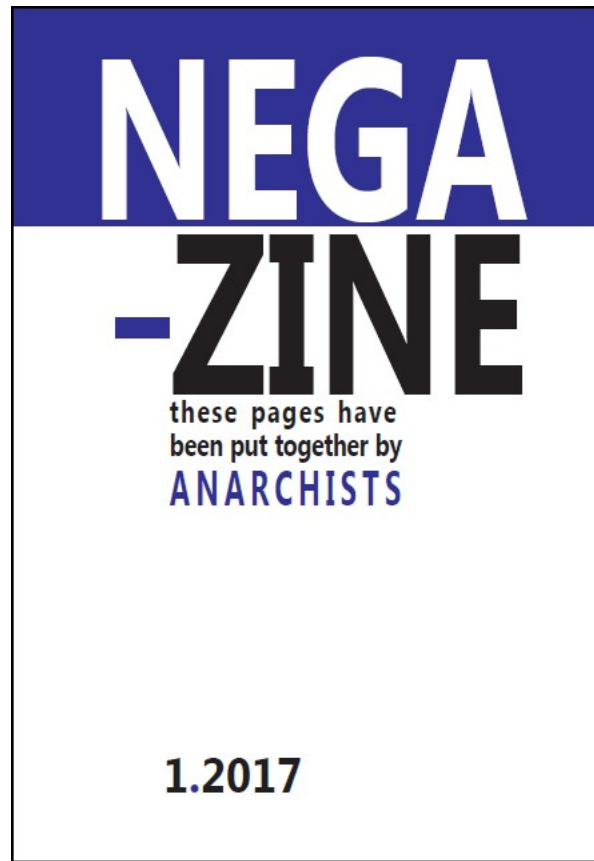


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Editorial

Those who agree that the clash with an enemy about to crush us and the struggle to assert our — anarchist — vision of life is perfectly valid, but think we should get over it and seek some paradisiac oasis and mutual goodwill, made a mistake in starting to read these lines. So they might as well stop reading here.

We are going to talk about the joy that we feel, and that we hope our readers feel, attacking the enemy. That is our sole reason for giving life to this new publication, a journal to be precise.

But what is a journal? A few printed pages bound with a cover. Is that all? No, in this case that's not all. It's not even the ideas that we are bringing to light, what we are daring to say or think needs to be gone into critically. Nor is it what we are going to attempt here for the first time, shocking our readers slightly by throwing our way of looking at things in their faces.

Only those who see the finger pointing at the moon and ignore the moon itself could reach such conclusions, quite plausible for goodness' sake. We are about to go beyond, arm ourselves once again to attack, inflict damage on a complex system that is destroying the planet. Because we intend to do something against this monstrosity in act before it succeeds with its project. At least try.

Now, before we act we must know and understand what stands before us and work out a suitable conceptual process in order to find the best methods of attack. That is the first reason for this journal.

A second is that we refuse to keep quiet and be slaves to what the very structure we want to destroy is passing off as reality. We want to look with other eyes, hear with other ears, feel with our hearts, not through a technological mechanism that we can substitute for human behaviour at any given moment.

A third reason is right there in front of us in this climate of flattening and uniformity, pitiful acceptance and agony misconstrued as breathing and heartbeats. We refuse this semblance of life that is substantially death. That is why we want to go beyond it and affirm joy as a vision of life, rather than as a paltry entrenchment.

