

Library.Anarhija.Net



Articles from “Canenero”

Various Authors

Various Authors
Articles from “Canenero”
1994–1997

Personal communication with the translator

lib.anarhija.net

1994–1997

Contents

Translator's Introduction	4
Vagabond Destruction	7
The Technique of Certainty <i>by Marco Beaco</i>	9
The Obscure Clarity of Words <i>by Alfredo M. Bonanno</i>	13
The Reverse Road <i>by Alfredo M. Bonanno</i>	17
Streamlined Production <i>by Alfredo M. Bonanno</i>	20
A Eulogy to Opinion <i>by Alfredo M. Bonanno</i>	24
The Specter That Reassures as it Kills <i>by Alfredo M. Bonanno</i>	27
Continue to Speak to Me <i>by Alfredo M. Bonanno</i>	30
Anarchism and Criticism of the Existent <i>by Benedetto Gal-</i> <i>lucci</i>	33
A Yellow Rose <i>by Alfredo M. Bonanno</i>	35
The Persistent Refusal of Paradise <i>by Penelope Nin</i>	39
Prisoners of a Single World <i>by Gruppo Anarchico Insur-</i> <i>rezionalista "E. Malatesta"</i>	42
Camomillo <i>by Penelope Nin</i>	46

He Jokes with Men <i>by Penelope Nin</i>	49
The Link That Isn't There <i>by Mario Cacciucco</i>	53
A Little, Little Giant <i>by Il Panda</i>	56
Beyond the Law <i>by Penelope Nin</i>	59
The Rudiments of Terror	62
Poor Heroes	64
Communiqué From Prison	68
The Fullness of a Struggle Without Adjectives	71
A Missing Debate	75
Letter on Specialization	79
An Adventure Without Regrets	86

Translator's Introduction

Canenero was a weekly anarchist publication that came out in Italy between the end of 1994 and the beginning of 1997 with one break. This was when the Marini investigation against anarchists began to bear its rotten fruit in an attempt to imprison dozens of anarchists on charges of “subversive association” or membership in an “armed gang”.¹ One of the ideas behind *Canenero* was to provide a means for ongoing communication and discussion in the face of this repressive operation of the state. A substantial portion of the material in the paper dealt with the situation and the various anarchist responses to it.

But the editors of *Canenero* were not willing to allow the repressive activity of the state to define the limits of the discussion in the paper they published, so along with information and analysis of that specific situation other significant questions and ideas were raised in its pages. Thus, within its pages one could find pointed, but brief, theoretical articles, social and historical analyses and biting witty looks at the week's news.

Of course, as is appropriate for a weekly publication, most of the articles are specific to the time they were written, intended for immediate use in the heat of the situation that was going on. But there were enough articles of more general interest that I considered it worth my while to translate a number of them for publication in this form. I have already made some of this material available in

¹ Venomous Butterfly Publications has published a pamphlet of material dealing specifically with this investigation and trial called simply *The Marini Trial*.

Without regrets.

The editors

More, Much More, a collection of writings by Massimo Passamani whose ideas I find particularly thought-provoking, and *The Fullness of a Struggle Without Adjectives*, texts originally intended to stimulate a discussion about armed struggle groups that appeared in the last few issues of *Canenero*.

In this booklet, I have collected a number of articles that I find particularly stimulating. I am certainly not in agreement with every word here. But I have found all of it to be a stimulus to deepening my own thinking on the sorts of questions raised. If, for example, Mario Cacciucio's description of relationships between people as that of "spheres that bounce off each other" and his consequent rejection of the very idea of love and friendship seem rather bleak to me, this is precisely why his article provokes me to examine the nature of everyday relationships more closely, particularly those that we call "love" and "friendship". In fact, one of the things that stands out for me in these articles is the way in which they are able to raise significant questions, often about matters that we take for granted, in so few words.

I have chosen to print the material in chronological order. The first article was an introduction to the project and the last was the editors' explanation for bringing the project to a close. In this last piece, the problems that confront any anarchist publishing project are made clear. As anarchists, hopefully, we do not publish just in order to have something to do. There has to be a purpose that relates to our broader life project of revolt. If we don't want to be leaders or evangelists carrying a supposed revolutionary gospel to whatever imaginary "masses", then it seems to me that the idea of developing relationships of affinity and complicity in which significant discussion plays a central part would be a primary reason for publishing. Without this, publishing seems to be a meaningless spewing forth of words playing into the degradation of language that this society imposes through its own one-way "communication". And real discussion is not a mere taking of positions and defending them from

the fortress of our various ideologies. It has to be the real encounter between various and conflicting ideas.

If, ultimately, the editors of *Canenero* did not feel that it stimulated the sort of discussion they desired, it is my hope that in publishing these articles in English, discussions may be stimulated here. There is a lot to think about in these brief writings. Perhaps it will stir something up.

Wolfi Landstreicher
February 2006

Finally, we have realized that, particularly in times like these, a weekly manages is able to stimulate reflection and worthwhile debate only with great difficulty. Incredibly, precisely due to its decision to put out questions to be confronted, *Canenero* has ended up becoming an object of debate itself, and not one of those involved in debate. To speak clearly, a weekly is alive when it is able to involve as many individuals as possible, i.e., when the ideas expressed are able to trigger chain reactions, even violent ones if you will, provided that they occur in conditions of mutuality. Otherwise, the paper falls back on itself and the only thing left is for it to die, if it doesn't want to survive as a pathetic monument to the idea. And so, this confrontation is lacking. Those who didn't agree with our ideas didn't contribute, only being able to send letters of insults and accusation, lacking the least bit of argumentation. And those who shared our ideas — even if only partially — didn't contribute. Worse yet, we realized that a representative task had been entrusted to the weekly: being the voice of those who have none. And the only discussions that *Canenero* seems to have been able to raise are those relating to its ability or lack thereof to perform a task that none of us ever desired. In this regard, the position-taking that appeared in the last issue, in its “stodgy supplement”, are an indicative example. A broad, interesting debate capable of expressing many imaginable facets and nuances was not born from the clash of two different perspectives. All that was born was a distressing series of declarations *for* or *against*. But for or against what, and why? Silence. Everyone keeps quiet.

A silence that reconfirms our doubts about the current validity of *Canenero*, and only increases the need to abandon an analytical tool like a weekly that maybe due to its overly narrow time schedule does not allow a better settling of the ideas contained in it, limiting itself inevitably to piling up problems and questions that still remain open.

And for all of these reasons, we have decided to put an end to *Canenero*.

An Adventure Without Regrets

Dear readers,

What you have in your hands is the last issue of *Canenero*. Various reasons have moved us to decide to bring it to a close. They all refer back to what we said in the editorial of #33, the first in the new series: “*Canenero* is a wager that only has meaning if there is someone willing to play.” And so now, those who have been willing to gamble on this stake are no longer so.

We are no longer available to do *Canenero* because its publication has come to take up too much of the time of our lives, preventing us not only from carrying out other projects that are close to our hearts, but also from being able to fully utilize the very instrument to which we gave life. If an anarchist weekly doesn’t want to have the aim of merely being an account, it must necessarily be used, and paradoxically those who made this one didn’t have the opportunity to use it as we would have liked.

Besides the limited length for articles in a weekly conceived like this (the famous page and a half) very often at most allowed us to outline certain discussions, to then leave them unresolved. Since it is unthinkable that the subsequent deepening of the discussion could happen in a weekly of this sort, it could only have been brought back to other more suitable venues, which up to now nobody has thought of creating. In the end, this situation became intolerable to us, first of all because of the current absence of other tools, like magazines that come out less frequently or books of some interest to us.

Vagabond Destruction

Canenero.

One word alongside another. A sound that is lost in the continuous deafening noise that they still call language. A word different from others. A hiss in the midst of shouts. A sigh from which to move in search of new meanings in world where everything has been *said*.

A word *against* others, an *against* that is other with respect to words, that doesn’t inhabit the space of the opposition between concepts, but that of the silence that precedes and accompanies it.

A word, finally, that doesn’t refer to itself, but that causes us to sense that region in which, in the silence where thought can move freely, the meaning of our singularity and the desire for revolt against all that suffocates it grow.

A paper for all those who, in this civilization of collective identity and reciprocal belonging, want to affirm their nature as “strangers everywhere”, as refractories against every fatherland (the “entire world” included).

Vagabond like the thought of the cynics, the Greek philosophers who in their scorn toward the regal condition of a philosophy addressed to power symbolized themselves with the image of the dog (*Kýon*, in Greek), as a sign of refusal of hierarchy, social obligation and the supposed necessity for laws. Repaid, as is fitting for all free spirits, with censure and mystification. In our language — that is passed off as neutral but cannot hide its christian nature — “cynicism” has become synonymous with voluptuous indifference to the suffering of others. Thus, the police of ideas which travels through

the centuries underground has gotten rid of what utterly did not give a damn for gods or laws.

So that the desire to be outside does not become resigned mutilation, but arms itself, but arms itself against every form of authority and exploitation.

So that one passes from the Power of dialogue (with which one thinks everything can be resolved) and from the dialogue of Power (that invites everyone to reasonable negotiation) to a feeling of radical hostility toward the existent, to the destruction of every structure that alienates, exploits, programs and regiments the lives of individuals. The black of the dog (this animal which is generally associated with the idea of submission, of servile meekness) is precisely the desire to come out from the herd of voluntary servitude and open to the joy of rebellion. Not the black in which all cows are equal (even if it is in their being *against* or *outside*), but rather that in which the boundaries between destruction and creation, between extreme defense of oneself and the construction of relationships of mutuality with others, disappear.

A paper — to piece together a mosaic of thousands of possible meanings — of vagabond destruction, meaning by this the possibility of passing to the attack against state and domination in all its manifestations without pledging allegiance, to use a well-known expression, to any flag or organization.

As individuals, always, even where the unshakeable desire for the other leads us to choose the path of union.

reasonings, and equally often, she lacks the will to be as open-minded and quick as her ideas, to refuse to remain at the mercy of events. In short, the ability to know how to choose the occasion. “In the heart of the occasion, everything is a weapon for the man whose will is not disarmed.”

I say again: everything together or nothing. When one claims to subvert the world only with discussion, or occupations, or books, or arms, one ends up trying to direct assemblies, occupying hovels, writing badly and shooting worse. The fact is that by repeating these banalities that should be the foundation for starting to truly discuss, one becomes boring like the specialists of repetition. The worn-out dialogues change by changing the situation.

Massimo Passamani

tion. Several people could also carry out an act of sabotage together, but if only one person were to put it into practice, this would not make the action lose its meaning. It seems to me that the question of the capacity for spreading in itself should be a reason for reflection, certainly not a unit of measure. If someone who loves breaking the windows of banks or shopping centers were to say to you, “Hi, I am a vandal,” it would make you laugh. It would be equally ridiculous if a subversive described himself as a “writer” because he doesn’t disdain publishing some book or article. I have never heard any anarchist present herself as a “saboteur”. If I ever heard this, I would think I was meeting a cretin. Furthermore, who has ever critiqued occupation as such? Who has ever said that dynamite is “more revolutionary” than crowbars? Making the struggle in all its form into an indivisible totality — this is the point. I would say this not of the struggle, but of my life. Without “propaganda” and “the arms of critique”, “armed struggle” and “the critique of arms”, “daily life” and “revolution”, “individual” and “organization”, “self-management” and “direct action”, and away with pigeonholing.

But without specific proposals (labor struggle, the occupation of spaces or something else), how do you create a broader involvement? Proposals are possible, even though it is necessary to agree on what and with whom. But such proposals are either instances of a theoretical critique and a global practice, or they are... accepted proposals.

Nonetheless, not everything is to be destroyed. The possibility of destruction must not be destroyed. This is not wordplay. Destruction is thought, desired, projected and organized. To do this, no useful contribution, whether theoretical or practical, is wasted, no method abandoned. It is certainly not with fine proclamations of subversion that we can go to the assault on the world. This way, one only becomes a retiree of revolt. The possibility of destruction is completely to be invented, and no one can say that that there has been much effort put into doing this. Often with the alibi that he doesn’t want to construct anything, someone will go deeply into

The Technique of Certainty *by* *Marco Beaco*

*“I was frightened to find myself
in the void, I myself a void.
I felt like I was suffocating,
considering and feeling
that everything is void,
solid void.”*

— *Giacomo Leopardi*

The metaphor of “mental illness” dispossesses the individual of whatever is most unique and personal in her way of life, in his method of perceiving reality and herself in it; this is one of the most dangerous attacks against the singular, because through it the individual is always brought back to the social, the collective, the only “healthy” dimension in existence.

The behavioral norms that regulate the human mass become absolute, the “deviant” act that follows a different logic is tolerated only when stripped of its peculiar “meaning”, of the particular “rationality” that underlies it. Reasons connect only to collective acts, which can be brought back, if not to the codes of the dominant culture, to those of various ethnic, antagonist and criminal subcultures that exist. The sharing of meanings, symbols and interpretations of reality thus appears as the best antidote to madness.

