public administration. By looking at forms of labor and social self-creation that are embodied in state work and necessary to the appropriation of social creativity, Harney argues that "it is precisely what I am labeling state work that must be brought with us into exodus in order to truly be left behind through the new mediation of difference."[16] It is by keeping the antagonisms of capital and state work near enough to be firmly dispelled that a constitutive politics of exodus would maintain its transformative powers.

As state work and governmental labor increasingly become immaterial, much like the nature of labor and production itself, the creation of wealth becomes welded into the process of constituting forms of subjectivity. But as the production of social wealth and its appropriation is increasingly founded upon processes of symbolic and linguistic manipulation, ideological effects of state work—such as citizenship and the idea of the state itself—are potentially antagonistic to the forms of appropriated and alienated labor that produce them. These processes of creating forms of collective identity and subjectivity in state work contain within themselves potentials for pushing the desires embodied in practices of state work beyond that which the administrative apparatus can handle. Or, as Harney notes, "Perhaps it is possible to continue state work only at the risk of wanting what it cannot have, revealing what it does want—a society of labor as the pleasure and fantasy and social reproduction."[17] It is in this way that Harney's theorization of state work is most useful; by looking at the labor embodied in state practice (rather than reifying the state as given object) it becomes possible to look for new ways to draw from the creativity of that labor and find ways it can be channeled toward productive social ends, rather than captured within the apparatus of state power.

A Multitude by, of, and for the Multitude

One of the distinctive features of operaismo has been the creative, dynamic reinterpretations of Marx that have broken radically with traditional readings. By drawing out ideas from sections of Marx's writing which have generally received less attention, particularly the *Grundrisse*, Operaisti theorists such as Tronti, Bologona, Negri, and Virno have been able to refocus their analysis to provide ways around some of the shortcomings of Marxist orthodoxy. But it should be remembered that whether or not operaismo was unorthodox, it was still autonomist *Marxism*, and is significantly molded by that fact. For instance, operaismo still focuses on labor

as the lever for political subjectivity while broadening the range of what is considered within the framework of labor.

The work of all these authors represents the continuation of this line of theorization. It is their ways of breaking from traditional Marxist orthodoxies that open new avenues for the productive meeting of Marxist and anarchist traditions. Lines of convergence between autonomist Marxism and anarchism seem possible precisely because a focus on cooperative forms of resistance, knowledge creation, and open forms of struggle come very close to positions long found within anarchist practice and theory. But, while the work of Negri, Virno, Tronti and other operaisti theorists are often read as libertarian, it is important to remember that even if their ideas departed greatly from Marxist orthodoxy, they were in other ways far from libertarian. Some might wonder why such a version of Marxism does not simply break with the idea of being Marxist altogether. But this makes more sense in the context where operaismo originated—in 1970s Italy, with its mass parties and unions of Marxist orientation—that made working in this tradition appear more tangible.

In many ways, however, the sharp distinctions that are made about current forms of production are the claims used to foster hope for this new concerted effort to realize the multitude. While texts such as *Grammar of the Multitude* and the writings of Hardt and Negri are exhilarating in their ability, it's perhaps almost willful self-delusion to see them as possibilities for new forms of revolutionary social action within current conditions. This is where books such as *Storming Heaven* and *State Work* become important: for the purpose of seeing how these ideas emerged within a distinct historical context, and how they might be applied in concrete situations that are quite different from the idealized creation of the "multitude" and of coming "exodus." It is also apparent in the new and interesting ways that operaisti ideas are being deployed and worked with in the organizing around precarious labor in Italy, Spain and France, for instance. It is these applications that will bear out the fruits of this theoretical labor, and their outcomes and reflections will refine and improve these theoretical tools.

The concept of the multitude, exodus and the currents of operaismo from which they emerge contain a reservoir of theorization and approaches that could inform and be shaped by our organizing practices. Only time and experience will tell whether the possibilities for broadening and enriching the languages through which we can communicate and describe our resistance will benefit by adding the idea of the multitude to the arsenal. Perhaps it would be wiser, rather than asking what the multitude is, to ask what the concept of the multitude and related ideas could mean for organizers and all those struggling for liberation. One can guess that this will be relative to the degree to which the idea of the multitude can cease to be a concept associated with or assumed to be the product of one or a few people, and through networked processes of action, reflection, communication, and reinterpretation become of a concept of, for, and by the concerted multiplicity of the multitude itself. ✷

Endnotes

1. The translation of *operaismo* as "workerism" is problematic in that the word in Italian does not have the pejorative connotations that it does in English. The Italian version of the word for workerism, meaning an exclusive focus on industrial struggles over all others, is *fabrichismo.*
2. Steve Wright. *Storming Heaven: Class Composition and Struggle in Italian Autonomist Marxism* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), 107.
3. Ibid., 3.
4. Ibid., 37-38.
5. Ibid., 69.
6. Paolo Virno. *Grammar of the Multitude.* Trans. Sylvère Lotringer (New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), 24.
7. Ibid., 21.
8. Ibid., 98.
9. Ibid., 49.
10. Ibid., 40-41.
11. Ibid., 56/61.
12. Ibid., 69-70.
13. Stefano Harney. *State Work: Public Administration and Mass Intellectuality* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 19.
14. Ibid., 89. An excellent argument made along these lines about the danger of conceptualizing government power as actually unified into the form of the state (rather than as various forms of power united by idea of the idea) is made by Philip Abrams in his excellent essay "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State." *Journal of Historical Sociology* Volume 1 Number 1 (March 1988): 58-89.
15. Ibid., 20.
16. Ibid., 58.
17. Ibid., 187.

Walking on the Edge of Revolt

by Louis-Frédéric Gaudet
translated by Andréa Schmidt and Louis-Frédéric Gaudet

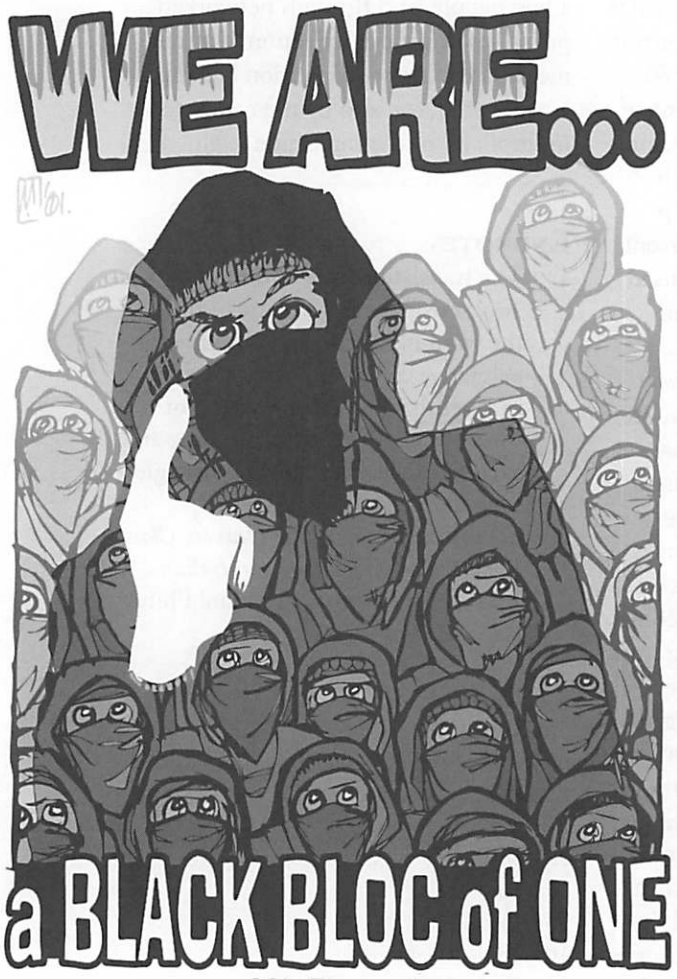
A review of:

L'Homme Révolté [*The Rebel*] by Albert Camus (1951; reprint, Paris: Gallimard, 2002).

Les Black Blocs: La liberté et l'égalité se manifestent [*Black Blocs: Expressions of Freedom and Equality*] by Francis Dupuis-Déri (Montréal: Lux Éditeur, 2003).