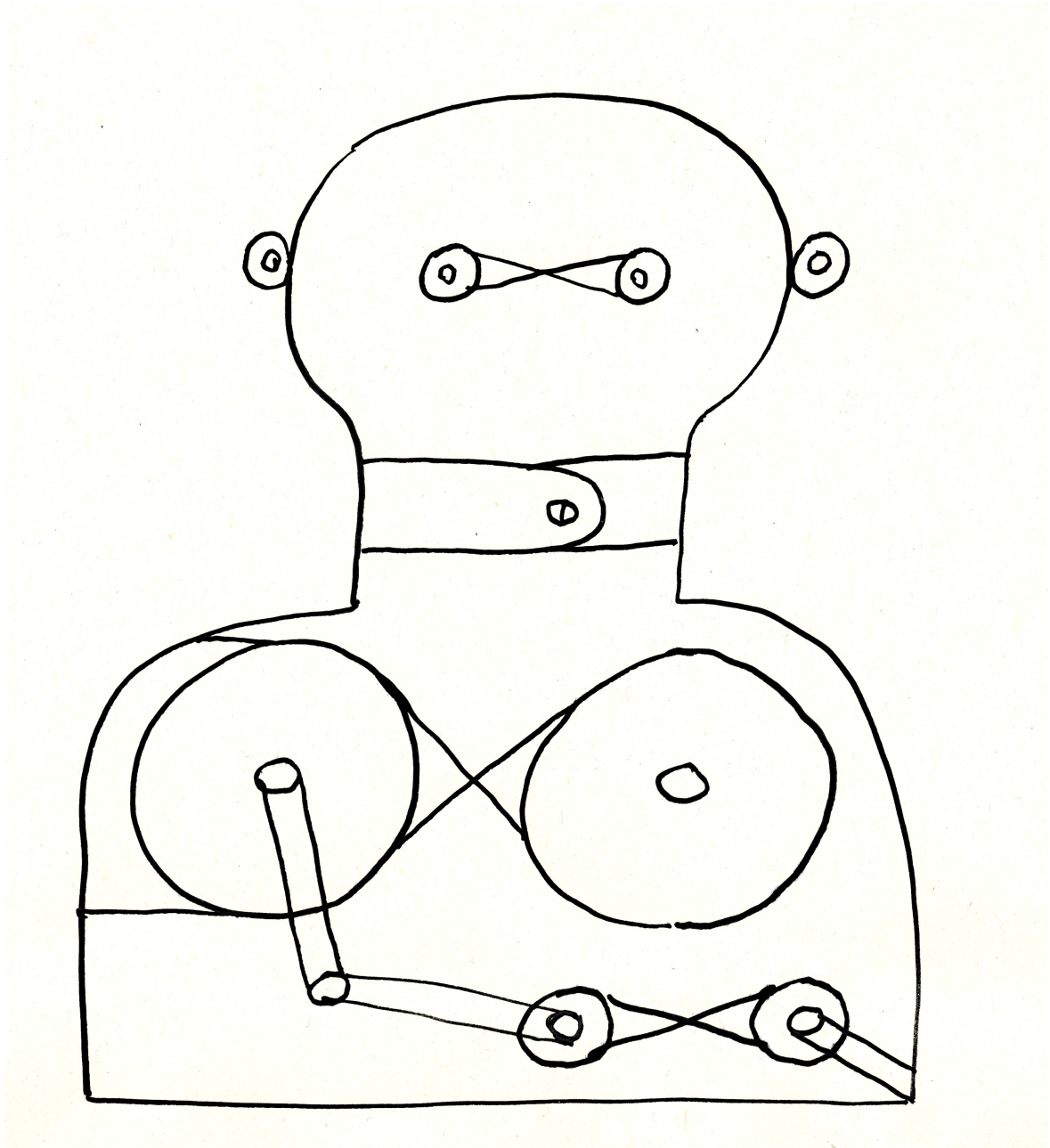
Let's abandon this miserable simplistic conformism, comrades. Let's go out into the open air, even just to the edge of the forest then, little by little, let's start to attack the places where the systematic slaughter of our life is taking place, the places of survival and mediocrity, of ignorance and shrinking to avoid the oncoming blows.

Let's take the initiative at long last, let's put the knife between our teeth and strike a blow.

These pages are not mere paper spattered with a few drops of ink, they are part of the enemy's flesh upon which we are imprinting the final cry of our will to destroy it.

May the clash go the whole way.

The editors



Technology

When reading the following pages it would be well to put everything that we already know about technology aside. Indeed, what knowledge or hypothesis passed off as certainty makes up the scientific aspect of technology? Not much.

If we take a look inside the drawer of established scientific research from which something concrete did emerge, we see a series of utilities. That is, things done for a purpose, even negative, as in the case of military techniques. This purpose is nearly always twofold: to replace something pre-existent, thus achieving a surplus of use and returns, and to open up new horizons of usability. Specialized workers euphemistically referred to as scientists, usually nitwitted and in the payroll of various patrons, do not have ideas, only capability, and these concepts need to be clarified.

Ideas allow us to understand what lies before us and how this could evolve, in other words they enable us to see in order to foresee. Capability enables us to use a device, read a program or even build one (silly binary sequences), put an object in the appropriate box then turn over and fall asleep in peace.