Thus if one who suddenly kills his family is a lunatic, or better, a “monster”, one who sets fire to a refuge for foreigners appears as a xenophobe (at most, from the method, a bit hasty, but still within

reason) and one who slaughters in the situation of a declared war is nothing but a “good soldier”.

Thus, according to the classifying generalization that makes them all alike, expropriating them of their lived singularity, lunatics are “dangerous to society”. Truthfully, one can only agree with this, certainly not because of the supposed and pretextual aggressiveness and violence attributed to those who suffer psychiatric diagnosis (the psychiatrists and educators of every sort are undoubtedly much more dangerous), but because they have violated, knowingly or not, the essentially quantitative codes that constitute normality. What is surprising is that after long years of domestication there is anybody who does not respond to cultural stimuli, if not quite automatically, at least in a highly predictable manner. Unpredictability is the source of the greatest anxiety for every society and its guardians, since it is often the quality of the individual; no motive, no value, no purpose that is socially comprehensible, only an individual logic, necessarily abnormal.

Defense from this danger is entrusted to the proclamations of science. In other words, the “unhealthy” gesture, the creator of which is not responsible, remains as a consequence of an external misfortune that could strike and give rise to thousands of people like him. The mechanism is therefore well contrived, a gesture deprived of meaning, of an underlying will, becomes innocuous, and it is easy to neutralize it, along with its creator, behind the alibi, which is “social” as well, of the cure.

The psychiatric diagnosis comes down on the individual like an axe, amputating her language, his meaning, her life paths; it claims to eliminate them as irrational, senseless; the psychiatrist behaves before them with the liquidating attitude of one who transforms the experiences of life into malfunctions of the psyche, the emotions into a malignant tumor to be removed.

Psychiatrists, as technicians of certainty, are the most efficient police of the social order. Reality, like the meaning of existence, has clear and unequivocal boundaries for these priests in white shirts;

never talked about from our side... And as long as one takes the due distance from those who continue to talk about it.

Once at the very end of a meeting on self-managed spaces, a friend of mine told me that in the 1970s there was the firm belief that anyone who used a gun, for this reason alone, was right, while now it seems that reason has been transferred lock, stock and barrel to those who occupy spaces. Interchangeable specializations. In itself, occupying spaces is an important method of struggle, which contains the very possibility of all subversion in a nutshell: the determination to reach out a hand and take one’s space. This clearly doesn’t mean that such a method, by itself, could put an end to the world of constraints and commodities. As always, the ideas and desires of those who apply it make the difference. If anyone in the occupied spaces seeks the guarantee of survival in a slapdash way, she will find it there, just as — by putting the occupation itself into play — she could find the point of departure for his most boundless demands there. The same goes for books, explosives or love affairs. The most important thing is not to place limits — in one direction or the other — borrowed from the ruling criteria (law, the number, the fortune of success).

Personally, I don’t know “the insurrectionalists”; I only know individuals who support the necessity of insurrection, each with his own reasons or methods. A necessity, as one of our friends said, determined by the fact that within the present society it is only possible to propose different ways of responding to the existing questions (perhaps with direct democracy, citizens’ committees, etc.), whereas with insurrection the questions themselves change.

And if we refuse all specialization, why describe ourselves as “squatters”? Why describe ourselves through one practice alone? Is it maybe because we can speak publicly of this practice, because it can spread further than others and because it implies a collective dimension? Poor criteria, in my opinion. One can also speak publicly of sabotage, as long as there isn’t any need to say, “I did this” or “that guy did the other thing”, in order to discuss a ques-

into every sphere of existence. The arm that contains all arms is the will to live with all one's possibilities, immediately.

And what of the thesis according to which it is necessary to take one's responsibility in the face of power by claiming one's actions? It seems clear to me that acronyms ready for sticking on inconvenient individuals make the police happy. So if responsibility is not to be a lie or a pretext for control, it must be individual. Each person is responsible to herself in her actions. The mutual recognition of responsibility only happens on a plane of mutuality. Therefore, there is no responsibility in the face of those who, by exploiting, place themselves against all mutuality. In the face of authority, there is no terrain — political or military conflict — of common recognition, but only hostility. What does it mean, then, to take one's responsibility in the face of power? Could it maybe mean — in perfect leninist observance — being recognized by it as an organization? Here responsibility ends and its collective substitute, the spectacle of social war, begins.

The leftist democrat, respectful of the law, is the first one to become infatuated with guerrilla iconography (especially when it is exotic) and once the guerrilla has laid down his arms, he is the first one to return, gradually from the left, to law and democracy. From this point of view, the one who declares the insurrectional perspective closed in its entire range, adhering more or less directly to reformism, helps to reinforce the false need for combatant organizations — reversed projections of political impotence. Leftist militants are even able to use subcommandante Marcos to legitimate their role against right through the game of postponements. For his part, the subcommandante hopes for nothing more than to be able to act democratically for his fatherland.

Leaving behind the more or less modernized leninists, we come to the sphere of anarchists. Even here, among the specialists of debate, many clasped the "Chiapas insurgents" to their hearts, provided that insurrection — this infantile disorder of anarchism — is

their mission: to "return" those who have gotten lost venturing onto the winding paths of nonsense "to their senses".

If the police are limited, as is claimed, to beating you, the psychiatrist demands to hear you say, "Thank you, I am well now" as well.

The focal point in the discussion is not in the four walls and the bars of the asylum, nor in the electroshock and constraint beds, nor in bad as opposed to good psychiatry, but in "psychiatric thought" itself, in the form of thinking of anyone who addresses himself to different subjects with the clinical eye of diagnosis, always looking for the symptoms of a pathology in them, in order to annul the difference with a "therapy" that brings them back to being more like us.

If the real purpose of the "new places" of psychiatry was that of stimulating creativity, individual growth, liberating communication and developing the capacity for relations, they would not be "psychiatric" or "therapeutic/rehabilitative" places, but probably ideal places for everyone, places of freedom. The problem is that these places are nothing but ghettos in which one does not find individuals interacting on the level of mutuality, but rather two "categories" of persons in asymmetrical positions: the professionals and the clients, the healthy and the diseased, those who help and those who are helped; in these places, the healthy try to persuade the diseased that what they did and thought up to that time was wrong, or rather "unhealthy", and through the "joyful" method of the encounter group, of dance, theatre and music...lead them toward the binaries of normality.

The "autonomy" and "self-realization" about which these democratic operators flap their tongues are exclusively their own and, to them, it is necessary to conform in order to be able to leave the healing enclosure. Psychiatric medicine itself, as analgesic (anesthetic) for the mind, is the sign of the attempt to block every development, every pathway however painful at times, that an individual puts into action as a reaction to that which oppresses her. Without mys-

tifying this process, this moment of “crisis”, that is not necessarily a pathway to liberation, the fact of the matter remains that the answer of power is generalized narcosis, collective stupefaction, that renders us static and tranquil, anchored to our placid misery.

there would be need for acronyms, boring claims, unreadable communiqués and all the rest. And still we hear talk of “Armed Struggle” and “combatant” organizations. Remembering — in the midst of so much self-interested amnesia — that arms also make up a part of the struggle can only be positive. But what does this mean? That we should no longer publish journals, have debates, publicly call for the elimination of the pope, throw eggs at judges or yogurt at journalists, loot during marches, occupy spaces or blockade the editorial office of whatever newspaper? Or does it mean — exactly as some magistrates dream — that this “level” should be left to some so that others can become specialists of the “attack”? Furthermore, with the intention of sparing the useless involvement of the entire movement for the actions of a few, as if it were not separations that have always prepared the best terrain for repression.

It would be necessary to free the practices of attack from any “combatant” phraseology, in order to cause them to become the real meeting of all revolts. This is the best way to prevent them from falling into a rut. So much the more so, since the exploited themselves sometimes move to the attack without waiting for instruction from any organization whatsoever. Dissatisfaction arms itself against the terrorist spectacle of power, sometimes feeding the spectacle. And anarchists should not be the one’s to disarm it. In order to hide every sign of dissatisfaction, in order to show that no one — except the latest “terrorists” — rebels against democracy, the state tries to invent a clandestine anarchist organization to which it attributes thousands of expressions of revolt — a revolt that goes beyond any gang, armed or not — in order to negate them. This way, it manages silence and social consensus. Precisely because the masters would like to enclose our activities into a military structure, dividing them into different “levels”, it is necessary for us to expand and unite them as much as possible into a revolutionary project that surpasses the armed mythology through excess. Each one with her own aptitudes and desires. And more than this, carrying subversion

stroying becomes completely one with the creation of new relationships and new environments. Then, everyone would be armed. Otherwise, specialists come into being — future bosses and bureaucrats — who “defend” while everyone else demolishes and rebuilds... their own slavery.

This is especially important because it is not “military” defeats that set off the decline and the consequent triumph of the old world, but rather the dying away of autonomous action and enthusiasm that are smothered by the lie of the “harsh necessities of the transition” (sacrifice before happiness in communism, obedience to power before freedom in anarchy). And historically, the most brutal repression is always played out precisely in this decline, never in the moment of widespread and uncontrollable insurrection. Paradoxically, anarchists should push, arm in hand, so that arms are needed as little as possible and so that they are never separated from the totality of revolt. Then I ask myself what “armed struggle” could ever mean. I understand it when a leninist is speaking about it, since he possesses nothing of revolution except the misery he sets up — the coup d’etat, the taking of the Winter Palace. But for an anti-authoritarian? Perhaps, in the face of the general refusal to attack the state and capital, it could have the significance of emphasizing the inoffensiveness of every partial opposition and the illusoriness of a liberation that tries to abolish the ruling order simply by “delegitimizing it”, or self-managing one’s elsewhere. It could be. But if there is anything partial, it is precisely the guerrilla mythology, with its entire stock of slogans, ideologies and hierarchical separations. So one is harmless to power, when one accepts going down the paths known to it and, thus, helps to impede all those it does not know. As to illusions, what else can one call the thesis according to which daily life — with its roles, duties and passivity — is criticized through armed organization. I absolutely recall the thesis: the endeavor was to supply a libertarian and non-vanguardist alternative to the stalinist combatant organizations. The results were already written in the methods. As if to attack the state and capital,

The Obscure Clarity of Words *by Alfredo M. Bonanno*

One who writes, perhaps even more than one who speaks, is called to clarify, to bring light. A problem is posed — the problem of something the one who writes should be concerned with since otherwise his respect would be deprived of meaning. This problem is illuminated by the use of words, by a specific use, capable of being organized within the shell of certain rules and in view of a perspective to be attained.

One who reads, perhaps even more than one who listens, does not catch the individual words but their meaning within the sphere of the rules that organize them and the perspective that they affirm they desire to reach.

However weak the meaning of what one writes (or says) might be, the one who reads (or listens) does not carry out the role of passive receiver. The relationship often takes on the appearance of conflict, within which two different universes clash with each other. But this clash is not based on any active intention on the part of the one writing (or speaking), and a passive one on the part of the one hearing (or reading). The two movements are only contrary only in appearance. The reader participates in the effort of the writer and the writer in that of the reader. Even if the two movements are separated from each other, they are not so in the fact, which has not been much considered, that the one who writes is always (simultaneously) a reader of the text she is writing, and the one who reads is also himself (simultaneously) the writer of the text that he is reading.

Here two errors are committed. The first is that in which one encounters the writer who thinks that by reading while he writes, he understands what she is writing, and doesn't realize that often her comprehension is not due to the clarity of the text, but to the reader-writer connection that reaches the highest level in the precise act of organizing word according to a project. The second is that which happens to the reader who, imagining himself in the act of writing the text that he is reading, refuses to accept word choices that are unthinkable to her, and doesn't realize that often the incomprehensibility of the text that she reads is not so much due to a lack of clarity as to the fact that he would have written it differently.

The thing that seems to escape this binary relationship is the third element, i.e., the topic that is being discussed. The reality examined with words is a barrier that, on the one hand, may help to organize the words in a certain way (accepting some and rejecting others), but, on the other hand, carries out a distorting process with regards to the employment of the accepted words. No word is neutral, but each one, being organized within concepts, contributes to transferring into the reader (and in still different ways, into the listener) a conception of the diffraction of the reality examined (of which one writes or speaks).

Thus, no word is clear or obscure as such; there is no possibility of definitively casting a pool of light on reality, clarifying it once and for all. Once the word is detached from the reality to which it refers and thus from the choice that the writer (or speaker) made on the basis of the suggestions of the reality examined, it no longer means anything. It vanishes, and its possibility for being anything, a means for thought or action, an element for uniting or dividing human beings, vanishes with it. The dictionary is like a warehouse of words. They are lined up there on the shelves, some used continuously, others only rarely, all equally available, but only a few of them able to be coordinated together according to the intentions of the one who chooses and the suggestions of the reality she wants to dress up in words.