Revolt is a perpetual state of confrontation that animates individuals and societies. Through times, places, and political contexts, emancipation has always been a result of a series of direct confrontations that has allowed individuals gathered together in struggle to reject humiliation and injustice. Nevertheless, the history of revolt must be characterized by the repetition of the different. As destabilizing as that may be, it is only a tactic, the expression of which need not be progressive. Distinguishing between the different forms revolt can take remains a difficult task.

For anti-authoritarians, new paths of reflection through action seemed to open up a few years ago, with the Zapatista uprising and the emergence, in the North, of the concept of a respect for a "diversity of tactics."[1] The critical task of emancipation remains unfinished, however. Confrontation and violence have regained their quasi-taboo status, blindly condemned or justified, coarsely eliminated from all debate in the name of quasi-theological principles. This is true among leftists and reactionary forces alike. In this moment, we are faced with the constant redeployment of capitalist power on new fronts. The continual invocation of the "state of emergency" limiting rights and freedoms, civilian populations living under military curfew, and a perpetual social war waged against the excluded, all feed new patterns of segregation, exclusion, and occupation. What is the status of our revolt in this particular historical context?



Mike Flugennock

Although separated by half a century, Albert Camus and Francis Dupuis-Déri offer a philosophical and practical perspective on revolt. These two contributions can nourish anarchist activists' examination of their resistance—an examination at once internal, undertaken with reference to our own systems of values, and comparative, considered with reference to other movements struggling against the present order. If it is clear to both authors that in confronting the forces of humiliation and injustice, the rebels lay the groundwork for emancipation, it is no less the case that the authors interrogate the relationship between the character of the rebel and the manifestation of revolt. Is revolt an instrument, deployed in the pursuit of specific objectives? Is one type of revolt condemned to exhaust itself and disappear once the rebels have attained their goals? Is it possible for an individual to rebel in the absence of more specific or predetermined goals than liberation from oppression and the affirmation of one's own existence? Asking these questions, the authors scrutinize the logic and articulation of revolt, and offer a critical perspective that allows us to distinguish between types of revolt, not simply on the basis of their manifestations, but rather on the basis of their principles and the degree to which they are reali-

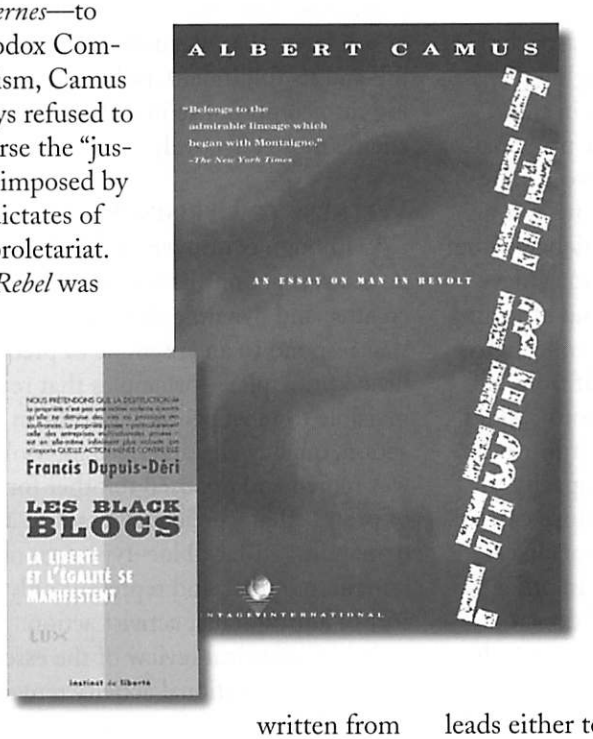
zed in action.

The Ethic of Liberation

Camus is known more for his novels than his essays. This has probably contributed to the obfuscation of some of the complexity of his thought, which was nonetheless accented by an anti-authoritarianism in search of a balance between justice and freedom, absurdity and revolt, the individual and society, life and suicide.[2] Born in Algeria to French parents, Camus's youth was difficult, characterized by poverty and illness that would shape his future commitments. His entire body of work was devoted to the search for a just world as well as a world of solidarity. Camus was, above all, a person of action who denounced injustice and offered concrete support to movements that fought it.[3]

Forty-five years after his death, Camus's work is still referenced, but it is often read hastily and poorly. In the fury that surrounded the events of September 11 and the so-called war on terror, some U.S. analysts pulled quotes from *The Rebel* in order to found their expeditious condemnations of "terrorist" violence.[4] Because Camus's essay examines first and foremost the case of murder in its relation to revolt, it did not take reactionary commentators much more than the fresh horror of Western suffering following the attack on the Twin Towers to cite *The Rebel*—without nuance and out of context—in order to affirm that violence cannot constitute a rational response to situations of humiliation and injustice. Such horror could thus only be the result of fanaticism or the last resort of nihilists; there was no reason to consider the socioeconomic and geopolitical contexts in which it occurred.

But to grasp the real scope of *The Rebel* and its subject matter, we have to understand Camus's position as an engaged intellectual, repulse by injustice but also impatient when faced with ideologically driven political manipulations. Marked by the post-World War II climate and adherence of the most visible French intellectuals—among them, Jean-Paul Sartre and the producers of the magazine *Les Temps Modernes*—to orthodox Communism, Camus always refused to endorse the "justice" imposed by the dictates of the proletariat. *The Rebel* was written from this critical perspective. The work seeks to elucidate the way in which revolt can drift off course, and the ways in which revolutions betray the principles that gave rise to them.



To this end, Camus begins to define the notion of rebellion from the point of recognition of the absurdity of the world. He situates revolt as a constituent element of the individual, a metaphysical act that takes the shape of a movement from which the individual rejects their condition and the state of society. For Camus, only revolt offers humanity the possibility of its fulfillment, for it makes the human condition dependent only on an endlessly renewed struggle. It is the process through which the individual embraces the dignity shared by all human beings.

Camus's argument distinguishes itself from others when he identifies revolt as both the means and end of struggle. Perpetual revolt is not only the way to repel the world's absurdity but also to foil nihilism. Revolt would be condemned to failure or accepted as absurd, yet at that point rebels transcend and transform their condition by means that render their own emancipation dependent on the extermination of the group that is contaminating their existence. Recognizing this, individuals must resist the call of nihilism, which leads either to silence or the acceptance of murder.

It is only by perpetuating the struggle, and not by struggling to achieve a prophecied Utopia, that the individual and one's peers are able to give humanity meaning and improve their condition. For Camus, resignation (which takes form in suicide), religious faith, and the faith in prophetic ideology are not only the recognition of the absurd but its very acceptance. Through perpetual revolt, the absurd is not suppressed but perpetu-

ally repelled.

Revolt must first and foremost allow for liberation from oppression, but it must also affirm the essence of the rebel as a being who stands in solidarity with others. Suspicious of the blind faith of the Communists, Camus could not glorify "praxis" without associating it with the fundamental values of the individual. Despite its pretenses, rebel action in the pursuit of specific objectives guided by a doctrine starts from the absolute in order to shape reality. Revolt, conversely, relies on the real in order to pursue a perpetual struggle for truth. The former seeks to carry itself out from the top down, and the latter attempts this from the bottom up, without ceding before the oppression of enlightened guides who pretend to legitimate the practice according to a given dogma.

In identifying revolt as an aspect of human nature, Camus highlights the rational calculus of efficiency in the pursuit of specific ends as the principal reason for the deviation of revolt. The deliberation process should thus not be about what to do—that is, a debate about the most appropriate means to achieve specific ends—but rather about affirming what an individual and their collectivity represent by liberating oneself from all constraint. In this sense, actions should be carried out neither for their intrinsic merit nor by virtue of their capacity to achieve other objectives. Actions carried out in this waywould "de-rationalize" the act in relation to its ends in order to make way for another sort of decision. For Camus, actions have value not only by virtue of the results they carry with them but rather because they are shaped according to a new ethos, which I would call anti-authoritarian, with a new conception of good, justice, and evil, oriented by the maximization of the relationship to life as well as the annihilation of forms of injustice and humiliation.