Ideas keep us in constant turmoil, they don't let us rest, they demand the best of us and when we give everything they push us still further, beyond the imaginable, beyond the down-to-earth submission that domesticates both scientists and know-all idiots, but not someone with an idea in their head and their heart. A skilled worker who has completed their research and been applauded by the illustrious public for their discovery, so to speak, feels accomplished. The knowledgeable idiot who has produced the ultimate annotation of a literary opus ends their days in the ivory tower of a university auditorium. Neither of these prototypes is capable of perceiving the powerful derealizing action that is striking both them and their cohorts through technology.

Why?

Because the world is made of things that need to be put in their place, things that lie limply in the hands and projects of these idiots or science workers, are manipulated, built and rebuilt every day so that everything proceeds as it should. Any hiccup must be stifled, any contradiction overcome, but none of this levelling and overtaking must go beyond pre-established roles, even if right now they seem like the impervious heights of operational intelligence. And in fact they are, but all within the ambit of quantitative doing, no quality glimmers on the horizon where the continuous repetition of the accumulation of facts marks the epitome of progress. This collective generalized flattening does not exclude the most productive minds on the planet, those normally considered to be the beacons of intelligence who attract the interest of some of the privileged seeking to increase their wealth.

Far away from this low-life of learned fools and bleating workers there still exists a world of personal commitment, action, attack on the supporting structures seeking to possibly go beyond and reach a quality that can transform life and, along with life, reality right there in front of us. Of course, this is obviously a small thing (a pinprick perhaps?), and so what? For us it is never a pinprick but something that transforms our whole existence as it rises to attack a wretched project that is taking everything we are, our very reality, away from us.

Because technology's project is to accomplish a totalizing task, the derealization of the world.

What do these words mean?

I shall try to explain them as best I can.

The whole of the techniques currently in operation makes up what we call the economy. This has been incorporated into technology. Yet technology is something different, radically different from the sum of the individual techniques. The latter are continually reproducing the world in which we live, technology makes it unreal, takes away its substance, deprives it of its reality. At this point a little patience is required from the reader to avoid giving up and throwing these poor pages away in disgust.

Let's not forget that technology's aim is to flatten and uniformize reality. So far this goal has only been achieved in small part, but the attempts of the various techniques to fight for the highest profit for individual producers cannot go on indefinitely. It is impossible to force everybody to use the same model of car, even if it is the one best suited for the current traffic conditions, or to wear the same suit. So the problem must be bypassed. This is derealization. Objects are freely produced and imposed on consumers through the market in all the ways that we know, but their meaning, their significance, has been weakened, that is, they have been deprived of their substance. This process is not yet wholly visible, it exists in certain sectors more than in others, but it is precisely by promoting this generalized cultural flattening that technology is achieving its goals. We buy cars that are clearly not suitable for the traffic in the

big cities and use them well below their potential because the remainder, their imposing construction, is simply a sign of our social level, the so-called status symbol on which so many words have been wasted. Fashion shows present designs that no one could ever wear, so we happily downgrade these cultural aspirations to our own level. A thousand signals (see cinema, television, literature) give us indications of all the erotic impulses that we could experience, then we content ourselves with more modest levels of fulfilment better suited to our own sexuality, which is usually not all that extraordinary. As we point out in another article, our time is horrendously sectorialized, giving us the illusion of living, breathing and enjoying life but we are actually asleep most of the time. Taken to the extreme, this is sounding the death knell for any other possible perspective.

As we can see, technology has succeeded in building an extremely advanced model of derealization in some areas, less so in others, but the project has a greater, all-encompassing, purpose, to derealize the human being.