Letter on Specialization

(Not putting one's destiny into play unless one is willing to play with all of one's possibilities)

Today I thought about how sad it is to fall into the habit of defining ourselves in terms of one of the many activities in which we realize ourselves, as if that activity alone described the totality of our existence. All this recalls the separations that the state and the economy inflict on our lives much too closely. Take work, for example. The reproduction of the conditions of existence (i.e., the activity of putting out the effort in order to eat, sleep, stay warm, etc.) should be completely one with discussion, play, the continuous transformation of the environment, loving relationships, conflict, in short with the thousands of expressions of our uniqueness. Instead, work has not only become the center of every concern, but confident in its independence, it also imposes its measure on free time, amusement, encounters and reflection. In short, it is presented as the measure of life itself. In fact, since this is their social identity, almost everyone is defined in terms of the job they carry out, i.e., in terms of misery.

I am referring particularly to the repercussions that the fragmentation that power imposes on everyone's lives has on the theory and practice of subversives. For example, take arms. It seems obvious to me that a revolution without arms is impossible, but it is equally clear that arms are not enough. On the contrary, I believe that the more revolutionary a change is, the less armed conflict is its measure. The broader, more conscious and more joyous the transformation is, the greater is the condition of no return that is created in relationship to the past. If subversion is carried into every sphere of existence, the armed defense of one's possibility for de-

of the lives of those who publish it. So don't think ill of us if we don't consult all (all of who? which area?) before saying what we think about what comes to us, or if we are not so many experts to teach the doctrine, since we want to have nothing to do with doctrines.

— *the editors of Canenero*

It's just that we can understand words, and thus decide if each of them is "clear" for us, on the condition of being conversant with this operation of dressing up. There are not words on one side, dead objects shut up in dictionaries, and reality on the other side where individual objects exist beside words that are also themselves objects, but all in a haphazard manner, without relationship. Flows of meaning exist, i.e., working procedures in the course of which the elements of reality (that here, for convenience, we can call "objects"). They receive meaning through us, putting on linguistic clothes. There is no chair separate from the word that means it, and the different words to which different languages have recourse reconfirm this endeavor as a flow of meaning, proposing philological nuances that through the history of the millennia often cause incredible routes, extraordinary adventures, to emerge.

Dressing reality is thus the primary activity of the human being, the condition for acting and itself an action, the essential form of action, insofar as thought itself is the process of clothing reality (a fact that is not much considered). What could we "do" without the capacity of "reading" reality. We would find ourselves before a dark mass of foreboding and fear. The most important question is not that of the greatest clarity (easiest words, dressed most modestly, linearity in the correspondences), but rather, and maybe contrarily, that of the greatest richness (different words contrasting the commonplaces, dressed in the liveliest colors, uncertainty of correspondence). The word is also enchantment, marvel, joyous invention, fancy, evocation of something other, not the seal of the already seen, the confirmation of one's certainties.

The aim of speaking and writing is therefore not that of "clarifying", but of "enriching" reality, of inviting the unexpected, the unpredictable. The one who communicates has no obligation to give us prescriptions for repair, panaceas for our fears, confirmations of our knowledge, but can even feel free to suggest difficult routes, to make uncertainty and danger flare.

And whoever wants to feel safe in his house is free to stop his reading or cover her ears.

in that place and our firm intention not to be enclosed. And these two perspectives, ours and theirs, have everything to gain from a mutual, constant and heated critique, even harsh when necessary. Because only through critique can distances widen or be bridged and the method be found for making the clash of projects that are so different as to be hostile worthwhile.

Knowing how to read also means that when someone writes that an experience like Revolutionary Action (AR) can be described as anarchist only at the cost of a huge distortion, one should not read that there were no anarchist in the AR. There were many anarchists in the AR, but there were also many other respectable comrades who, and this is not our fault, were not anarchists. It is not without reason that we consider the debate about the AR more interesting than that about the Red Brigades or other combatant parties.

And then – to bring up another flaw – if the one who proposes certain perspectives has the misfortune of being in prison, we certainly cannot play the role of Red Cross nurses, accepting anything that comes to us from behind bars with a compliant smile or applause even when we consider it rubbish. As long as we consider comrades in prison as poor things who we must always consider right so as not to cause them pain, or as heroes who we consider right because prisoners are always right, the problem will be left unresolved, new situations will catch us unprepared yet again and – in turn – the comrades in prison will be left more and more isolated. It would be best to shake the guerrilla war or political myths of medals from our heads – the myths according to which the more time one has been or has to be in prison, the more revolutionary and, thus, the more correct they must be – and reason passionately on our problems, which are also the problems of the imprisoned who have their say as well. This is why *Canenero* dedicates these pages to this topic [...]

Finally, one more thing shines through in some of the statements of position: the concern that *Canenero* should or wants to be the representative paper of “an area”. *Canenero* represents a small piece

that makes it possible for us to still attack the ruling order, and to continue to live fully and with passion in all the spaces that, despite everything, we are able to conquer. To do this, clear ideas and useable tools would be of service to us — before the arrest warrants — to makes sure that our life is not reduced to flight. These tools are also the new way for organizing with respect to the new situation, the new way of communicating with struggles in course and with comrades who are not being pursued. Everything with the same perspective of the complete overturning of life, sacrifice and the existent that animated us before we had to go on the lam. And what about this, what could it ever have to do with a specific combatant organization — even one that is horizontal, but still has acronyms, programs and the limits that follow from this?

In any case, we were wrong. The debate had a hard time getting off the ground and only one contribution to the discussion has reached us up to now [...]. All the rest have been collective communiqués and the taking of stands [...] that don't deal with the topics in question with sufficient depth. On the contrary, it seems to us that they reveal, at least partially, some common flaws and push us to consider a few things. The first is that it is necessary to know how to read. By this we mean that if someone writes that the specific armed organization, even when it declares itself anarchist, is a structure that we consider our enemy — as we wrote in the last issue — because it prospects utterly opposed to those we hope for, one should not read that those who propose it or practice it are our enemies. If we were to state that the anarcho-sindicalist perspective, for example, is not just extraneous, but also hostile, to us, we are certain that no one would misunderstand our words. No one would think that we intended to wait outside the houses of comrades who share this perspective in order to do them in, or that we would refuse to give our solidarity if they were struck by repression. The thing that touches us is that in their vision there is a place ready for us as well, that we, however, do not want to occupy. And our critique originates from their project of enclosing us

The Reverse Road *by* Alfredo M. Bonanno

Times of doubt and uncertainty have arrived. New and old fears spur the search for guarantees. In the market where human affairs are managed, new models of comfort are briskly haggled over. Madonnas weep, politicians make promises; everywhere war and misery, savagery and horror are rife, rendering us now unable to even feel outrage, let alone to rebel.

People have been quick to accustom themselves to blood. They scarcely smell the odor of the massacres, and every day something new and more incredible awaits them: Tokyo, Gaza, the changeless Bosnia, Burundi and still more places, remote, distant, and yet nearby. What they ask is to be left out of it. Being informed, even of the smallest household massacres, those of Saturday evening for example, which pattern dozens of deaths weekly, with no other purpose than that of knowing in order to forget.

In a world that is revealed to be increasingly weak in real meanings, in motivations that give content to life, in projects worthy of being lived, people give away freedom for specters that are in easy reach, specters that come out from the studios of power. Religion is one of these specters. Not any religion whatsoever, objectified in distant and crusty practices, governed by priests and simulations lacking sense, but a religion that can reach the emptiness of their minds, filling it with the future, that is with hope.

I know well that a religion of this sort does not exist, but there are many people who try hard to exploit the need that exists for it. Against this need, the rationalist claims made by Cartesian vet-

erans of the victories through which they have conquered, and destroyed, the world are worthless. Their chatter of scientific certainty no longer charms anyone. No one, except for a small group of relentless intellectuals, is willing to believe in the capacity of science to solve all the problems of humanity, to give an answer to all the questions concerning the eternal fear of the unknown.

Now it occurs that even we anarchists allow ourselves to take on this extraordinary laceration, to which we should instead remain extraneous, if we want to find a path for action, a path capable of making us understand reality, and thus putting us in a position to transform it. Even we don't quite know what to do.

On the one hand, we withdraw, horrified, in the face of always delirious and disgusting manifestations of faith in all its forms. Sometimes we have pity for the man that stoops, that suffers under pain, and thus accepts the image of the incredible specter, and hopes, and continues to suffer and hope. But we can have no more than this for him. Immediately afterwards, contempt takes over, and with contempt, refusal, distancing, rejection.

On the other hand, still looking carefully, what do we find? We find an equally contemptible misery, but one that knows how to dress itself well, with the garments of culture and fine speech. This latter misery believes in science and in the world that can be systematized, in the world that is moving toward its highest destinies. But it closes its eyes and covers its ears, waiting for the storm to die down, unconscious and pitiless in the face of the pain and misery of the rest of the world. This universe of specialists and respectable people also disgusts us, in many ways as much as or more than the other, that at least had ignorance and the passionate force of emotion on its side.

But us, what do we do? We don't beat our chests, nor do we go around with a slide-rule in our pockets. We believe neither in god nor in science. Neither miracle workers nor wise men in white coats interest us. But are we then really beyond all this?

A Missing Debate

Three weeks ago, when we published Garagin Gregorian and Pippo Stasi's communiqué from prison, we thought that it might be able to open an interesting and worthwhile discussion. That document could have generated an endless series of reflection on topics that are always relevant (specialization, specific armed organization, attack, justice) and on others that — having never really disappeared — have returned after many years to shake up our lives (the question of going on the lam, for example). In our opinion, all these topics should be faced in perspective. By this we mean that they should be confronted not just on the basis of the much too obvious logic of "*comrades are grown-up, weaned and choose what to do for themselves*". We've all reached this point, and it seems ridiculous to repeat it. It is not so necessary to say which conception seems to us to be more or less compatible with "anarchist ethics and tradition", but which one seems like it could move in our perspective. An armed band could possibly be organized in a horizontal manner, but what does that have to do with our insurrection? In the article that accompanied the comrades' communiqué, we did nothing more than reassert the basic banalities on the question of armed struggle, the important matters that *Canenero* has always been fond of emphasizing. But so many other questions remain open, questions that need to be raised sooner or later.

An example for all: the police knock at our door with an arrest warrant. In the situation where we manage to give them the slip, what do we do? Take care, this is a serious problem because forced clandestinity should not cause the interruption of our projects. We should make ourselves capable of facing the new situation in a way

as “anarchist” at the cost of a huge ideological distortion. In fact, comrades of various origins came together in AR , animated at the beginning by a libertarian and anti-stalinist spirit that defined its experiment for a brief time as anarcho-communist, considered as the summation of the various positions of the comrades. But it has become clear to many anarchists that armed organizations, none of them excluded, contributed to the decline of social subversion in those years. And these critical reflections are not new, but have been expressed by various anarchists on many occasions since the 1970s.

We don't know what reasons pushed Stasi and Gregorian to distribute this writing. To say it all, their proposal seems out of this world to us, a bit like the rhetoric used for the occasion, that seems to come directly from debates that raged in the 1970s, poisoning the atmosphere. But more than anything else, we don't like to see comrades accept the ultimatum the power puts forth today (either reformism or armed struggle) allowing themselves to get drawn into the foolish game of upping the ante: since we are accused of belonging to an armed band that doesn't exist, why not form a real one? Well, this temptation, this attraction toward the one-way mirror of the armed organization, has no grip on us, and we will never tire of criticizing it wherever it manifests itself. Insurrection has desires and reasons that no military logic could ever understand.

I don't think so. Merely reflecting, we realize that we are still children of our times. But, being anarchists, we are so in a reversed manner. We naively think that it is enough to overturn the errors of others like a glove in order to have the beautiful truth dished out in shovelfuls. It isn't so.

Therefore, refusing that of the obscure which exists in the times in which we live, we set our feet on the certainties of a different science, indeed, a science that we must build completely ourselves, from top to bottom, but that like the other one will be based on reason and will. And, at the same time, refusing what there is of the functional and utilitarian in science, we go in search of sensations and emotions, intuitions and desires from which we expect answers for all questions, answers that cannot come to the extent that these stimuli crumble in our excessively rough hands.

Thus, we reel, now in one direction, now in another. We don't have the ideological certainties of a few decades ago, but the critiques we have developed are still not able to tell us with the least bit of trustworthiness what to do. Thinking that we are in a position to act beyond every value, every foundation, in the moment that we ask ourselves what to do, we don't know how to give ourselves a certain answer.

In other times, we had less fear of ridicule, we were more obtuse in our stubborn and coherent doing, less worried about matters of style. I fear that we are too much in love with subtleties, with nuances. Continuing along this path, we might even lose the meaning of the whole that has never been lacking, the projectual sense that made us feel rooted in reality, part of something in the course of transformation, not mere monads, brilliant in our own light, but dark to each other.