Because it expands the possibility of critiquing choices of actions, this process of de-rationalizing revolt also reduces the danger that actions will be coopted or tamed as they are repeated and even ritualized. as it expands the possibility for critique. When revolt affirms itself as a tactic that represents the alternative itself rather than as a principle that merely foreshadows it, it allows us to deliberate about our own options, and to consider nuances of an ethical and moral order. In this sense, if a process of revolt doesn't reflect (to some degree) a sense of univeral morality, and thereby reach a maximum number of people and enlarge the movement, it won't have the ability to expand its base and feed its actions with new energy.

The limitations of Camus's work lie in his style and the range of his topics. Due to the abstract character of his writings and his concern mainly with an era that has ended, his arguments sometimes descend into confusion. But above all, his work affirms the rebel and their principles. Revolt, for Camus, is an act of solidarity that maximizes the right to life and its fulfillment, rather than delving into compromise in order to fight an enemy more effectively.

Witness to Uprisings

Although controversial, black bloc direct actions have proven to be creative and dynamic demonstrations that respond to an ensemble of preestablished principles—principles that remain invisible to most people. This form of action, quickly characterized as "violent," was reified and opposed to other forms of protest that were equally radical and demanding. Black bloc–type actions remain marginal, and represent only one sort of anticapitalist activist action. Nevertheless, a critical review of the essence of this confrontational activity remains worthwhile.

Watching from the outside, the phenomenon seemed magnified by the North American media's infatuation with the glamour of black bloc actions. Internally, the debates between different tendencies within the movement for social justice defined the discussion about the respect for a diversity of tactics such that there was little analysis or debate about black blocs beyond their strategic value. Destabilized now by the diminishing size of their convergences and also, to some extent, repression, anticapitalist activist communities in North America are beginning to ask themselves how to make the connections between current forms of domination and strategies for struggle.

It is because black blocs arrived on the anticapitalist activist scene as one of the important innovations of the past years that it is worth reviewing the topic, despite a sense that it has been thoroughly covered and exhausted. Autonomous and decentralized in their actions, black blocs were able to produce a creative tension between the symbols of capitalism and grassroots resistance, specifically within demonstrations organized on the basis of a respect for a diversity of tactics. This tension, which represented a kind of opportunity for anarchists to make their message and ideas known, had to be exploited by activists in order to reclaim discursive space and action that was barricaded and impossible to penetrate without the help of tactics of confrontation.

An activist and political theorist from Quebec, Dupuis-Déri decided to focus on the phenomenon in *Les Black Blocs: La liberté et l'égalité se manifestent.* As a pundit, the author had already contributed a great deal to demystifying the anarchist movement in the francophone world. Notably, his contributions put the renaissance of the anarchist movement into cultural and historical perspective, and provided a counterbalance to the demonization of the movement by the mass media, labor leaders, and other social democratic players in 2000 and early 2001, as the convergence against the Summit of the Americas was being organized in Quebec City. Thus, Dupuis-Déri's approach to the topic of black blocs is one of an informed observer who has mixed with activists in organizing processes and struggle.

Apart from a few on-the-spot analyses immediately after the big convergences where the black blocs were present, few works have analyzed the tactic. This being the case, Dupuis-Déri's work arrives at just the right moment and allows for a critical review of the tactic. Without being openly anarchist, the analysis

is concerned primarily with explaining concepts and critiques that are near and dear to anarchists. Clear and concise, Dupuis-Déri's book would suit the novice well, while activists will find in it the echo of debates that permeated recent organizing efforts. In short, this is an important book, as much for its ability to demystify a movement phenomenon for a general population as for its usefulness as a recorded memory for the activist community.

The first edition of Dupuis-Déri's book is divided into three parts. The first part provides a historical perspective on a phenomenon all too often perceived as having appeared out of nowhere during the "Battle of Seattle." The analysis allows Dupuis-Déri to demolish a number of falsehoods, including the characterization of the black bloc as a permanent or an apolitical organization that exists as a worldwide underground network.

The black bloc made its first appearance in the early 1980s, as a tactic of resistance to the eviction of squats in Germany. The term was first coined by German security forces. Taken up by a handful of collectives during the antiwar demonstrations at the time of the first Gulf War in 1991, it was only with the multiplication of big anticapitalist convergences that the public became more familiar with what the media described as "anarchist hooligans" dressed in black.

Dupuis-Déri tries hard to demonstrate that black blocs represent "a form of collective action, deliberately chosen by some activists, in order to make visible a radical critique of the economic and political system within a demonstration."[5] In short, he argues, a black bloc-type action is the result of a decision-making process undertaken in a closed group, and coordinated with others, that respects the ability, judgment, and decisions of each person to involve oneself in the sort of action one considers the most appropriate in a given situation and context. Defying the illegitimate authority of the institutions of global capitalism, the black bloc's direct action represents the fulfillment of the duty to resist. It affirms and demands an anarchist position. The action only has meaning insofar as the result emerges from an ethic that places direct democracy, equality, and solidarity at the heart of its decisions.

Dupuis-Déri's analysis also contextualizes the debate on violence that ensued from the black bloc's reputation, without glorifying an insurrectionary mystique. Examining the nature of direct action organizing and repression, the author describes the actors in the confrontation as "equal and free," while the security forces, on the other hand, for all that they are more violent and better equipped, are "obedient and unequal."[6] Moreover, the confrontations that occur at the gatherings in which black blocs work prove to be much more democratic than those organized by its most notorious opponents within the social justice movement. By demanding a place within the diversity of tactics framework, black blocs become spokespeople for their unique political analysis and simultaneously advocates of free spaces for other forms of resistance as well. Black blocs are far from the "one tactic fits all" marches orchestrated by state-sanctioned opposition groups, which limit the free expression of dissidence and occupy highly hierarchical spaces in which the presence of some people is more important than others.

The second part of Dupuis-Déri's book allows the architects of the black bloc to speak on their own behalf. The maneuver is interesting because it gives the reader access to a number of communiques and analyses written by black bloc participants themselves. It allows the reader to glean insight into the organizational logic of affinity groups. If some might see in it an organizing guide, the reflection and positions defended in these pages are instead evidence of black bloc participants' own ethical and tactical conciousness raising, and they confirm Dupuis-Déri's analysis.

The final section of the book gives space to the debate between Michael Albert and black bloc participants concerning the relevance of black bloc–orchestrated actions. The idea is interesting: it repositions the reader in the debates that followed the most recent manifestation of the black bloc phenomenon. Nonetheless, it would also have been intriguing to lay out the position of activists sympathetic to black bloc actions who have chosen not to participate in them. After all, the most notorious defenders of the concept of respect for a diversity of tactics have rarely been the first to head to the front lines of demonstrations. The author's approach also does not allow for reference to significant debates, internal to the anticapitalist movement, about the sexist and racist character of black blocs.[7]

All in all, above and beyond the demystification of the phenomenon, the book's main contribution lies in Dupuis-Déri's analysis of the black bloc as a manifestation of a revolt anchored in ethical values of self-determination, freedom, equality, and solidarity. The author demonstrates how the participation, debate, and decision making in small affinity groups, at the front line or the periphery of grassroots battles, represents a mechanism of checks and balances that ensures that black bloc actions won't sacrifice the values that motivate their revolt in the name of efficiency. The black bloc's act of revolt is at once the reaction to oppression and the affirmation of an alternative politics. This is not about bestowing an aura of revolutionary romanticism on black blocs but about emphasizing that in situations of resistence, the tactics of confrontation in the name of social justice are always possible without having to deny our origins, the values that animate our identity, and the values of our movements and collectives.

Rarely have we seen such a confrontational relationship between those who govern and those who refuse to be governed. Yet it is difficult to determine the specificity of this revolt in the absence of a framework for comparison. The direct action of black blocs can be seen as distinct particularly in its relationship to other forms of resistance that have confronted the symbols of capitalism during the large convergences of the past ten years (in the North). A comparison of black blocs, the WOMBLES, and the Tute Bianche would probably have allowed for a clearer examination of black

bloc analysis and choices. Such a comparison would have allowed for an innovative exploration of the debates over the macho and racist character of black bloc actions—debates that are far too often limited by dogma. In all, the strength of Dupui-Déri's work is that he engages with the organizational dynamics of the blocs, and informs his readers quite remarkably of the integrity that emerges from the political and moral values of the activists and their actions.