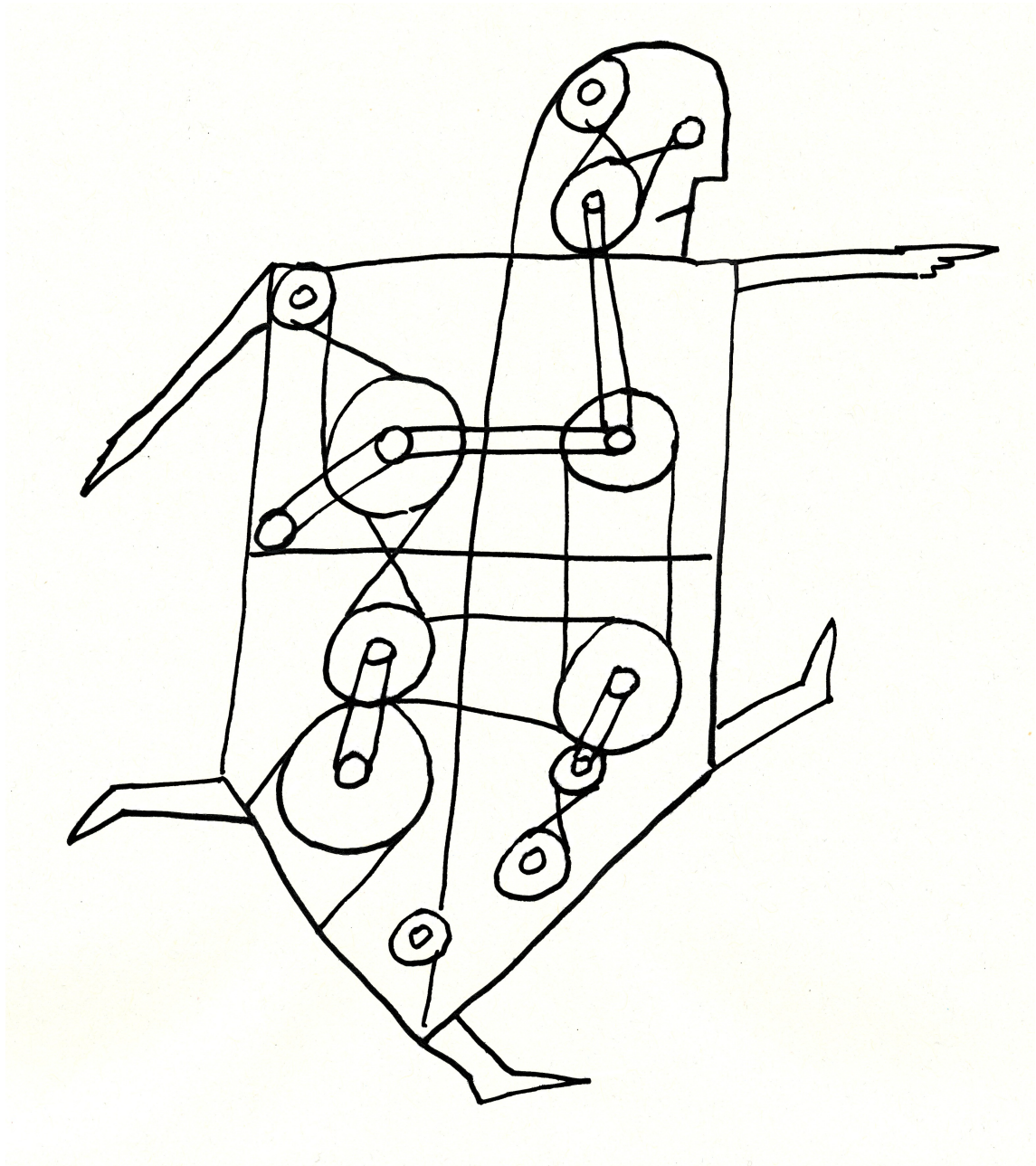
Cultural flattening is not the main aim of the technological undertaking, this is more an instrument than an aim. Beyond that, a horizon of uniformizing is unfolding in the absence of reality. In the face of this rampant fictitiousness, an effective response could be to reaffirm harsh reality. I am what I am capable of doing, so I try to extend this and become the homo faber of my destiny. I can change it, differentiate it from that of others, live a meaningful life within the very production set-up that is trying to suffocate me. Of course this is just chatter, or gibberish. By merely doing I cannot achieve anything beyond what is being built around me. Unrealized, I build non-realizations and become ever more inclined to take irreality for reality, so can adapt to my zombie life. I can accumulate all the knowledge I like by merely doing, but I will never be able to transform any of it into a tool of liberation or, without going too far, a means of attack. This is the mistake made by many who see knowledge as an aristocratic tool used by the powerful to maintain their privilege. There is a lot of truth in this but something is lacking. Knowledge secures dominance, but dominion idiotizes itself, leaving differentiated processes in circulation that could endanger it at any moment. A committee of learned idiots and skilled workers would never be able to control the world, whereas the technological process of derealization could. This is what we need to understand. We must seize the instruments to attack while we are still in time, that is, before we are completely derealized by technology, and these instruments are also cultural.