Streamlined Production *by* *Alfredo M. Bonanno*

Among the various characteristics of the last several years, the failure of global automation in the factories (understood in strict sense) must be pointed out, a failure caused by the failure of the prospects and, if you will, the dreams of mass production.

The meeting between the telematic and traditional fixed production (harsh assembly lines later automated up to a certain point with the introduction of robots) has not developed toward a perfecting of the lines of automation. This is not due to problems of a technical nature, but due to problems of an economic nature and of the market. The threshold of saturation for technologies that can replace manual labor has not been exceeded; on the contrary there are always new possibilities opening in this direction. Rather, the strategies of mass production have been surpassed, and have thus come to have little importance for the economic model of maximum profit.

The flexibility that the telematic guaranteed and has steadily made possible in the phase of the rise of post-industrial transformation at a certain point caused such profound changes in the order of the market, and thus of the demand, as to render the opening that the telematic itself had made possible or rather put within reach useless. Thus, the flexibility and ease of production is moved from the sphere of the factory into the sphere of the market, causing a standstill in the telematic development of automation, and a reflowering of new prospects for an extremely diversified demand that was unthinkable until a few years ago.

ideology. Whereas insurrection exalts the possibilities of individuals, armed organization only exalts the techniques of its soldiers. Whereas insurrection considers a gun or a stick of dynamite to be only one of the weapons available to it, the armed organization makes it the only weapon, the only tool to use (“Long live armed struggle”). Whereas insurrection aims to generalize itself and invites everyone to participate in its festival, the armed organization is closed by force of circumstance and — except for its few militants — nothing is left for others to do except to cheer it on. The subversion of life is a vast project that knows no limits, because it aims to disrupt the totality of society. Armed organization is only able to glimpse a marginal aspect of this struggle — the military conflict against the state — and mistakes it for the whole. And even this conflict, even the armed attack against the state, loses any liberatory meaning, any breath of life, when its entire impetus is reduced to the promotion of a program an acronym to spend at the political market.

It is rather in anonymity that all political calculation vanishes, leaving space for the thousands of individual tensions and vibrations, and for the possibility for them to meet, come together and abandon themselves in each other. And of what use are neon signs to those with no commodities to sell. As to the accusation against those actions claimed with a “circle A”, claiming that they expose the whole anarchist movement to police provocation, other anarchists, terrorized by the idea that someone might come knocking at their door. Unfortunately for them and for the comrades who signed the document, a possible acronym will certainly not resolve the situation. At most, instead of suspecting anarchists of having signed an action with a “circle A”, the police will suspect them of being part of a specific group.

It seems to us to be a bit hasty to claim that in the 1970s, the anarchist movement knew specific experiences of the combatant model, since the “Revolutionary Action” (AR) archipelago — to which we assume Stasi and Gregorian are referring — can only be described

As we have often taken the opportunity to say in the columns of this paper, we are decidedly opposed to all armed organization, including an unlikely anarchist armed organization. Here it is not a question of a mere divergence of views, but of a substantial radical difference that goes well beyond any considerations of expediency or contingency. We are against any armed organization today, as we were yesterday and will be tomorrow. And we confirm that this aversion of ours is not limited to formal disagreement. Not only will we never support an armed organization, but we will oppose it with a harsh critique. We will oppose its formation and spread because we consider it hostile to us, insofar as it is not capable of generating prospects that we find desirable.

We think that the individual who rises up, the individual who rebels against this world that is too cramped to contain his dreams, has no interest in limiting their possibilities, but in extending them infinitely if possible. Thirsty for freedom, eager for experience, anyone who rebels is in continuous search for new affinities, for new tools with which to express herself, with which to go to the attack on the existent in order to subvert it from the foundations. This is why insurrectional struggle should find its stimulus and energy in our capacity for filling its arsenal with ever new weapons, beyond and against all reductive specialization. The experts in pistols are like the experts in books, or occupations, or whatever else. They are boring because they always and only speak about themselves and their favorite means. Precisely because we do not privilege one tool over any of the others, we love and support numberless actions, carried out through the most varied means, that occur daily against the ruling order and its structures. Because revolt is like poetry: to be such it must be made by all, not by one alone, particularly not an expert.

Now the specific armed organization is the negation of this insurrectionary struggle, the parasite poisoning the blood. Whereas insurrection encourages enjoyment and the realization of what we have at heart, armed organization only promises sacrifice and

If one reads the shareholders' reports of some of the great industries, it becomes clear that automation is only sustainable at increasing costs that quickly become anti-economical. Only the prospect of social disorder of a great intensity could still drive the financially burdensome path of global automation.

For this reason, the reduction of the costs of production is now entrusted not only to the cost of labor, as has occurred in the past several years as a consequence of massive telematic replacement, but also to a rational management of so-called productive redundancy. In short, a ruthless analysis of waste, from whatever point of view, and, first of all, from the perspective of production times. In this way, by a variety of means, productive pressure is exercised once again on the producer in flesh and blood, dismantling the ideology of containment on the basis of which an easing of the conditions of suffering and exploitation that have always been characteristic of wage labor was credited to telematic technology.

The reduction of waste thus becomes the new aim of streamlined production, in its time based on the flexibility of labor already consolidated and the productive potentiality guaranteed by the telematic coupling as its starting point. And this reduction of waste falls entirely on the back of the producer. In fact, the mathematical analysis realized through complex systems already in widespread use in the major industries can easily solve the technical problems of contractors, which is to say, those relative to the combination of raw materials and machinery, in view of maintenance. But the solution to these problems would remain a marginal matter to production as a whole if the use of production time were not also placed under a regime of control.

Thus, the old taylorism comes back into fashion, though now it is filtered through the new psychological and computing technologies. The comprehensive flexibility of large industry is based on a sectoral flexibility of various components, as well as on the flexibility of the small manufacturers that peripherally support the productive unity of command. Work time is thus the basic unity for the new

production; its control, without waste but also without stupidly repressive irritations, remains the indispensable connection between the old and new productive models.

These new forms of control have a pervasive nature. In other words, they tend to penetrate into the mentality of the individual producer, to create general psychological conditions so that little by little external control through a timetable of production is replaced by self-control and self-regulation of productive times and rhythms as a function of the choice of objectives, which is still determined by the bodies that manage productive unity. But these decisions might later be submitted to a democratic decision from below, asking the opinion of individuals employed in the various production units with the aim of implanting the process of self-management.

We are speaking of “suitable synchronism”, not realized once and for all, but dealt with time and again, for single productive periods or specific production campaigns and programs, with the aim of creating a convergence of interest of interests between workers and employers, a convergence to be realized not only on the technical terrain of production, but also on the indirect plane of solicitation of some claim to the demand, which is to say, on the plane of the market.

In fact, it is really in the market that two movements within the new productive flexibility are joined together. The old factory looked to itself as the center of the productive world and its structures as the stable element from which to start in order to conquer ever-expanding sections of consumption to satisfy. This would indirectly have to produce a worker-centered ideology, managed through guidance by a party of the sort called proletarian. The decline of this ideological-practical perspective could not be more evident today, not so much because of the collapse of real socialism, and all the direct and indirect consequences that followed from this and continue to grow out of it, but in reality, due to the productive changes which we are discussing. There is thus no longer a distinction between the rigidity of production and the chaotic

The Fullness of a Struggle Without Adjectives

Recently a communiqué from prison was distributed that has probably disturbed quite a few comrades. We are reproducing it here. Though it has the tone of a proclamation and certain statements are ambiguous, it seems to us that we can rule out the idea that we are confronting the announcement of the formation of an anarchist armed organization. This would be illogical for various reasons. For example, because, throughout time, armed groups have been shrewd enough to explain themselves after they have acted, and it doesn't appear to us as if the acronym “Combatant Revolutionary Action” has ever claimed anything. Furthermore, if the comrades who signed the communiqué had, indeed, formed an armed organization, their document would become an explicit self-denunciation before the court, and this even before having initiated hostilities. If such a thing were true, it would make no sense at all.

From this, we deduce that the text should be interpreted as a simple proposal. Unfortunately, the wretched linguistic style in which it was formulated risks provoking misunderstandings and incomprehension that it would be best for everyone to avoid. More simply, we believe that Pippo Stasi and Garagin Gregorian wish to invite the anarchist movement to reflect on the arguments that they set forth, like the necessity for a portion of anarchists to undertake a path of armed struggle and, therefore to create a specific armed struggle. And since these comrades have not hesitated to state what they think, assuming all responsibility, we assume that no one will take it badly if we do the same.

ment to continuous provocations, while it is right to form specific groups that assume political responsibility for their actions.

Our combatant path is the formation in the revolutionary sense of a combatant, internationalist, anti-imperialist anarchist organization, in relation with all revolutionary forces that intend to subvert the order of the bourgeois capitalist state in its phase of globalization, in order to introduce ourselves as a unique productive and organizational model for relations between human beings.

To the many-centered and camouflaged conformation of cybernetic-industrial power, we will respond with wide-spread and well-aimed actions to undermine it both on the territory and in the urban space in which the organizational and informational infrastructures of its domination are centered.

Living force to all revolutionary prisoners and to all combatants, for a new free, anarchist and communist anti-authoritarian society.

Let's remember to avenge all the comrades struck by the fire of the repression of the state-capital.

Long live anarchy, long live armed struggle.

Rome, December 1, 1996

Pippo Stasi, Karechin Cricorian

(Garagin Gregorian)

and unpredictable flexibility of the market. Both these aspects are now brought back under the common denominator of variability and streamlining. The greater ability to penetrate into consumption, whether foreseeing and soliciting it or restraining it, allows the old chaos of the market to be transformed into an acceptable, if not entirely predictable, flexibility. At the same time, the old rigidity of the world of production has change into the new productive speed. These two movements are coming together in a new unifying dimension on which the economic and social domination of tomorrow will be built.

A Eulogy to Opinion *by* *Alfredo M. Bonanno*

Opinion is a vast merchandise that everyone possesses and uses. Its production involves a large portion of the economy, and its consumption takes up much of people's time. Its main characteristic is clarity.

We hasten to point out that there is no such thing as an unclear opinion. Everything is either yes or no. Different levels of thought or doubt, contradiction and painful confessions of uncertainty are foreign to it. Hence the great strength that opinion gives to those who use it and consume it in making decisions or impose it on the decisions of others.>

In a world that is moving at high speed toward positive/negative binary logic, from red button to black, this reduction is an important factor in the development of civil cohabitation itself. What would become of our future if we were to continue to support ourselves on the unresolved cruelty of doubt? How could we be used? How could we produce?

Clarity emerges when the possibility of real choice is reduced. Only those with clear ideas know what to do. But ideas are never clear, so there are those on the scene who clarify them for us, by supplying simple comprehensible instruments: not arguments but quizzes, not studies but alternative binaries. Simply day and night, no sunset or dawn. Thus they solicit us to pronounce ourselves in favor of this or that. They do not show us the various facets of the problem, merely a highly simplified construction. It is a simple affair to pronounce ourselves in favor of a yes or no, but this simplicity

organizers of culture, the culture that is summed up in the symbols of the commodity as mediations between production and consumption.

The globalization of exploitation now so extremely normal is intellectual. The cerebral flattening to the preordained schemas of intelligent machines, the homogenization of the cultures of peoples to the new languages of communications and production are the aim of the new imperialist colonialism. Cybernetic universalism, or multimedia communication, is a tool of the systematic and quantitative reorganization of the new world order, in the sectors of the market, of capital, of the institutional order and of the territorial infrastructure, of the repression of antagonists, refractory to the homogenization of the new scientism, intellectual standardizer.

Inspiring ourselves critically with the experiences of the antagonist armed movement of the 1970s and particularly with the anarchist heritage, with struggles for regional independence, stable references for our path of conflict with the state-capital aimed at extinguishing them through insurrectional means, therefore, on the basis of this historical heritage, we allude to constructing a communist society in anarchist production in the anti-legal sense, without courts or prisons, through struggle against every form of government and power that is realized through the efforts of the exploited; an iconoclastic society inspired by free cooperation among people and by free education.

We recognize in this court the fawning role of the servant of the state, in which, living like a courtier off the sweat of the productive labor of workers and peasants, it insures that the exploited populace continues its obsequious service to bourgeois justice.

Every revolutionary action against the state and bourgeois institutions will be claimed as the sign of a beginning and a continuation of a precise antagonistic path, called Combatant Revolutionary Action, for which we will assume all responsibility in front of power.

No claim at all — at least on our part — for actions against the state with the circle A, because this exposes the anarchist move-

Communiqué From Prison

On the day that the state-capital in its two-fold capacity of judge-oppressor will officiate its vindictory trial (in the Occorsio hall of the court in Rome on December 10, 1996) against the anarchist movement — an archaic rite of insult and criminalization against the transgressors of bourgeois society — in the attempt to expunge every form of individual or organized revolutionary antagonism combating the exploitation of the human being, we fearlessly affirm combatant revolutionary action, without unrealistic aphorisms or anathemas we will claim our identity as an armed organization against the state.