Challenging Revolt

Both *The Rebel* and *Black Blocs* show that only direct action allows us to transcend he absurdity of the world with which we are confronted. Beyond this simple recognition, *The Rebel* offers anarchists fuel for reflection likely to reinforce the legitimacy of their actions, insofar as they remain faithful to the principles that feed their revolt.

Dupui-Déri's work has the merit of bringing together the arguments for how confrontation can be creative as well as affirm a political position rather than merely an irrational act, the result of accumulated frustration. Obviously, it deals with only one section of the spectrum of resistance. And resistance is by no means a sealed concept, whose principles are frozen in time and space. There is room for discussion and debate on the topic of black blocs and the activity of confrontation. Changes in the nature of convergences orchestrated by social justice activists have shaken some of the bases of that discussion. Nonetheless, the discourse on the topic is proving slow to develop, and at an organizational level, no alternative to the formula of affinity group-based actions has been raised. So long as this is the case, the possibility of a black bloc resurgence is real. The challenge continues to be one of clearly shaping his form of confrontation in order to create free political spaces. It is at this point that the genuine organizational work begins. It is often only in moments of relative calm that the important work of consolidation and expanding networks of support, so necessary for the creation of such spaces, can really take place.

We live in a context of holy wars orchestrated by fundamentalist religious movements and our states, that seek not to maximize their relationship with life but rather their own hegemony. Our goal as anti-authoritarians should therefore take shape in a renewed engagement in our projects, local struggles, and literature, where we should not only ask questions about the effectiveness of our methods of struggle but also about how to promote the positions that found our revolt, and thereby open up a realm of possibilities. Only a practice guided by principles with something of a universal resonance, like solidarity, equality, justice and self-determination, has the power to reconfigure the landscape of our concrete situations. Such a practice determines ur capacity to be creative, and prevents our revolt from veering into domination and terror. ✷

Endnotes

1. The concept of a diversity of tactics has so far—for better or worse—escaped any attempt at a clear and precise definition. At the very least, one can affirm that the respect for a diversity of tactics recognizes the plurality of forms of dissidence. This plurality results from particular socio-cultural, economic, and political dynamics, based in the day-to-day experience of exploitation, oppression, and repression of marginalized communities. Taking into account this plurality of lived experience, the concept promotes the idea that a number of forms of resistance can prove just and legitimate and that no one form of resistance has intrinsic strategic merit. The activists who emphasized this recognition, within the framework of the mobilizations against the Summit of the Americas in April 2001 in Quebec City, had two complementary objectives: 1) to reorient the debate about violence and the legitimacy of tactics used by demonstrators toward a criticim of the structural violence perpetrated by a capitalist system; 2) to avoid rifts between those opposing the Summit of the Americas and legitimating the state and security forces' criminalization of certain forms of resistance. Thus, the concept of diversity of tactics is one that privileges an open solidarity that respects different types of resistance.
2. See Albert Camus's contributions to *Le Monde Libertaire*. They are available online at http://federation-anarchiste.org/ml/
3. Active in the resistance to the German occupation, Camus was also one of the first French intellectuals to take a stand against the colonial oppression of Algeria, to denounce fascism in Spain, and to protest the authoritarian drift of communism.
4. In the anglophone world, *The Rebel* is often perceived as a treatise against political revolutions. See Paul Berman's recent book, *Terror and Liberalism*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003). Basing himself on Camus's work, and mainly on *The Rebel*, Berman critiques Islamicist totalitarianism and the recourse to violence. Slapdash and simplistic, the author draws on only a part of Camus's analysis in order to justify the "War on Terror," while the latter's arguments could in fact throw into question that very war, waged as it is in the name of perverted principles.
5. Francis Dupis-Déri, *Les Black Blocs: La liberté et l'égalité se manifestent* (Montréal: Lux Éditeur, 2003), 16.
6. Ibid, 70.
7. At the time, the Black Bloc's confrontational actions were criticized as macho and of making the demonstration environment uncomfortable for many demonstrators from communities excluded by the capitalist system. The argument was based on the fact that confrontational actions bear different consequences for different demonstrators, and are generally more severe for groups most affected by structures of domination. On the other hand, the proponents of a respect for a diversity of tactics claimed that the experience of exploitation, oppression and repression are multiple and cannot be reified for any particular group, thereby determining their behaviour.

Species of Anarchist Memory

by *Alexander K. Hirsch*

A review of:

Panegyric by Guy Debord (New York: Verso, 2004).

Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist by Alexander Berkman (New York: New York Review of Books, 1999).

I.

Milan Kundera once said, "The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting." Indeed, the very language of the political—of struggle, renewal, contestation, power, collectivity—is articulated in the incantations of the forgotten and the remembered. It is the assassination of memory that most secures the hegemony of power, and the nothingness of forgetting that most impedes radical movement. Perhaps never before has this mattered more—never before has the present depended so utterly upon the silence of the past. To Eric Hobsbawm, "the destruction of the past, or rather of the social mechanisms that link one's contemporary experience to that of earlier generations, is one of the most characteristic and eerie phenomena of the late twentieth century."[1] Whether it be the forgotten anarchist rural collectives of the Spanish revolution, or the silenced legacy of the slave rebellions of the Haitian revolution, the neglected brilliance of Bakunin or Kropotkin, the derelict memory of the Italian factory councils, or the Haymarket strike, anarchists know that our relationship to the past is one shaped by a power abetted by the amnesia. Our age is striking in its will to dehistoricize, to rationalize disappearance. Ours is not merely an age that allows the past to become fully bygone, but also one that gives battle to the past as such, one embellished by forgetfulness. *Forgetfulness breeds acquiescence, memory disenchantment, and upheaval.* Insofar as the detection of the contradictions inherent in the professed ideals of society and the illumination of the meaning of the social forces implicit in those contradictions remain important endeavors for anarchist theory, memory should remain a principal anarchist issue.

II.

Debord and Berkman may seem at first an odd pair to sort together. They are after all separated in time by a generation—Debord was five when Berkman died in 1936. Their political projects seem far removed as well: Debord the self-proclaimed leader of the Situationist International, author of *The Society of the Spectacle*, provocateur of the May 1968 student rebellion in Paris; Berkman, "revolutionist first, man second,"[2] a classical anarchist influenced primarily by Johann Most. He served fourteen years in a Pennsylvania state prison after attempting to assassinate Henry Clay Frick the co-owner of the Steel Homestead plant who employed 300 strikebreakers to defeat the Amalgamated Iron and Steel Workers Union strike of 1892. Whereas Debord's writings would encourage us to consider the cultural undercurrents of societies dominated by modern forces of production, and the visual phantasmagoria twisted up inside the fetishization of consumerism, Berkman's would urge us to react against illegitimate authority, to scorn despotism, to defy the oppressor. Debord was concerned with discovering the clandestine movements of power, Berkman with resisting the obvious reprehensibility of hegemony. Where Berkman saw power as what presses against from the outside, as what subordinates, or sets beneath, Debord saw power as that which defines reality itself, the totality of social and cultural life, an amalgamation of power with which we are complicit and which launches not against us but through us.

Though their differences are significant, it is the similarities between these two men that are profound. Both Berkman and Debord were born to wealthy families and high social standing, both found anarchism a compelling "third way" against liberalism and marxism, both men considered themselves heroes to the revolutionary classes, champions of the awakened. Both were accused of assassination, and both, ultimately, committed suicide. Both men considered themselves to have spent significant portions of their lives imprisoned—Berkman literally incarcerated, Debord captive to the existential drama of his age. Berkman served most of his sentence in the harrowing profundity of solitary confinement. Debord lived his life rapt by the overriding boundaries imposed on his free will. "The pleasures of existence have been redefined in an authoritarian way,"[3] Debord would lament, "the general decadence is a means in the service of the empire of servitude." The world, to Debord, was "naught but deception," a world not merely appalling by its "troubled times, extreme divisions in society, and immense destruction," but also one dominated by intense alienation, and the monopolization of everyday life by false consciousness. In short Debord saw our world as one subjugated by "the autonomous movement of non-life."[4] The

sensation of confinement and bondage, of helplessness and isolation, of compulsory obedience and discipline, the forced labor, arbitrary deprivations, depraved routines, and summary detentions, to Debord, were universally characteristic of modern times. The perverse logic of the prison had been wholly applied. The dejected subject position of the imprisoned had become that of the ordinary citizen, each and every one of us bound to the perverse will of capital, hierarchy, worse, spectacle. Debord agreed altogether with Maurice Blanchot, postmodern French author, who said, "if it weren't for prisons, we would know we are all already in prison[5]."

III.

Berkman's *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist* was first published by Emma Goldman's now renowned journal *Mother Earth* in 1912. It quickly collected a loyal, albeit undersized, underground audience and then, like so many works of autobiographical literature, was lost in time, submerged in the blackness of neglect. Since September 1999 when the *New York Review of Books* republished it, the work has been infused with new life, a new readership, and a formidable responsibility only a classic could undertake.

The central question posed by *Prison Memoirs* is how such an abyss might form between the idealistic aspirations of a society and its sobering reality. Berkman asks how the chasm between the dream of a harmonious social order and the catastrophe of its actuality shapes our daily existence. Perhaps most intensely, he asks how violence manifests in American society not as some unwarranted madness or epidemic, but rather as a systemic and calculable effect inherent in the rift between the ideal and the reality. Hardly outdated, the questions Berkman raises seem all the more significant coming from a man who readily accepts political violence as an activist's instrument, a position incessantly debated and scrutinized in the media since September 11. Berkman was not a terrorist however, and to him the political meaning of violence was by no means simple. Never would he condone violence committed against the innocent nor would he excuse violence for the sake of violence. Berkman, like most anarchists of his age, drew a sharp distinction between political assassination and murder, the former being a revolutionary action draped in radical fervor, the latter a morally culpable and illegitimate act:

> *Human life is, indeed, sacred and inviolate. But the killing of a tyrant, of an enemy of the People, is in no way to be considered as the taking of a life... True, the Cause often calls upon the revolutionist to commit an unpleasant act; but it is the test of the true revolutionist—nay, more, his pride—to sacrifice all merely human feeling at the call of the People's cause.*
>
> *Could anything be nobler than to die for a grand, a sublime Cause? Why, the very life of a true revolutionist has no other purpose, no significance whatever, save to sacrifice it on the altar of the beloved People. And what could be higher in life than to be a true revolutionist? It is to be a man, a complete MAN. A being who has neither personal interests nor desires above the necessities of the Cause; one who has emancipated himself from being merely human, and has risen above that, even to the height of conviction which excludes all doubt, all regret; in short, one who in the very inmost of his soul feels himself revolutionist first, human afterwards.*[6]

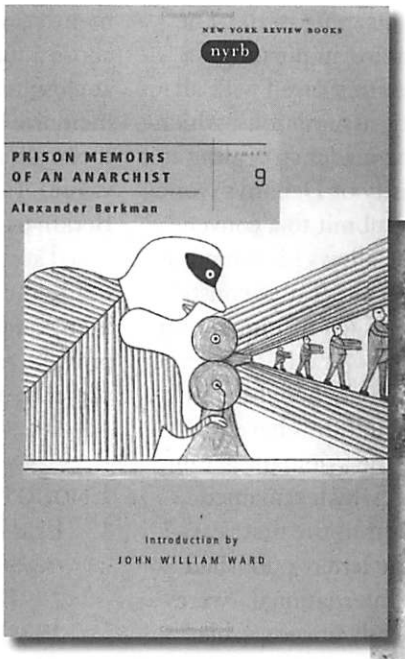
Prison Memoirs is divided into four parts. The first comparatively brief section gives a detailed description of the attempted assassination of the authoritarian Henry Clay Frick, and the subsequent trial where Berkman declines aid of legal council, defends himself as an anarchist disbelieving in the mandates of a corrupt legal justice system, and is ultimately convicted and sentenced to twenty-two years imprisonment. The third and fourth sections, equally truncated, deal with Berkman's "resurrection," or his life after prison—the inner drama of a man released from incarceration yet still subject to the unjust strictures of the law. The majority of the text, however, is concerned with the experience of being in prison. The organized injustice of the prison, the sadism of unchecked power, the darkness and unbroken sameness of confinement, the sinister silence and fearful solitude, the ugliness of the dungeon, all the horrors and brutality of his life, all that Berkman deplored of capitalist societies and wished to tear down of American civilization, all vested as a microcosm in a Pennsylvania state prison.

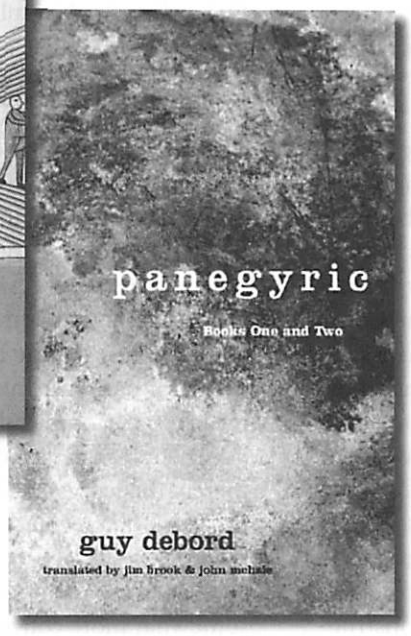
It was in prison that he wrote to his beloved Emma Goldman, "the stupendous task of human regeneration will be accomplished only by the purified vision of hearts that grow not cold."[7] Certainly Berkman could never be accused of housing a chilled heart—the revolutionary spirit he embodied, his pure intent, and the force of his uncompromising love of freedom, never wavered. The dedication of his memoir "to all those who in and out of prison fight against their bondage" contains the crux of Berkman's character, his will, his altruistic devotion to the emancipation of others.[8] Yet Berkman's style of composition—crude, innocent, simple—is symptomatic of his own naïve nostalgia for a Golden Age that never was, and a melancholy covet of a utopian future. His idealism, his rapture, are often articulated in a mawkish language only the sap of a romance novel could muster, and his glorification of the virtuous inner-nature of "the People" might strike the reader as millenarian. His invocation of the concept of "freedom," often incessant and redundant, bears resemblance to that of George W. Bush's second inaugural address. Both men use the term in its most abstract sense, and neither detail what a substantive freedom might look like. What maudlin style Berkman presents cannot however sweep away the most sophisticated elements of his work: his relentless self-scrutiny, his arresting and brazen honesty, his inspiring voice. To find how one stays alive under the conditions of totalitarianism, to find what it means to live an internal

life unimpeded by the fear of the "succeeding darkness" of modernity, is to find Alexander Berkman's memories in their raw and very human shape.

IV.

One might read Debord's memoirs in hope to find within it some trace of his life, some chronological series of events that gave rise to the Debord of *The Society of the Spectacle*, or to the numerous cinematic techniques he innovated. But to read *Panegyric* with such intent necessarily disappoints. *Panegyric* is divided into two parts (the third burned during the night of 30 November 1994, in accordance with Debord's wishes, passed on by suicide note). It was published in English for the first time by Verso in the fall of 2004. The first part is an autobiographical sketch, the second a sequence of images somewhat haphazardly arranged, neither of which contain within them any traditional information regarding Debord's life.





The first volume of *Panegyric*, a mere 68 pages, contains at least as many quotes as it does original writing. "Quotations are useful in periods of ignorance or obscurantist beliefs," writes Debord of our age, an age marked by, in his terms "a milieu of demolition experts."[9] The entire volume reads like an archipelago of quotations, taken from a broad range of sources—Shakespeare, Li Po, Thucydides, Tocqueville, Novalis, Clausewitz—loosely strung together by a meandering and self-aggrandizing commentary on no one thing in particular. "My method will be very simple," Debord declares at the outset, "I will tell what I have loved; and, in the light, everything else will become evident and make itself well enough understood."[10] In typical Debordian fashion, *Panegyric* presents information implicitly, subtly driving ideas and concepts between the lines where they are either recognized and harvested by the reader or drowned in festering and undiscovered textual caverns. Bequeathed by the legacy of Surrealism, *Panegyric* acknowledges all the philosophical conundrums inherent to recounting with any precision the trajectory of one's life, and instead sweeps out from under the text any reference point or resemblance to narrative form. Instead the memoir aspires to perform what Debord has learned "what sovereignty is, how many kinds there are, how one acquires it, how one keeps it, how one loses it[11]," by refracting insight with skillful awkwardness, producing a stimulating disequilibrium.