In that hall-like place, formal representation of the legitimacy of bourgeois law, we will practice militant anarchist anti-judicialism by abstaining from the farce of the debate of the trial. We will not endorse the mythical “de jure”, judicial doctrine, age-old normative heritage of states that are developed on the age-old usurpations of slavery, torture and the exploitation of other people’s labor, that guarantees defense for those investigated, offering them the judicial tool of reply, a way of guaranteeing the “democratic” form of the prosecuting trial, a sharp, corrupt and deceptive way disguise *a priori* the prejudice against the defendants who don’t appear in court. We will not recognize the judges!

Industrial civilization is the highest of the aspirations of progress to which state-capital society aims. It forces millions of people in the world to give up the ancient indigenous culture of the population in order to embrace the modern culture of the factory. With the great means that the bourgeois capitalist state uses, beyond being functional as the dominant means of production, are powerful

hides complexity instead of attempting to understand and explain it. No complexity, correctly comprehended, can in fact be explained except by referring to other complexities. There is no such thing as a solution to be encountered. Joys of the intellect and of the heart are cancelled by binary propositions, and are replaced with the utility of “correct” decisions.

But no one is stupid enough to believe that the world rests on two logical positive and negative binaries. Surely there is a place for understanding, a place where ideas again take over and knowledge regains lost ground. Therefore, the desire arises to delegate this all to others who seem to hold the answers to the elaboration of complexity because they suggest simple solutions to us. They portray this elaboration as something that has taken place elsewhere and therefore represent themselves as witnesses and depositories of science.

So the circle closes. The simplifiers present themselves as those who guarantee the validity of the opinions asked, and their continual correct production in binary form. They seem to be wary of the fact that once opinion — this manipulation of clarity — has destroyed all capacity to understand the intricate tissue that underlies it, the complex unfoldings of the problems of conscience, the fevered activity of symbols and meanings, references and institutions, it destroys the connective tissues of differences. It annihilates them in the binary universe of codification where reality only seems to have two possible solutions, the light on or the light off. The model sums up reality, cancels the nuances of the latter and displays it in pre-wrapped formulas ready for consumption. Life projects no longer exist. Instead symbols take the place of desires and duplicate dreams, making them dreams twice over.

The unlimited amount of information potentially available to us does not allow us to go beyond the sphere of opinion. Just as most of the goods in a market where every possible, useless variety of the same product does not mean wealth and abundance but merely mercantile waste, an increase in information does not produce a

qualitative growth in opinion. It does not produce any real capacity to decide what is true or false, good or bad, beautiful or ugly. It merely reduces one of these aspects to a systematic representation of a dominant model.

In reality, there is no good on the one side or bad on the other. Rather there is a whole range of conditions, cases, situations, theories and practices which only a capacity to understand can grasp, a capacity to use the intellect with the necessary presence of sensibility and intuition. Culture is not a mass of information, but a living and often contradictory system, through which we gain knowledge of the world and ourselves. This is a process which is at times painful and hardly ever satisfying, with which we realize the relationships which constitute our life and our capacity to live.

By canceling out all of these nuances, we again find ourselves with a statistical curve in our hands, an illusory course of events produced by a mathematical model, not a fractured and overwhelming reality,

Opinion provides us with certainty on the one hand, but on the other it impoverishes us and deprives us of the capacity to struggle, because we end up convinced that the world is simpler than it is. This is totally in the interest of those who control us. A mass of satisfied subjects convinced that science is on their side, that is what they need in order to realize the projects of domination in the future.

The next four texts were printed in *Canenero* in order to stimulate an ongoing discussion. Unfortunately, this discussion never went beyond what is printed here and a few very brief statements that merely amounted to taking sides rather than furthering the debate. Although I am quite aware that the specific detail of the situation in Italy in 1996–7 were quite different from our present situation, I, nonetheless, think that there are broader ideas presented in these texts worthy of discussion and debate in relationship to a real practice here as well. I hope that there are those who will be moved to further this discussion in terms of our situation here and now. — the translator

Poor Durutti. His name — when not used to christen an after-work bar for comrades — is reduced to a mere polemical tool.

The Specter That Reassures as it Kills *by Alfredo M. Bonanno*

All authority comes from god, said the apostle, and he was right. But not in the sense of offering legitimacy to authority due to its divine origins, but in the sense of the impossibility of authority in the absence of the idea of god.

The very concept of supreme security, of something beyond the parts, and thence also the concept of the sacred and untouchable function of government and justice, comes from the idea of god. The “immutable”, dreamed up by people as protection against the fear of the future and of the unknown that are hidden in the mists within which this last is enveloped, is god, the specter that reassures as it kills.

But in order for authority to be exercised in the sphere of human matters, that is to say, to become state and government, to insinuate itself into every fiber from which society is composed, it doesn't just need the support provided by the idea of god; it also needs force, real force, suitable to the times and conditions of the conflict with all those who, because they suffer the authority and pay the consequences for it in terms of repression and restrictions of freedom, oppose it.

And this force is made up of weapons and armies, governments and parliaments, cops and spies, priests and laws, judges and profes-

sors, in short, of the entire apparatus at the service of power without which it remains a dead letter.

But the force is based on wealth, that is on the possibility of accumulating money or of securing oneself control of the flows in which the circulation of money is realized. With the development of commerce and industry, passing from ancient times through those of the industrial revolution up into the epoch in which we live, at the beginning of the third millennium, when wealth bends into a spasmodic essentialization of itself, passing from the old and static form of accumulation to the new, dynamic form of flux and high velocity circulation, its function as the basis of authority has not changed.

So we can say that an authority without wealth is a contradiction. All the tyrants of the past, like all the political people of today that have managed and continue to manage the public thing, have had immense quantity of wealth in their hands.

A poor person can never exercise authority, which is why an authority lacking the wealth that could form it into institutions and guarantee it as such in the concrete exercise of its functions tends to weaken into authoritativeness, thence into something quite different. A poor person may be authoritative for her knowledge, his coherence, her accuracy, but he would never constitute an authority.

This is why they Church, aware of its historical task, passed through a theoretical and practical torment that lasted three centuries and carried it from the initial critique of wealth (carried out in all the texts of primitive christianity), to the justification and acceptance of wealth, and the time in which this voyage was completed corresponds precisely to the philosophical maturity of St. Augustine and the conquest of power through Constantine, nearly simultaneous events.

This is why in the encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, the pope confuses us, limiting himself to quoting only half of the citation and thus misappropriating it to justify (or rather establish) the “gospel of life” as he calls it.

about the anarchist robbers of our time? A response to this is necessary; the comparison is far too obvious. And, as usual, the response is found in his time, in his implacable raids, in his ability to “objectively” change contexts and situations. And then there is the man, Buenaventura Durutti. Wasn’t he, in fact, the one who said — and the word of a hero is sacred — that “then I followed that method because the circumstances were different from those of the present day”, and “Banditry, no. Collective expropriation, yes! Yesterday is surpassed by the road of history itself. And anyone who desires to revive it, taking refuge in ‘the right to live’ is free to do so, but outside of our ranks, renouncing the title of militant and accepting individual responsibility for his action without compromising the life of the movement or its prestige before the working class”? Yes, he really was the one who said this, and we all need to remember it. All of us.

Only in this way could one forget. Forget that these words were said in 1933, when there were, to quote Durutti again, “a million union members” and “ a population awaiting the propitious moment to carry out the great revolution.” Forget that, after the propitious moment when he urged collective action had passed, it would be the time for Sabate, Facerias and other anarchist proponents of individual action — who were maligned and disowned for this by other anarchists afraid that their organization might lose its good reputation — to take this struggle up again.

But today, are we in a moment propitious for revolution? And besides, don’t Durutti’s thoughts exclusively deal with members of the FAI/CNT? Wasn’t it the militants of these organizations who were to renounce their “titles” if they decided to attack a bank? And what of those who have never been part of such organizations, who have always strongly affirmed individual responsibility for their actions? Has Durutti’s meaning been erased in order to use his words against these people? Those who have something to say are only his self-interested interpreters, preoccupied with confirming for the millionth time that there is no salvation outside the church.

Poor Heroes

“His death unleashed a frantic propaganda about the hero Durruti. Any discussion would end with the citation of his name. And each time he was named, a bit of his thought and work was killed.”

— Abel Paz, *“Buenaventura Durutti”*

Durutti is probably the best known anarchist in the world. His name is linked to the Spanish revolution, to the summer of 1936, when the Iberian proletariat rose up, arms in hand, against power and attacked the military bases, burned the churches, occupied the factories. It is this struggle, where he fought on the front lines together with the people of his column, that every one remembers. This is the struggle in which he lost his life on the morning of November 20, 1936, and due to which he became a hero to all.

And a hero is always right. No one ever dares to bring his statements or his actions into question. No one. The dark sides of heroes need never be put on display; they are justified. And Durutti had his dark sides as every human being does. Of those linked to his character, such as his hatred for homosexuals, there is nothing more to say. Everyone is made as they are, and besides so much water has passed under the bridge since then. But what of those linked to his choices in life? What can be said about these? What, for example, can be said about his past as a bank robber? Something needs to be said about it today when there are anarchists in prison accused of robbing banks. Can one sing the praises of that distant anarchist robber, dedicate a fine commemorative book to him and keep silent

The fable speaks of a young man who approached the Master and asked him what to do in order to obtain eternal life, and the Master told him to observe the commandments, going through a list that begins with “Thou shalt not kill”. It is from this that the pope draws his cue to establish the “gospel of life” carrying out an act of confusion rather than reasoning. In other words, the mixing of the order of the commandments put into play here in the gospel text, which places “Thou shalt not kill” in the first place, is the proof of the will to defend life as the primary essential good. But the text of the story in Matthew continues. In fact, it tells us that the rich young man responds by saying that he had followed all of these commandments, but wanted to know something more, and the response was quite precise: “If you want to be perfect, go, sell all that you own, give it to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven, then come follow me.” As if to say that wealth were an obstacle and that the Church cannot accept it.

But to refuse wealth would have meant that the Church would condemn itself to exclusion from power and invalidate its participation in earthly authority that it always considered as a provisional passage toward the total conquest of power and the domination of the world, realized, of course, for the greater glory of god.

This is why it never accepted this refusal, but always persecuted with violence and death, with fire and sword, all those who supported the necessity for the Church to be poor in order to speak to the poor and not converse with the rich over the topics that interest them relating to the management of power or to mutually contend with them for power. And this is why the Church has always considered all those who support the refusal of wealth and all those who intend to fight against the rich of the earth to be heretics.

If it had taken the concrete force that comes from wealth and from commerce with the powerful, the Church would have removed the possibility of acting as the practical foundation of authority from the idea of god and would have forced authority to become blatant tyranny, clear and visible to everyone.

Continue to Speak to Me *by* *Alfredo M. Bonanno*

Facing the understanding of oneself and others, unsuspected aspects of awareness are frequently discovered. When we approach a problem about which we know little or a person whom we have never met before, we feel a sense of panic (or of pleasure, a subtle difference that is never completely clear). Will we manage to get to the bottom of it? We ask ourselves. And the answer is not always positive.

Most of the time we look at the “stranger” with suspicion, the suspicion that always exists of the difference that is not yet codified. Where will this “stranger” take us? Certainly toward new things, and what will these be like? They might be good or bad, but they upset our balance, the sleep (and dreams) that we often create between one harsh awakening and the next.

From this, it is all the more necessary not to reveal ourselves. Since our personal world, our own world, is what is at stake when we risk venturing into the unknown, we are disposed to defend it to the death; its boundaries harden and propose an interpretive scheme. The “stranger”, whether person or problem, is thus catalogued in the sphere of our schemes; we dilute the form in the structure, suppress it by force, expecting the other to conform itself to our needs. Thus, after having killed it in the ritual manner that we can and within the limits of our capacity as killers, we reproduce it, adapted to our aims, even continuing to feed our inclusive desires, dreams and sleep.

These deaths and injuries are just like the deaths and injuries caused by aerial bombing, like those that occur year-round at workplaces, in barracks, in police stations, in hospitals, in prisons. Like those brought about by the paving over of wild places, by nuclear power plants, by the adulteration of our food, by atmospheric pollution or by the psychosomatic illnesses caused by the way of life that is imposed on us in this world.

So here it is, the violence that strikes everyone in a blind and indiscriminate fashion. Here it is, the terrorism of the state.

The Rudiments of Terror

The ruling order and its challenger face each other. The former has everything: an organization — the state — economic power, military power, control over the entire nation. The latter has little at its disposal. Only a specific number of people, full of desperation, with a few rudimentary weapons. But these few are inspired by a terrible propulsive force, the ambition for domination, that is great enough to move them to launch their challenge. They know that they are weaker than their adversary, so they must strike and run, strike and run. And when a power — even in embryo — must strike, it knows only one tool: terrorism, the use of intentionally blind and indiscriminate violence. Like that of December 3, 1996 in Paris which caused the death of two people and the wounding of fifty more, mangled by the explosion of a bomb that happened in a subway car.