What Debord does make clear is his love of the revolutionary moment, the "flash on the horizon."[12] When human beings, degraded by the authority of total power, find themselves obliged to view their relationships in light of a pure freedom, thrust themselves into history, and capture for themselves the basis of their own lives, the true source of living emerges. In Debord's esteem, "nothing in art has ever given me this impression of an irrevocable brilliance... nothing else: neither Mallarmé's blank page, nor Malevich's white square on a white background, nor even Goya's last pictures, where black takes over everything, as Saturn devours his children."[13] Revolutions, the "surface eddies on the river of time,"[14] are what constitute the replenishment of hope, the thrill of potentiality, the feat of liberty, the life of equality.

V.

"Of all the truths which go to make up this volume of *Panegyric*," Debord alleges "it will be acknowledged that the most profound resides in the very manner of assembling and presenting them together."[15] It is precisely this emphasis of style, of appearance and structure over content, which makes Berkman and Debord worth comparing. In our present era dominated by historical disregard, an age so bereft of collective memory, the art of anarchist memoir writing is a solemn task whose implications are not merely political, but revolutionary. To an epoch that has forgotten how to historicize itself, *what* these men remember about their lives, vital as it may be, is not nearly as important as *how* they remember it.

A fine example of the way in which collective memory functions in contemporary society takes us back to the events of September 11, 2001. The mode of remembrance deployed by the media following the horrifying event was the incessant portrayal of its visual record. We all sat and watched the appalling images of planes smashing into the trade towers over and over with terrible awe. The image soon became iconic by the sheer quantity of its representation. The depiction of the event was as ceaseless as it was ubiquitous. The recycling vision was interminable, indeed almost rhythmic in its regularity. Rather than create a qualitative memory of the catastrophe,

we relied on a quantitative one. This was our way of remembering September 11th, by reprocessing the event until its horror became normalized. Indeed we remembered the event in such a way that we could be assured that its impact would be forgotten, obsolete. Or otherwise the reiteration of the image of the burning towers has been used instrumentally to legitimize imperial wars and the illegitimate detention in the United States of non-citizens. This irreverent and grotesque use of the memory of those who died would perhaps never be tolerated unless the intense impact of the event were first mitigated by the unremitting visual portrayal of the event. This is the ahistoricism militating against collective remembrance in our day, this is the obsolescence of the past, this is the assassination of meaning itself.

It may be safely said that by its silence, collective memory will have signified the limits of justice. The boundaries of the thinkable and the limits of the possible are carved by memory. To ask the question why the events the totality of which we call history occur as it does, to ask what power it is that moves the destinies of people, is also to ask how memory functions in a given social universe. It is because of the *way* in which the past is staged, the way we read ourselves backwards, that meaning in the present becomes accessible and alternative futures imaginable. A reconstructive vision for an anarchist politics must find new forms of memory, new ways of commemorating and invigorating the befallen past. An anarchist memory must negotiate the past not by raising its voice against society or protesting against the obvious injustice of late capitalism, but rather by elevating social criticism to the level of form, thereby embodying its critique, personifying how things might otherwise be.

The ways in which Debord and Berkman read themselves backwards provides anarchist theory with a model for thinking the past, for rediscovering how the past matters. By contrast to Berkman, Debord's language is convoluted and conceited. The continual shift of meaning, present in nearly every sentence, quite deliberate on Debord's part, yields an effect evocative of what life and memories are actually like: paradoxical, bewildering, eccentric, ironic. His method of remembrance is layered with multiple meanings—muddled, fluid, non-linear, packed with planned inconsistencies, and marked with an arbitrary and flowing array of images. Rather than personify meaninglessness though, Debord's autobiography protests meaning itself. The way we deploy meaning in pursuit of a political objective is itself laced with all kinds of problematic assumptions, which becomes clear to the reader struggling to interpret the obscurity of Debord's work. Debord's refusal to submit to a conventional narrative style allows his memories to drift and link into alternative constellations of meaning, which inspire innovative strategies of remembrance to emerge. His memories are not anchored in any familiar framework and thus have the power to challenge the axiomatic. "Our only manifestations, which remained rather rare and buried in the first years," Debord muses of the letters published by the Situationist International, "were meant to be completely unacceptable."[16] To celebrate the unacceptable is not merely the legacy of Dadaism but also the work of a revolutionary form of memory.

Berkman's memories are framed somewhat more conventionally. His life emerges from the page in the reader's mind as an undivided sum. His memoirs read as a personal diary, and as such present the reader with a familiar format. Yet Berkman presents his life as a collage of visual impressions which overlay and interrupt one another. Describing first the fateful train ride to Frick's office, Berkman then digresses into memories of his youthful life, of the buoyant aspirations of his adolescence, and then of his mother's early death. His frequent digressions into displaced moments which beckon from an outmoded past gives time itself an episodic quality in Berkman's memories. Berkman's invocation of the anachronistic makes the present appear awkward and thus able to be defied. It is an imaginative display of memory, one that renders the reader all too aware that we affect history in our attempts to understand it.

Perhaps the portraits each man chose to emblazon upon the opening pages of their memoirs most accurately depict the differences between them. Whereas Berkman chose a picture taken from the side, his head turned to meet the gaze of the camera, eyes framed by spectacles, mouth somber and straight, Debord chose a fuzzy image of his palm taken at close range. Whereas Berkman's memories are forthright, glaring, intense, Debord's are sensitive, peculiar, and vague. Taken together the memoirs of Berkman and Debord present a combined style of remembrance that conjures to life the rhythms and shifting patterns that gesture from the past in a way that provoke rather than comply with the present. ✸

Endnotes

1. Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 3.
2. Alexander Berkman, *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist* (New York: New York Review of Books, 1999), 13.
3. Guy Debord, *Panegyric 1* (New York: Verso, 2004), 67.
4. Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, (New York: Zone Books, 1994), 12.
5. Maurice Blanchot, *The Writing of the Disaster*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 66.
6. Berkman, *Prison Memoirs*, 97.
7. Ibid., xix.
8. Ibid., dedication page.
9. Debord, *Panegyric*, 14.
10. Ibid., 5.
11. Ibid., 37.
12. Ibid., 56.
13. Ibid., 63.
14. Ibid., 56.
15. Ibid., 11.

Institute for Anarchist Studies Updates

Summer 2005 Grants Awarded

The Institute for Anarchist Studies awards a total of $2,000 annually to radical writers and translators of essay-length works that treat themes of importance to the development of contemporary anarchist theory and practice. We are pleased to announce the recipients of the summer 2005 IAS grants. Each author was awarded $350 to support the completion of his project.

Kazembe Balagun was awarded a grant for "Queering the X: James Baldwin, Malcolm X and the Third World." The essay is an intellectual intervention in the debates about gender, race and sexuality. By promoting an intertextual dialogue between Malcolm X and Baldwin, the essay will foreground the queer influences in both men's analysis of racial oppression. Showing how both Malcolm and James' vision of a just society included aspects of an erotic, the essay will shift much of the rhetorical essentialism from both men's work and illustrate means by which radical/revolutionary activists can use both in an anti-authoritarian framework.

Balagun is a New York-based cultural historian and frequently contributes articles to the *NYC Indypendent* and is a member of *Estacion-Libre*—People of Color in Solidarity with Chiapas.

Evan Daniel was awarded a grant for "Rolling for the Revolution: A Transnational History of Cuban Cigarmakers in Havana, South Florida and New York City, 1868-1895." From the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, Cuban *torcedores* (cigar makers) exemplified the highly autonomous work culture of skilled artisans and their newspapers and workplace orators, or *lectors*, articulated an explicitly internationalist anarchist ideology. Despite this internationalist orientation, Cuban cigar makers played a pivotal role in the fight against Spanish rule by raising funds, disseminating propaganda, and eventually participating in armed struggle. This essay will ask how and why Cuban cigar makers who were anarchist internationalists eventually supported a nationalist endeavor, adopting and adapting both anarchism and nationalism in order to respond to their changing social and material realities.

Daniel lives in New York City, where he is a processing archivist at the Tamiment Library/Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University and a Ph.D. student in History and Political Science at the New School for Social Research.

Ramor Ryan was awarded a grant for "Zapatista Spring: Autonomy and a Water Project." The essay will tell the story of a solidarity project to install a potable water system in a Zapatista base community located on occupied land. Offering their technical knowledge, their solidarity and enthusiasm for the Zapatista struggle for autonomy and self-determination, a group of anarchists from Mexico City, the US and Europe were sent by the Zapatista Revolutionary Clandestine Committee to the village of Rafael Moreno deep within the Lacandon Jungle. Living and working with the companer@s for 10 weeks, the activists experienced rebel joy and the wretched hardships of abject poverty in equal measure. "Zapatista Spring" will explore the notion of international solidarity, and examine questions provoked by the water project experience: how are meaningful bridges of solidarity built between privileged activists of the North and those of the disadvantaged South? When is solidarity no more than charity, and when does it really help build autonomy?

Ryan lives somewhere in the global rebel underground and has worked on a dozen water projects in different regions of the autonomous municipalities of Chiapas. His book *Clandestines: The Pirate Journals of an Irish Exile,* for which he received an IAS grant in 2002, has been contracted by AK Press and will be published in spring 2006.

Thank You Chuck, and Farewell!

Ten years ago, Chuck Morse gathered a group of us together at his home in Albany, New York, to initiate a new political project. His idea was to found an organization dedicated to increasing the theoretical development of the anarchist movement. Chuck's proposal was to do this by raising money and then giving grants to assist radical writers. With that first meeting in 1995, the Institute for Anarchist Studies (IAS) was born. And now, ten years later, the IAS has given away over $50,000 to more than fifty writers from twelve countries, and has expanded its projects to include a theoretical journal, the Renewing the Anarchist Tradition conference, the Latin American Archives project, and soon, a book imprint collaboration with AK Press. The IAS continues, but sadly without Chuck.

In April of this year, Chuck resigned his position as a board member. Chuck was both the founder of the IAS and its first general director. Chuck put in long hours and selfless amounts of work to establish the IAS. The first IAS office was in his home, and the organization's activities took up all of Chuck's time—all generously donated. His devotion to the project, moreover, was ceaseless.

In addition, Chuck's other project, *The New Formulation: An Anti-Authoritarian Review of Books*—a successful project in its own right—was merged with the IAS publication, *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory*, making for a much more substantive, comprehensive publication, as is hopefully evident to readers with this current issue.

Chuck has that rare combination of an overarching political vision and an ability to concentrate on all the little things necessary to move us in that direction. He both knows what type of society he wants to live in and all the hard work needed to get us there. He is meticulous in his attention to details and highly organized—some might fondly say to the point of being obsessive-compulsive. Chuck has strong opinions and loves to debate, yet he always wanted to do what was best for the IAS and the movement it serves—and still does. He constantly reminded board members of our responsibility to our donors, and worked to honor those sacrifices and financial contributions that make the IAS possible.

The board will miss Chuck's presence and his invaluable contributions. We are also sure he will succeed in whatever projects he sets his sights on next. The IAS will forever be in his debt, as will those many anarchist writers, thinkers, and revolutionaries around the world that the IAS has encouraged or inspired.

Grant Updates

Daniel Burton-Rose continues to find new material for his project *Listening to an Enforced Silence: Ba-Jin in Communist China.* The project collects the insights of Li Feigan—an anarchist organizer who employs the pen name "Ba Jin" and has become a central figure in twentieth-century Chinese literature. While working on *Listening to an Enforced Silence*, which he hopes to complete in the fall of 2006, Burton-Rose is translating Ba Jin's autobiography, *Memoirs* (1936). *Memoirs* is the work of Ba-Jin's which was most affected by communist censorship, and the translation will indicate sections excised from the post-1949 edition of the book. Burton-Rose was awarded an IAS grant in February 2005.

Trevor Paglen has completed the *Recording Carceral Landscapes* project for which he was awarded a grant in July 2004. The project is a collection of images, texts and interviews that make visible the social, political, and economic relationships that constitute California's massive prison system. In order to make the material available as widely as possible and to distribute it at no cost, Paglen has produced the project as a website (paglen.org/carceral). The site includes downloadables that can be printed and distributed for educational and organizing purposes.

The first volume of **Robert Graham**'s *Anarchism: A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas* was published in spring 2005 by Black Rose Books. The two-volume project assembles the definitive texts of the anarchist tradition, organizing them chronologically and thematically. Graham has acquired English translations of classical anarchist essays for inclusion in the first volume of the project that have never before been published. These include substantial selections from Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Latin American texts as well as essays by Otto Gross, Gustav Landauer, and Diego Abad de Sántillan. Graham is currently working on the second volume of the two-volume project. Graham was awarded an IAS grant in January 2004.

Nate Holdren has completed his translation of the Colectivo Situaciones's *19 and 20: Notes for the New Social Protagonism.* The translation of the radical Buenos Aires collective's account of the social movements that exploded in Argentina on December 19 and 20, 2001, will make the book available to an English-speaking audience for the first time when it is published by Rowman and Littlefield in 2006. Holdren devotes his spare time to Notas Rojas, a collective that aims to translate Spanish-language political theory and social movement history into English. People interested in getting involved are invited to contact him at: nateholdren@gmail.com. Holdren received in IAS grant in July 2003.

The IAS's 2005 Fund-raising Campaign

Promoting critical scholarship exploring social domination and reconstructive visions of a free society

For nearly a decade, the IAS has worked to support the development of the theoretical tools necessary for critiquing systems of domination and envisioning alternatives to them.

At a time when genuinely radical movements in North America are at low ebb, it is more important than ever to create opportunities for anti-authoritarians to analyze contemporary challenges and strategies and to reflect critically on movement practices and dilemmas. Through our grant program and other efforts, the IAS supports and sustains forums in which such theoretical work is possible, and contributes to nurturing a global community of anarchist scholars and public intellectuals.

Over the past decade, the IAS has funded over fifty projects by authors from countries around the world, including Argentina, Canada, Germany, South Africa, the Czech Republic, and the United States. We have funded movement research, anthologies, translations, historical studies, online publications, books that serve as organizing tools and others that read like pirates' tales. Last winter, the IAS modified its grant program to fund and provide editorial and publishing assistance for writers and translators of essay-length works only.

The IAS has been able to provide this unique and important support thanks to the generosity of our comrades and allies around the world, and we are asking for your assistance once again. We are trying to raise $15,000 by January 2006 in order to keep awarding grants to radical writers, developing our publishing efforts, and supporting our other projects.

Your donation will help the IAS to:

- Award US$2,000 in grants to writers and translators of essay-length work that treat themes of importance to the development of anarchist theory and practice;
- Provide editorial and publishing assistance to the essay writers and translators we fund. Many completed essays will be published in Perspectives on Anarchist Theory or in a new books series to be published in collaboration with AK Press;
- Sponsor the annual Renewing the Anarchist Tradition conference, a scholarly space in which to reexamine and reinvigorate the social and political tradition of anarchism;
- Publish *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory*, our bi-annual journal for theoretical debates and projects reflective of a diversity of anti-authoritarian tendencies;
- Coordinate a speakers' bureau.

As an expression of our appreciation for your support, we are offering book gifts to IAS donors who reside in the US or Canada, thanks to the good people at Raven Books in Amherst, Massachusetts. IAS donors who give US$25 or more are entitled to receive at least one great book from their collection. All donors will receive an annual subscription to *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory*.

Please donate today.