Terrorism has returned — the mass media throughout the world has begun to scream it. It has returned? But when did it ever go away?

Of course, the terrorism of the challenging power is blatant and is immediately denounced as such by the media of its rival. But who will have the boldness to denounce the terrorism of the power in office, the terrorism of the state, particularly the powerful states that maintain the global order? The images of mangled bodies have traveled around the globe, rousing the horror of all, perhaps enough to make people forget that for those in power (and for those seeking it) the “common people” have always been thought of as cannon-fodder. Slaughtering them in a subway car or on a battlefield doesn’t really make any difference.

In this way, some of us, and certainly not the worst, wrap ourselves up in the cocoon of codification, judging or suspending judgment without being aware of it. But in daily practice, this suspension is always expressed in trusting the other to remain in the sphere of our perspective by itself, without our needing to do it violence. In these cases, the common sense of ridicule helps in finding tunings that would otherwise be revealed as nonexistent.

Please, no shouting your contempt for order; it is sufficient that you show me that your way of living follows a lively, dancing qualitative logic and not the obligation of the routine of quiet and the code. But show me this with logical, accurate connections. Please, tell me that you are crazy, just like me, but say it with clarity. Please, speak to me of the terrible shudder of darkness, but tell me about it in the light of the sun, so that I can see it, here and now, represented in the distinct speech in which I was educated.

Encourage me with your chants about destruction — they are sweet lullabies for my heart’s needs — but speak of them in an orderly manner so that I can understand them and thanks to them understand what destruction is. In short, I want the words to reach me in a well-organized form. Alas, if you start to shout, I will no longer listen. It is good to destroy, but with the order that logic imposes. Otherwise we go into the chaos of the unrepeatable, where everything fades into the incomprehensible. Yes, granted, something could reach me even through the perplexing shouts of an Algerian marketplace on a feast day, but I am not used to that life, to that unpredictable and fleeting dance, to the unforeseen appearance of the “stranger”. It is necessary that you put the code of habit before me, that the language be made full of immediateness. Speak to me, I beg you, so that the word becomes the umbilical cord between me and the world of what has already happened, so that nothing presents itself as being thrown suddenly into the dark dimension of chaos.

Speak to me of love, of your love, for me, of every possible love, even of the most remote and difficult to understand, of the violence that goes at it from the hip, of violence and death, but, in order to

let me see it with the eyes of the mind, speak to me about it imprisoned, captured in the slimy and corruptible web of words. Speak to me about it carefully, I beg you, so that my heart can bear its repercussions. Then I will make a habit of it. And really, since you have spoken to me about it, the love will become familiar to me and I will carry it with me everywhere, like one carries a knife in one's pocket, a heavy object that furnishes security. As to that other possibility, as to the "stranger" that presented herself suddenly before my eyes, like a thief in the night, no longer beckoning to me there, it abandons the high howl that could still speak to me in the night.

Speak to me of the future society, of anarchy, that in which you and I believe, describe its conditions of uncertainty to me, the unpredictability of relations between human beings finally freed of every constraint; with your calm, persuasive words, tell me of the ferment of the passions that break loose, the hatred and the desire for destruction that don't disappear from one day to the next, the fear and the blood that don't stop spreading and flowing in the veins of a society that is finally different from every nightmare of the past. Tell me, I beg you, but do it in a way that does not frighten me, Speak to me about it in an orderly manner, speak to me about what we do, you and I, and the others, and the comrades, and those who were never comrades, but who come to understand from one moment to the next, all together, building, a little here, a little there, bit by bit, while everything within life, I mean true life, begins to flourish again. But speak to me about it with intelligible logic. Don't shout into my ear that which shouts within you, frightening me. Keep it to yourself. Keep the difficulty of coordinating your needs and ideas with mine to yourself. Keep the indomitable strength to yourself that leads you far from any acceptance of my will, your own being irrepressibly hostile to all codification just like mine, after all. Not telling me all these things, you would stop frightening me.

I beg you, don't give me anything more to worry about.

of power — I will not change my mind simply because someone waves the red flag of the risks I will face before my eyes. If I acted otherwise, the penal code would be advising me about what my conduct should be, greatly limiting my possibilities to act and thus to express myself.

But if it is an absurdity to describe an anarchist as "illegalist", it would be ridiculous to attribute the quality of "legalist" to her. How could an anarchist, an individual who desires a world without authority, expect to be able to realize his dream without ever breaking the law, which is the most immediate expression of authority, that is to say, without transgressing those norms that have been deliberately established and written in order to defend the social order? Anyone who intends to radically transform this world would necessarily have to place herself sooner or later against the law that aims to conserve it.

Unless...Unless the desire to change that world that still smolders in the hearts of these anarchists is in some way subordinated to the worries about the risks they might face, about being persecuted by the police, about being brought under investigation, about losing the appreciation of friends and relations. Unless the absolute freedom that means so much to anarchists is considered a great and beautiful thing, but mainly in the realm of theory — manifesting itself in the inoffensive banter exchanged from the armchairs after a suffocating day of work — because from the practical point of view the strength of domination offers no hope. Then it is advisable to make utopia into something concrete, with its feet upon the ground, uniting it with good sense, because revolution could never be considered legal under any penal code.

Enough of dreaming the impossible; let's try to obtain the tolerable. Here it is, the invective against the myth of illegalism coming from certain anarchists takes on a precise meaning, that of justifying their self-interested predisposition to conform to the dictates of the law, setting aside every foolish, immoderate aspiration.

In the name of realism, of course.

to savor the thrill of the forbidden or perhaps in order to satisfy some ideological dogma. But I ask, where have these comrades run across this illegalism at all costs, who has spoken of it? Who would be such a fool as to challenge the severity of the law when she could do otherwise? Obviously, nobody.

But there is probably another point on which it would be useful to reflect. Can an anarchist avoid challenging the law? Certainly in many circumstances this is possible. For example, at the moment I am writing for a paper that is published legally; does this perhaps make me a legalist anarchist? On the other hand, if I were to go this evening to put up clandestine flyers, would this make me an illegalist anarchist? But then, what would ever distinguish these two categories of anarchists?

The question of the relationship between an anarchist and the law cannot be settled in such a hasty and misleading way. As I see it, the actions of an anarchist cannot be conditioned by the law in either the positive or the negative. I mean that it cannot be either the reverential respect for the guiding standards of the time or the pleasure of transgression as an end in itself that drives her, but rather his ideas and dreams united to her individual inclinations. In other words, an anarchist can only be an alegalist, an individual who proposes to do what most pleases him beyond the law, without basing herself on what the penal code allows or forbids.

Of course, the law exists and one cannot pretend not to see it. I am quite aware that there is always a bludgeon ready to attend to our desires along the way toward their realization, but this threat should not influence our decision about the means to use to realize that which is dearest to our hearts. If I consider it important to publish a paper — a thing that is considered legal — I can easily attempt to follow the provisions of the law about the press in order to avoid useless annoyance, since this does not change the contents of what I intend to communicate at all.

But, on the other hand, if I consider it important to carry an action considered illegal — like the attack against the structures and people

Anarchism and Criticism of the Existent *by Benedetto Gallucci*

In a historical context like the one in which we live (the collapse of ideological dogmas, institutional certainties, etc.) it is a matter of fact that more and more people are beginning to show an interest in anarchism and to take libertarian ideas into consideration. Anarchist groups and circles and libertarian collectives are growing.

At this point, I don't think it would be untimely to talk about the difference between the individual comrade who discovers an anarchist awareness and therefore begins to spread her anarchist ideas and the classical militant of a political organization. As anarchists, we are focused on the critique of the existence that surrounds us, but we don't forget to take time for individual self-criticism that serves to make us keep our feet quite firmly on the ground. But self-criticism is lacking among political militants, and this inevitably leads them to set themselves up on a pedestal of arrogance and presumption. By self-criticism, I mean the individual process of self-analysis that is a part of the life of every libertarian, through which they constantly bring their way of thinking, acting, speaking and relating with others into question.

It isn't a question of merely examining one's character or temperament. On the contrary, it's a question of driving out all the shit that Power and the Church (as well as the current everyday consumer society) shoves into us from the moment we're born. Certain inter-

nal mechanisms with which we were shaped from a most tender age are quite difficult to destroy even when one has the lucidity to recognize that they are in clear conflict with libertarian principles. One always tends to think, “after all, I am made this way...” It is safe to say that it is a bit humiliating to discover people who speak of self-determination, anarchy and revolution who are totally incapable of carrying out an internal revolution that is necessary for destroying authoritarianism in whatever form it manifests itself.

For every future collective project of liberation, an individual voyage to grasp hold of the awareness of anarchist ideas is essential, a project that cannot be separated from a profound critique of the pathogenic germs of Power present in everyone of us.

Beyond the Law *by Penelope Nin*

To tell the truth, I don't quite understand what is meant today when people speak of “illegalism”. I thought this word was no longer in use, that it could not slip out of the history books of the anarchist movement any more, shut up forever with the equally ancient “propaganda of the deed”. When I have heard it talked about again in recent times in such shamelessly critical tones, I haven't been able to hold back a sensation of astonishment. I begin to find this mania for dusting off old arguments in order to avoid dealing with new discussions intolerable, but there is so much of this.

One thing, however, seems clear to me. The illegalism that is spoken of (badly) today is not the concept that was debated with so much heart-felt animation by the anarchist movement at the beginning of the 20th century. At that time this term was used to indicate all those practices prohibited by law that were useful for resolving the economic problems of comrades: robbery, theft, smuggling, counterfeiting money and so on. It seems to me that today some anarchists, lacking anything concrete to discuss, are tending much too easily to claim that illegalism means a refined glorification for its own sake of every behavior forbidden by law, not only of those dictated by the requirements of survival. In short, illegalism would become a kind of theoretical framework for erecting illegality as a system, a life value.

Some people push it even further, to the point of censuring a no better defined “illegalism at all costs”, yearning for comrades who would violate the law even when they could do otherwise simply

that unleash unpredictable mechanisms — to such an extent that they displace the narrow limits of demands, beyond which it no longer matters what the truck drivers wanted to negotiate, whether wages, pensions or work hours, because what is at stake is something else entirely, something for everyone.

Or else nothing could happen in a blockaded city. It could be a huge, very sad Sunday.

The pot boils and the giant is never too big for us; it cannot even sleep peacefully. Its arteries — that are roads, electric wires and computer networks — are exposed and can be cut, generating an infinite and unpredictable series of possibilities.

A Yellow Rose by Alfredo M. Bonanno

But have we truly finished interpreting the world? I did not realize that anyone was transforming it. The absolutely “other” event does not stand out on the horizon, whereas the mechanisms of the market are organizing themselves on the old codes and reproduce themselves, justifying poverty and wealth, the absurd polarizations of “the world goes this way”.

In *A Yellow Rose*, Borges makes us see how the poet Marino, prince of fine speech, seventeenth century Italian master of human letters, realized at the point of death that speaking (or doing, which is really the same thing) as reproduction and mirror of the world, as grand interpretive picture, is not possible. He concludes more modestly with doing (and thus also speaking) as excess, as superfluous addition to a composition that is already complete, even if, for us, it is unwelcome and intolerable.

Thought and action, like this and that, are never simply projected, i.e., they don't have a meaning “merely” as a function of what they contribute to determining or what one could foresee them as determining. First of all, they are a previous history, i.e., they are themselves events, significant in their sort of autonomy, full of meaning and, thence, carriers of the marking that human activity has attached to them.

In other words, they are characterized messages, pieces in motion of the humans that have thought and done them, as thoughts and actions. As such, they have no neat counterparts in the goal that they intend to achieve, i.e., they are not exhausted in the pur-

poses that have apparently determined them. The study of this “difference” leads directly to the interior of the absolutely “other”.

If we think and act with the sole aim of adapting ourselves to reality, maybe wildly tooting our own horn to make ourselves better heard, and more distant, we don't have time for nuances, for the thing added in excess of which I am speaking here. We produce what is necessary because the world goes forward with out contributions as well, and the rules of the market impose the codes of this production on us. They tell us (along broad, but sufficiently clear, lines) what to do so as to never come out below, *or above*, what is required for the project to be realized. And when we fail in the capitulation that is required of us, we feel precisely that we have failed, we are failures, and we look at our inefficient hands and weep despondently.

Perhaps we will have to weep hotter tears when success has come precisely through the great capacity for adapting what we do to the goals to be reached. Perhaps precisely in this instance, that the increasingly intense efficiency of modern techniques suggests to us every day, we have supplied our little contribution to the great constructions of power. And this even when the project assumed the particulars of revolution, of the subversion of institutions and values, customs and traditions.

In this case, in small and big things, we are set up as suppliers of the future executioner, we have concluded our efforts in the perfection of what we had thought. A greater number of final details that correspond with the starting hypothesis is always seen as a higher degree of success. Goals have been achieved, finish lines crossed, hopes satisfied. Now the people have their free rules, old tyrannies are dead, new freedoms are engraved on shiny new tablets. We can present the bill. We are the liberators: we are the creators of the project and its details. We have incubated high social meaning the way a peacock egg is incubated, and now we witness the shining of the sun's golden feathers.

it to be. The feast is always right around the corner, because if the paths of domination are infinite, so are the paths of revolt: the giant that we have in our heads is really a network of relations, enormous indeed, but quite concrete, and these relations use determined channels, determined paths. And these paths could, indeed, be blocked, priming, in time, unpredictable mechanisms.

Such an eventuality has been bringing difficult moments to life for the French for several weeks. Truck drivers — those wage-laborers who drive back and forth across France and Europe, transporting commodities for the profit of capital — are on strike. Not only are all these goods not being bought and sold, with all the consequent problems for French cities and the economy; in fact, by strike, the French truck drivers did not just mean a mere abstention from work. No, they park their semis at the entrances of cities, on the expressways and block traffic; or they surround refineries in order to prevent the resupplying of fuel.

Bordeaux is already completely blocked, like a consistent number of the cities of the west and the southeast, and in Paris, the siege is starting. Think, what can a blockade of this sort arouse: already, just a few short days after the start of the protest, a few factories are noticeably slowing down production. Without raw materials, industry can't work since its products are not transported and sold. And along with the factories, offices and ministries are shaken.

What can happen in a blockaded city? Everything and nothing, it's a question of *time*. Cities are built around work and its time. The time of the city is scanned from the hands of a clock, the ticking of which rules our lives branding our days with fire. The office, the family, Sundays, evenings, survival doesn't survive without the ticking of the clocks.

However, in a blockaded city, time might not have any more need for clock faces and hands. It is released from work; it can expand and contract improbably even to the point of vanishing.

This might be dangerous for the giant. You will see that, without time, strange ideas enter people's minds, strange vices are born

A Little, Little Giant *by Il Panda*

[There are moments when it seems that anything could open up, that all possibilities are in play. These are the moments we need to seize in order to realize our rebellious dreams. There are no guarantees in these moments, only possibilities. The following article was written in the midst of one such moment that occurred several years ago in France. — translator]

It is not just a matter of proportions. We always appear so very little in the face of this world that overwhelms us and that not only seems incomprehensible — with its endless and intricate network of relationships and dependencies between endless causes and effects — but also unassailable.

Yes, of course, we'd like to turn this world upside down, we'd like to destroy these relationships, but we don't know where to begin; everything seems useless to us, all our destructive fury seems to be reduced to an almost inoffensive tickle against an impassive giant. Our hearts are stirred to revolt, but how many times have we run up against the supposed immutability of the giant that oppresses us? The pot is boiling, we think; but we don't know how to lift its lid, this blessed pot, we don't understand is rhyme or reason. And even if the urgency of things always goads us into action, it doesn't seem to us that this manages to prime the mechanism that could put the existent into a hard spot. Our continue clashes with the world don't succeed in reproducing themselves, rousing the passions, the wild and collective feasts, the revolutions that we desire. And yet, as we know, the giant is neither so big nor so passive as we imagine

The force of the goal to achieve has killed the initial character of action and thought. And that character was the adherence of to the concrete activity of the one who thought and acted, a manifestation of strength that wanted to leave its sign, to affirm itself in the world, to transform the world, not with the mark of subordination to something external, but with its own exuberance, with the excess that this very thinking and acting produce. The concern of the one who acts and thinks, and who makes of her thought and action a single thing, is thus not that of finding a measure outside himself, in the efficiency with which the project has been realized, in the completeness of the result, but is rather that of finding within the project itself, which was and remains a moment of doing and thinking, all the superabundance of the absolutely "other". What does this mean?

It means not waiting for the goals to give reasons to the choices, ideas and means in order to act. Not waiting for practical authorization or moral foundation to arrive from the outside, from others or from what one hopes to obtain. If the project is not clear within us, if we are therefore not willing to incur the risks that our ideas and actions entail, we cannot expect a mere positive result to furnish us with what we lack. By accepting this conception, we present ourselves as creditors; we want a concrete result but only for ourselves, precisely because we have always been aware of that initial lack and have always gone in search of a completeness.

If, however, we are sure of what we think and of the reasons that move us to act, we are complete from the start. And if we are complete, we can make a gift of ourselves to the other, we can make a gift of ourselves to the objective we want to achieve. And this gift of ourselves will appear immediately for what it is: the exchange of a gift between ourselves and the other, between ourselves and the reality that stands before us, unknown but desired, that we want to transform. Our gift is not remedial, it doesn't equalize, it doesn't bring justice, it doesn't smooth out faults. It destroys and creates, adds the immeasurable excess beyond which all calculation

becomes impossible. It fills our hearts beyond any economic calculation.

of concepts aimed at defining, establishing, when an unconditioned eruption of our desired could cancel all this in order to lead it into the abyss of the possible, the conceivable? And why not clearly, decisively, forcefully destroy the relationship when it becomes hateful to us since the past is a thing that becomes extraneous to the extent that you can no longer put your hands on it. And memories are useful, more than anything else, to those who momentarily live far from their will.

Comrades, friends, lovers, for me dissolution unites all these descriptions. I love, I prefer, I choose in my own way, as a lawless one. I don't know what love is, and I don't know what friendship is, perhaps because they don't exist or perhaps because I have no need to use these words, because I have a more or less clear idea of what the dynamic of knowing and standing together with others, in agreement or disagreement, is.

Relationships without the disquieting and unbearable presence of authority are the only ones that I put up with, and I rely on them to express my boundless I. When one of these relationships tends to create a bit of restlessness or sacrifice or that smarmy thing known as tolerance, then I hold that the time has come to remove myself from it, to start over in another of the infinite situations that the existent proposes to me.

Starting again from a gratifying detachment.

The contacts that I establish may be more or less lasting. Circumstance contribute to a large extent. But they always end with the option of reopening.

When I talk about seeking affinity, I speak of granting myself a series of contacts with other individuals, which do not cause harm to my capacity to act, but are rather capable of giving me new strength, new capacities, multiplying the bouncing of my sphere on those of others, something indispensable for the search for myself and my satisfaction. The common meanings of “love” and “friendship” thus leave me perplexed.

When relationships open, one cannot establish *a priori* how they might extend or end themselves. Relationships are and that is all. The randomness of events and the manifestation of individual will contribute to creating a certain something. And when I say a certain something, I mean everything. From the most heated passions, to carnality, to crime, to sensory ecstasy, to esteem, to indifference, to annoyance.

Excluding is a bit like making laws, depriving oneself of possibilities for movement. Uniting different events can cause the sense of their originality and uniqueness to be lost. If for some a kiss is love, for me it is a sensation of the lips to experiment with each time.

The individuals with whom I share moments are profoundly different from one another. Each instance, having peculiar characteristics, has nothing to do with any other instance. There is no doubt.

So, what is love and what is friendship when one speaks of relationships? Are they oracles to which to prostrate ourselves of obstacles to everything? Who is the person that we can get take part in one of these categories with certainty? And wouldn't this certainty be a misguided and misleading boldness? Wouldn't it always be to small? If “the fragile cage of language” is what still creates these problems for us, why not enter a bit more into contact with oneself and do away with these oh so mysterious and intangible words that lead the fruit of our personal emotions and agreeableness back to something that doesn't exist? Why make oneself the spokesperson

The Persistent Refusal of Paradise *by Penelope Nin*

It is rumored that we (a “we” not well-defined whose lack of definition suits the rumor-mongers) have nothing to do with anarchism, being in reality nihilists disguised for the purpose of penetrating into the sanctuary of anarchy with bad intentions. It is noted that one who takes up the task of guarding the temple ends up seeing thieves everywhere, and maybe the hour has come to quiet “our” troubled detractors.

First of all, they must explain what they mean by nihilism. Personally, I view anyone who extols the joys of nihilism to me with suspicion because I consider nihilism, as the substantiation of nothing, to be a deception. When the incompleteness of all is cultivated with a feeling of fullness, it is difficult to resist the temptation to replace the old absolute with its most abstract moment in which nothing is immediately transformed into all and is therefore totalized. Ultimately, nihilism seems to me to be a crafty form of reasoning, that drives the whole structure of knowledge into the darkness of Nothingness only to receive, through this spectacular, radical negation, still more of the light of the All.

But probably the rumored “nihilism” consists of something much simpler, that is, of a supposed absence of proposals. In other words, one is nihilistic when one persistently refuses to promise a future earthly paradise, to foresee its functioning, to study its organization, to praise its perfection. One is nihilistic when, instead of taking and valuing all the moments of relative freedom offered by this soci-

ety, one radically negates it, preferring the drastic conclusion that none of it is worth saving. Finally, one is nihilistic when, instead of proposing something constructive, one's activity comes down to an "obsessive exultation of the destruction of this world." If this is the argument, it is, indeed a meager one.

To begin, anarchism — the Idea — is one thing, and the anarchist movement — the ensemble of men and women who support this Idea — is another. It makes no sense to me to say of the Idea what in reality only a few anarchists assert. The Idea of anarchism is the absolute incompatibility between freedom and authority. From this it follows that one can enjoy total freedom in the complete absence of Power. Because Power exists and has no intention of disappearing voluntarily, it will be necessary indeed to create a way to eliminate it. Correct me if I'm mistaken.

I don't understand why such a premise, which no anarchist "nihilist" has ever dreamed of denying and suppressing, must lead necessarily to postulating new social regulations. I don't understand why, in order to "be part" of the anarchist movement, one must first undergo a doctoral examination in the architecture of the new world, and why it isn't enough to love freedom and hate every form of authority with all that entails. All this is not only absurd from the theoretical point of view, but also false from the historical point of view (and the anarchist rumor-mongers show so much fervor for History). One of the points about which Malatesta and Galleani clashed regularly was precisely the question of whether it was necessary to plan what would be created after the revolution or not. Malatesta argued that anarchists must begin immediately to develop ideas of how to organize social life because it doesn't allow for interruption; Galleani, on the other hand, argued that the task of anarchists was the destruction of this society, and that future generations that are immune to the logic of domination will figure out how to rebuild. In spite of these differences, Malatesta did not accuse Galleani of being nihilist. To make such an accusation would have been gratuitous because their difference was only

The Link That Isn't There *by* *Mario Cacciucco*

In addition to explaining, language in its function of allowing communication between individuals, situations and materiality is set the misguided task of enclosing emotions, mental states and relationships between individuals and others within syllables.

In my opinion, the mystification of relationships of love and friendship is spurious. Examples from lived experience would be a great help in explaining my reflection, but I want to try to clarify it by using, in my own way, the written word.

I start from the presupposition that every individual is different in her attitudes, aspirations, physical aspect, pleasures. The relationships that exist between individuals are like spheres that bounce off each other in a whirl of contacts, without causing any fusion. Modifications, but never fusions. I on the other, the other on me. In every instance, each sphere maintains its uniqueness. Starting from my own uniqueness, I thus decide to embark on an unlimited search for contacts and situations close to mine, in order to realize myself excessively by enjoying the differences of others. And I do so by affirming my will to preserve my decision-making abilities however and whenever. In general, I recognize the difference of others, I am attracted to it, like a child who sees a clown pirouette and is attracted by the novelty and likableness that it communicates to him. I recognize the charm of all that is external to me, the known, the less known and the unknown.

from the thoughts of Malatesta since saying that there is a limit to the use of violence is not the same thing as saying that one must never have recourse to it.

Having recourse to the dead does not serve to justify one's indolence.

over the constructive aspect of the question; they agreed completely about the destructive aspect. Though this is omitted by many of his exegetes, Malatesta was, indeed, an insurrectionalist, a confirmed supporter of a violent insurrection capable of demolishing the state.

Today, however, one merely needs to point out that anyone who holds power does not give up their privileges voluntarily and draw the due conclusions to be accused of nihilism. Within the anarchist movement, as everywhere, times change. Whereas once the debate among anarchists dealt with the way of conceiving the revolution, today it seems that all discussion centers around the way to avoid it. What other purpose could all these disquisitions on self-government, libertarian municipalism, or the blessed utopia of good sense have? It is clear that once one rejects the insurrectional project as such, the destructive hypothesis begins to assume frightful contours. What was only an error to Malatesta — limiting oneself to the demolition of the social order — for many present-day anarchists represents a horror.

When pious souls hear the bark of a dog, they always think that a ferocious wolf is coming. For them the blowing of the wind becomes an approaching tornado. In the same way, to anyone who has entrusted the task of transforming the world to persuasion alone, the word destruction is upsetting to the mind, evoking painful and unpleasant images. These things make a bad impression on the people who, if they are to be converted and finally flock into the ranks of reason, must have a religion that promises an Eden of peace and brotherhood. Whether it deals with paradise, nirvana or anarchy is of little importance. And anyone who dares to place such a religion into question cannot be thought of as simply a non-believer. In the course of things, such a person must be presented as a dangerous blasphemer.