The IAS's 2005 Fundraising Campaign

Great Books for IAS Donors

Raven Books of Amherst, Massachusetts, has generously made the following books available to IAS donors:

- For a US$25 donation to the IAS, we will mail you any one of the following books and a one-year subscription to *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory.*
- For a US$50 donation, we will send you any two books and a one-year subscription to *Perspectives.*
- For a US$100 contribution, you will receive five of these great books, and a one-year subscription to *Perspectives.*
- For a US$500 donation, you will receive all of the following books and a one-year subscription to *Perspectives.*

Books will be delivered to U.S. and Canadian destinations free of charge. Other destinations will require that the donor pay for shipping expenses.

Abramovitz, Mimi. *Regulating the Lives of Women: Social Welfare Policy from Colonial Times to the Present.* South End, 1996. Paper, 411 pp., $22.

Abu-Jamal, Mumia. *Death Blossoms: Reflections from a Prisoner of Conscience.* Litmis, 1996. Paper, 153 pp., $12.

Barsamian, David. *Louder Than Bombs: Interviews from the Progressive Magazine.* South End, 2004. Paper, 233 pp., $15.

Bohlen, Jim.

Making Waves: *The Origins and Future of Greenpeace.* Black Rose, 2001. Paper, 181 pp., $19.99.

Bookchin, Murray. *Anarchism, Marxism, and the Future of the Left: Interviews and Essays,* 1993–1998. AK Press, 1999. Paper, 350 pp., $19.95.

Brecher, Jeremy. *Strike!* South End, 1997. Paper, 421 pp., $22.

Breines, Wini. *Community and Organization in the New Left,* 1962–1968. Rutgers, 1989. Cloth, 185 pp., $25.

Brownstein, Michael. *World on Fire.* Open City, 2002. Paper, 180 pp., $14.

Bullard, Robert, ed. *Highway Robbery: Transportation Racism and New Routes to Equity.* South End, 2004. Paper, 244 pp., $18.

Chomsky, Noam. *Rogue States: The Rule of Force in World Affairs.* South End, 2000. Paper, 251 pp., $16.

Cohn-Bendit, Daniel, and Gabriel CohnBendit. *Obsolete Communism: The Left-Wing Alternative.* AK press, 2000. Paper, 231 pp., $16.95.

Desfor, Gene, ed. *Just Doing It: Popular Collective Action in the Americas.* Black Rose, 2002. Paper, 204 pp., $24.95.

Dyson, Rose A. *Mind Abuse: Media Violence in an Information Age.* Black Rose, 2000. Paper, 225 pp., $19.99.

Fernandez, Frank. *Cuban Anarchism: The History of a Movement.* See Sharp, 2001. Paper, 152 pp., $10.95.

Guevara, Ernesto "Che." *The Motorcycle Diaries: Notes on a Latin American Journey* (film tie-in). Ocean Press, 2004. Paper, 175 pp., $14.95.

Guevara, Ernesto "Che." *Diarios De Motocicleta: Notas De Viaje Por America Latina* (Spanish edition of *Motorcycle Diaries*). Ocean Press, 2004. Paper, 168 pp., $14.95.

Hiro, Dilip. *Sharing the Promised Land: A Tale of Israelis and Palestinians.* Olive Branch, 1999. Paper, 371 pp., $18.95.

hooks, bell. *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black.* South End, 1989. Paper, 184 pp., $14.

hooks, bell. *Sisters of the Yam: Black Women and Self-Recovery.* South End, 1993. Paper, 194 pp., $14.

hooks, bell, and Cornel West. *Breaking Bread: Insurgent Black Intellectual Life.* South End, 1991. Paper, 171 pp., $14.

Kunstler, William. *Politics on Trial: Five Famous Trials of the Twentieth Century* (includes Sacco and Vanzetti). Ocean Press, 2003. Paper, 129 pp., $9.95.

La Botz. *Democracy in Mexico: Peasant Rebellion and Political Reform.* South End, 1995. Paper, 274 pp., $17.

Larson, Neil. *Determinations: Essays on Theory, Narrative, and Nation in the Americas.* Verso, 2001. Paper, 213 pp., $22.

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Contributors

Alexis Bhagat is a sound artist and writer from New York City and is co-editor of *Sound Generation,* a survey of contemporary sound art, forthcoming from Autonomedia. He serves on the board of the Institute for Anarchist Studies.

Alejandro de Acosta lives in Austin, Texas and teaches philosophy at Southwestern University. His current research and teaching interests are in Latin American philosophy (especially questions of language, territory, history, and cosmology), and the theoretico-practical intersection of anarchist theory, experimental therapeutic practices and assorted "limit-experiences." He is also interested in studying and intensifying the tension between philosophy as an academic discipline and philosophy as self-fashioning, or as way of life.

Mary Foster lives in Montreal where she is active in Block the Empire-Montreal.

Melissa Forbis lives in Austin, Texas. She is working on a translation of Zulema Lehm and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui's *Anarchist Trade Unions in Bolivia: 1920-1950.*

Louis-Frédéric Gaudet is a researcher at the Department of Political Science, University of Quebec, Montréal, (UQAM). He has organized with a number of human rights and anti-capitalists organizations. He is currently involved with the Montreal Anarchist Bookfair collective and a board member of the IAS.

Alexander Hirsch is a doctoral student in the Politics Department at the University of California, Santa Cruz. His forthcoming review "The Political Acoustics of the Poetic Imagination," on Adrianna Cavarero's latest text *For More Than One Voice: toward a philosophy of the voice,* and Simon Critchley's *Things Merely Are* will be published by Theory and Event shortly. He can be reached at akhirsch@ucsc.edu.

Nate Holdren co-translated the book *19th and 20th: Notes for the New Social Protagonism* by Colectivo Situaciones, a project the IAS generously supported. He is involved in Notas Rojas, a small e-mail list seeking to support and encourage radical translations. He can be reached at nateholdren@gmail.com.

Jerome Klassen is a student in Toronto.

Eric Laursen is writer, editor, and activist based in New York City. He has contributed to a wide variety of publications and is currently researching a book on social welfare provision in a stateless society. He works with the International Solidarity Movement-NYC and the Black Key Media Collective.

Mark Lance is a professor of philosophy and professor of justice and peace at Georgetown University, a board member of the IAS, and a member of the national steering committee of the U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation.

Cale Layton lives in Austin, Texas. He is working on a translation of Zulema Lehm and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui's *Anarchist Trade Unions in Bolivia: 1920-1950.*

Josh MacPhee is an artist and activist currently living in Troy, NY. He loves exploring abandoned buildings filled with graffiti, using art as an excuse for large-scale social re-organization and is co-editing two new books, one on art and anarchism for AK Press, and also a collection of radical graphics for Soft Skull Press. He is currently obsessed with 1970's British Anarchist book design; if you are too, drop him an email at josh@justseeds.org.

Todd May is Professor of Philosophy at Clemson University. He works on political philosophy and recent French thought, including Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze. He is the author of *The Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism.* He has been involved in a number of progressive struggles, including Palestinian rights, gay and lesbian rights, and anti-racism work.

John Petrovato is a long-time board member and former director of the IAS. He is a co-organizer of the Renewing the Anarchist Tradition conference, human rights activist, and owner of Raven Used Books in Cambridge, MA.

Ramor Ryan lives somewhere in the global rebel underground and for several years was based in Chiapas, Mexico, doing international solidarity work. His book *Clandestines: The Pirate Journals of an Irish Exile* will be published by AK Press in spring 2006.

Andréa Schmidt lives and works from Montreal. She is a board member of the IAS and co-editor of *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory.*

Stevphen Shukaitis is a Ph.D. student at the University of Leicester Centre for Philosophy and Political Economy. He is a member of the Ever Reviled Records Worker Collective, the Planetary Autonomist Network, and is currently writing a book (*Between Sisyphus and Self-Management*) on the history of worker self-management and its continuing relevance and possibilities in an age of globalized capital. He can be reached at stevphen@mutualaid.org. For more of his writing see refusingstructures.net.

Sebastian Touza is the co-translator *19th and 20th: Notes for the New Social Protagonism.* He is involved in other translation projects and has written articles on Colectivo Situaciones and other radical experiments taking place in Argentina. His email address is lstouza@sfu.ca.