And this is why “we” (but who is this “we”?) are called “nihilists”. But the nihilism in all this, what is the point?

Prisoners of a Single World *by* *Gruppo Anarchico* *Insurrezionalista “E.* *Malatesta”*

“The fact is that the state would not be so pernicious if those who wanted to were able to ignore it and live their lives in their own way together with those with whom they get along. But it has invaded every function of social life, standing over all the activities of our lives and we are even prevented from defending ourselves when we are attacked.

“It is necessary to submit to it or bring it down.”

— Errico Malatesta

If we were not deeply dissatisfied with this world, we would not write on this paper and you would not read this article. It is therefore useless to waste further words to confirm our aversion to Power and its manifestations. Rather, what seems useful to us is the attempt to determine whether a revolt that is not openly and resolutely against the state and power is possible.

The question should not seem odd. In fact, there are those who see in the struggle against the state nothing but a further confirmation of the extent to which it has penetrated into us, managing to determine our actions — even if only in the negative. With its

or Paolo Schichi? Nevertheless, Malatesta did not deny the legitimacy and even the necessity of the use of violence as such; he only opposed a violence that “strikes blindly, without distinguishing between the guilty and the innocent.” It is no accident that the example of blind violence that he usually gave was that of the bomb that exploded in Barcelona during a religious procession, causing forty deaths and numerous injuries. This is because he would have no critique to make in the face of rebellious actions against precise targets that have no consequence for extraneous people. In fact, in the course of one of his famous interviews with *Le Figaro*, in which the interviewer tried to press him to disapprove of Ravachol’s bombs, and of the attack at the boulevard Magenta, Malatesta answered: “Your conclusions are hasty. In the affair of rue Clichy, it seems quite clear to me that it was intended to blow up a judge; but I regret that it was carried out — quite involuntarily, I believe — in a way that brought injury to people whom he had not considered. As to the bomb of boulevard Magenta — oh! I have no reservations about that! Lherot and Very had become accomplices of the police and it was a fine act of struggle to blow them up.”

It seems clear that all the discussion and polemics that occurred in those distant years — that certain present-day anarchists run through again in order to sell us the image of an anti-violent Malatesta — were not in fact aimed at the use of violence in itself, but only the limits one could not exceed without placing the very principles of anarchism in question, or at most those limits suggested by considerations of a tactical order.

But let’s leave “the dark end of an earlier century” and the polemics that then raged in the anarchist movement, and return to the present. No explosive actions claimed by anarchists in recent years could be considered as being carried out in a “blind” and “insensitive” manner. Rather all could be said to have been directed against the structures of domination without putting “the lives of people at risk.” So how can one justify the repudiation of these actions on the part of certain anarchists? Certainly not by borrowing

ment such cases have occurred? To avoid going too far, it is enough to consider Errico Malatesta, the famous Italian anarchist.

All the friends and scholars of the thoughts of Malatesta have had to agree on one fact. His sole preoccupation, his sole desire, throughout his life was to make revolution. For Malatesta, there was no doubt: anarchists are such because they want anarchy and it is only possible to realize anarchy by making revolution, a revolution that would necessarily be violent, the first step of which is insurrection. It seems to be a banality, and indeed it is. And yet it is a banality from which many anarchists tend to distance themselves with a sense of disgust.

Luigi Fabbri wrote: “Insurrection is the necessary and inescapable event of every revolution, the concrete event through which it becomes reality for everyone. It is from this fact that Malatesta’s aversion for every theory and method that tends, directly or indirectly, to discredit it, to avert the attention of the masses and the activity of revolutionaries from it, to replace it with means that are apparently more convenient and peaceful grew.”

Not just revolutionary, since “anyone can call themselves revolutionary while using the prudence to postpone the desired transformation to far distant times (when the time is ripe, as they say),” Malatesta was above all an insurrectionist inasmuch as he wanted to make the revolution immediately — a revolution understood “in the sense of violent change carried out through force against the preserving powers; and it thus implies material struggle, armed insurrection, with the retinue of barricades, armed groups, the confiscation of goods from the class against which one fights, sabotage of the means of communications, etc.” — not in a distant and undefined future, but immediately, as quickly as possible, as soon as the occasion presented itself, an occasion that had to be created intentionally by anarchists if it did not come on its own through natural events.

Yes, I know; who is not familiar with certain critiques Malatesta made of violence and polemics that he wrote about Emile Henry

cumbersome presence, the state would distract us from that which should be our true objective: living life our way. If we think of taking down the state, of obstructing it, of fighting it, we don’t have the time to reflect on what we want to do ourselves. Rather than trying to realize our dreams here and now, we follow the state wherever it goes, becoming its shadow and putting off the realization of our projects to infinity. In a frenzy to be antagonist, to be against, we end up no longer being protagonist, in favor of something. Thus, if we want to be ourselves, we should cease to oppose ourselves to the state and start to consider it not with hostility, but with indifference. Rather than giving ourselves to trying to destroy its world — the world of authority — it is better to build our own, that of freedom. It is necessary to stop thinking about the enemy, what it does, where it is found, what to do to strike it, and dedicate ourselves to ourselves, to our “daily life”, to our relationships, to our spaces that need to expand and improve more and more. Otherwise, we will never do anything but follow the inclinations of power.

The anarchist movement today is full of this sort of reasoning, the continual search for justifications disguised as theoretical analyses that excuse one’s absolute inaction. There are those who want to do nothing because they are skeptical, those who do not want to impose anything on anyone, those who consider power too strong for them and those who don’t want to follow its rhythms and times; every one of these excuses is good. But these anarchists, do they have a dream capable of setting their hearts aflame?

In order to clear the field of these miserable excuses, it is worth the effort to remember a few things. There are not two worlds, ours and theirs, and even if, to be absurd, they did exist, how could they be made to co-exist? There is a single world, the world of authority and money, of exploitation and obedience: the world in which we are all forced to live. It is impossible to pretend that we are outside. This is why we cannot allow ourselves to be indifferent, this is why we cannot manage to ignore it. If we oppose ourselves to the state, if we are always quick to seize the occasion to attack it, it is not

because we are indirectly molded by it, it is not because we have sacrificed our desires on the altar of revolution, but because our desires cannot be realized as long as the state exists, as long as any Power exists. The revolution does not distract us from our dreams, but rather is the only possibility that allows the conditions for their realization. We want to overturn this world as quickly as possible here and now, because here and now there are only barracks, courts, banks, concrete, supermarkets, prisons. Here and now there is only exploitation, while freedom, as we understand it, does not really exist.

This does not mean that we give up on creating spaces of our own in which to experiment with the relationships that we prefer. It only means that these spaces, these relationships, do not represent the complete freedom that we desire for ourselves and for everyone. They are a step, but not the final one, much less the definitive one. A freedom that ends on the threshold of our occupied house, of our “free” commune, is not enough, it does not satisfy us. Such freedom is illusory, because it frees only as long as we stay at home and don’t leave the confines that are imposed on us. If we don’t consider the necessity of attacking the state (and there is much that we could say about this concept of “attack”), then, by definition, we can only do what it allows us to do at its convenience, forever, limiting ourselves to surviving in the little “happy isle” that we will build ourselves. Keeping our distance from the state means conserving life, confronting it means living.

Our capitulation is implicit in indifference toward the state. It is as if we were admitting that the state is stronger, is invincible, is beyond contestation, one might as well lay down one’s arms and consider cultivating one’s kitchen garden. Is it possible to call this revolt? It seems to us rather to be a completely inner attitude, circumscribed by a kind of diffidence, incompatibility with and disinterest in that which surrounds us. But resignation remains implicit in such an attitude. Contemptuous resignation if you will, but resignation nonetheless.

He Jokes with Men *by* *Penelope Nin*

“But expropriations and violent actions that put the lives of people at risk, and more generally the theory and practice of illegalism at all costs are far from our anarchism. Such actions are in clear contrast with the anti-violent Malatestian spirit that we have made our own.”

(from *Germinal*, # 71/72, p. 26)

The greatest misfortune that can befall a human being endowed with any quality is to be surrounded by followers. As long as he remains alive, he will be perpetually compelled to keep watch so that nothing stupid is said or done in his name, toil that will prove useless however when, after his death, the initiates quarrel over how to advance the path of his endeavor. The followers are never at the level of their “teacher”, since only those who lack their own ideas take on those of others — becoming, precisely, their followers. Thus, followers not only prove to be incapable of causing something that has already been started to advance, but since they lack the qualities of the one who came before them, they easily reach the point of distorting and betraying the ideas they claim to support.

The phenomenon, deprecable in itself, takes on ludicrous and even amusing features and directions, particularly when the unfortunate “teacher” is an anarchist, that is to say an individual hostile to all authority and therefore opposed in principle to the herd mentality. And yet who can deny that even within the anarchist move-

onization by a part of the venerable anarchist Church. The fact that his murderers were precisely the communists who Parlato, Fofi and their comrades praised so highly up until recently is a particular that is utterly insignificant.

The fact remains only Camomillo Berneri — the anarchist who used to candidly maintain that “a minimum of authority is indispensable” — could have become the line of union between stalinists and anarchists, the unbelievers who — like Gobetti and Gramsci — do nothing but feed dogma with their heresy.

But, okay, let's say it: as far as it goes, these judges are perfectly right. There are anarchists and “anarchists”. Some are bad and are rightly in prison. But others — among them, it is worthwhile to recall, a few of the proposers of this convention, Claudio Venza, Gianni Carrozza, Giampietro Berti — are good. So good that they can enjoy the esteem of all the respectable people of this world.

A toast therefore to Camomillo. And to hell with the “anarchists” in prison.

It is like throwing punches that are limited to warding off blows without ever trying to bring the adversary that one hates down. But our adversary does not give us any respite. We cannot merely leave the ring and go on making a laughing-stock of it. It is necessary to bring our adversary down; dodging and expressing our disappointment in it is not sufficient.

Camomillo *by Penelope Nin*

At this time, a lot of anarchists from all over Italy are flooding into Rome.

A month ago, by the order of a public prosecutor who was looking for easy glory, about thirty enemies of authority were taken into custody and locked up in Rebibbia, a prison in the outlying suburbs. To protest against the arrogance and vengeful spirit of the judges who have decided to take away their freedom, one of them has begun a hunger and thirst strike to the death.

But last Saturday, these anarchists were not alone in breathing the air of the eternal city. Others joined them there, guests this time of the international bookshop, *Il Manifesto*, where they went to chatter — together with communists, marxists and historians — about Camillo Berneri, “an anarchist between Gramsci and Gobetti”, as the title of the conference said. It was promoted by the daily newspaper of via Tomacelli¹ by the libertarian studies center of Milan and by the Historical Review of Anarchism of Pisa, in collaboration with the Roman bookshop Anomolia.

It’s a good thing that there are anarchists willing to cleanse the good name of anarchy, washing away the awful reputation that a few hotheads would like to attach to it. In printing the news of the arrests a month ago, *Il Manifesto* had already attentively made note of how the investigators “a bit too easily” granted “a single ideological-political motivation to actions that seem like those of a band of common criminals.” But a fine convention organized all

¹ Also called *Il Manifesto*. — translator.

together was the thing needed to dissipate the last doubts, to finally bring back a bit of serenity.

In response to this proposal, it was immediately said that a better subject could not have been chosen. What anarchist more than Camomillo Berneri could have brought anarchists and personages such as Valentino Parlato, Goffredo Fofi (who is publishing an anthology of Berneri’s writings), and Enzo Santarelli onto a common terrain? Figures of this sort certainly could not remain insensitive to the fascination exercised by the leading exponent of anarchist revisionism and by his unsettling definitions of Anarchy — “the society in which technical authority, stripped of every function of political domination, comes to form a hierarchy conceived and realized as a system of distribution of work” — and of freedom — “the power of obeying reason”.

“Anarchist *sui generis*”² — so he loved to describe himself — Berneri fought like a lion to bring anarchism out from the mists of utopia at blows with reality. “Better the present evil than something worse” was the battle cry that accompanied him throughout his life and to which he always remained faithful. This sense of measure led him to salute the Bolshevik regime in 1918, despite abstentionism³ which he dismissed as “cretinism”, collaborate with liberals like Gobetti, and make sympathetic gestures toward a part of the Catholic world with which he shared the idea of woman as wife, procreator and ideal housekeeper. And the deep sense of duty — which Camomillo identified with God is what made him write words full of cautious common sense about the necessity of money and the inevitability of prison, with the consciousness that it is always necessary to reach a “compromise between the Idea and the fact, between tomorrow and today.”

Beneri was killed in Barcelona during the days of May 1937, in the heat of the Spanish revolution. His martyrdom earned him can-

² “his own kind of anarchist”. — translator.

³ refusal to participate in the electoral process. — translator.