One of the ways that technology is derealizing us is through offering us incomplete patterns of reasoning that are meaningless in themselves, so quite unreal, but which we are already capable of taking as real. A series of these is being formed by extracting certain models of protest from the recent past, opportunely emptying them of content and rendering them unreal. For example, the struggle against technology by refusing to use the gadgets that influence our daily lives (mobile phones, computers, etc.), shutting oneself away in some hole in the country or in the mountains, using ridiculous linguistic obstructions to indicate a rejection of past behavioural patterns (for example the refusal of the masculine form to include the feminine, etc.), the vegetarian ideology, the vegan one, and so many other little traps opportunely put into effect by technology.

The transition from the symbol to the real thing and vice versa often happens rapidly for no apparent reason. We listen to mangled music reduced to symbols that we absorb passively. Every now and then we reemerge due to a surviving trace of culture and become aware of what is happening to our ears. But this step cannot be taken without mediation and support. Often alongside the symbol something comes into play, that distorts the substitutive meaning. The syncretic wealth becomes the intermediary between the symbol as going beyond and the unrealized presence of the thing beckoning us from under our daydream. So we wake up with something in our hands and become aware not only of our idiocy but of the forces that made us so profoundly idiotic. This thing finds us now lost in the forest of symbols but, sometimes, it is so strong as to show us a path amidst thousands and thousands of them, a path that can lead us out to the point of clashing with reality. But this reality isn't that hard thing full of meanings that can be used to satisfy desires and needs, it is still a hallucination. So we are at a crossroads. We can charge head down against all that resonates in ignorance and false immanence, and for this we need a designation, a solid foothold that we must find there in the path that we opened up in the forest with so much effort. Or we can turn the other way and go back to sleep. After all it might just have been a bad dream, a warped sense of life, when we have been dead for some time and stink like corpses without realizing it.

But the designation has struck us, in some way. Resist as we might, having sensed that behind the unreal hides another connotation unknown to us, that behind the turning of the path in the forest there is a breath of life that could wake up the sleeping "beauty" and recall many things that we have long forgotten or have never known. We sense that behind this designation lies the black void of action, the dream that awakens, accusing us of sloth and cowardice, of the urgent need to give our lives a push, look around, and above all fight the syncretism that connects the symbol with the thing symbolized, irreality with reality, the irrealizing mechanism that sang us the lullaby right to the point of a possible awakening.

And here we must put our life on the line.



Two languages

The journal we are proposing will be published in two languages, Italian and English.* Most of us live in Italy. The decision to publish these pages in English as well as Italian is not simply due to the fact that one of the comrades involved in this new editorial project lives in the UK, but because we want to reach as many comrades as possible. We feel that the questions we have decided to pause and look at concern everyone, wherever they are, and when dealing with them we want to try to overcome the linguistic, historical and cultural boundaries within which we usually think and discuss.

Despite being anarchists, as westerners our perception of the world and of reality (as far as our ever-diminishing capacity to interpret the latter permits) is without doubt linked to the way that we grew up, the education they gave us, the knowledge we have acquired, the system of values which, one way or another, influences the way we relate to each other and how we act. In other words, it is linked to European and western social conditioning. Most of the problems that we are taking up and trying to address, albeit in the prospect of destruction, arise from the reality of a democratic society. Our reactions and analyses inevitably reflect the soft but intimately violent and maliciously masked atmosphere typical of this kind of society. So it is natural to wonder whether these conditions are suppressing the gasps of conflict that flicker inside us every now and again like little flames, and whether we shouldn't be striving to look elsewhere? Not go elsewhere, but look elsewhere.

What does embracing an international dimension of the clash mean? Not just meeting comrades who live in other countries and understanding their language, but also posing the problem of translating the meaning of the words according to their specific context. Do we really know what "clash", or "to be anarchist" means? To struggle in places where there are situations of civil war, militarization (real, massive) of territories, where more than two people cannot meet in the streets, where the conditions of life and reflection are completely different from those that we are used to? Are we prepared to flush all our theories, personal antipathies, all the ideological attitudes that we drag along with us, down the toilet? In our part of the world, discussions on methods and targets for attack are hardly ever based on real struggles, so why not try to see what is happening far from our backyard?

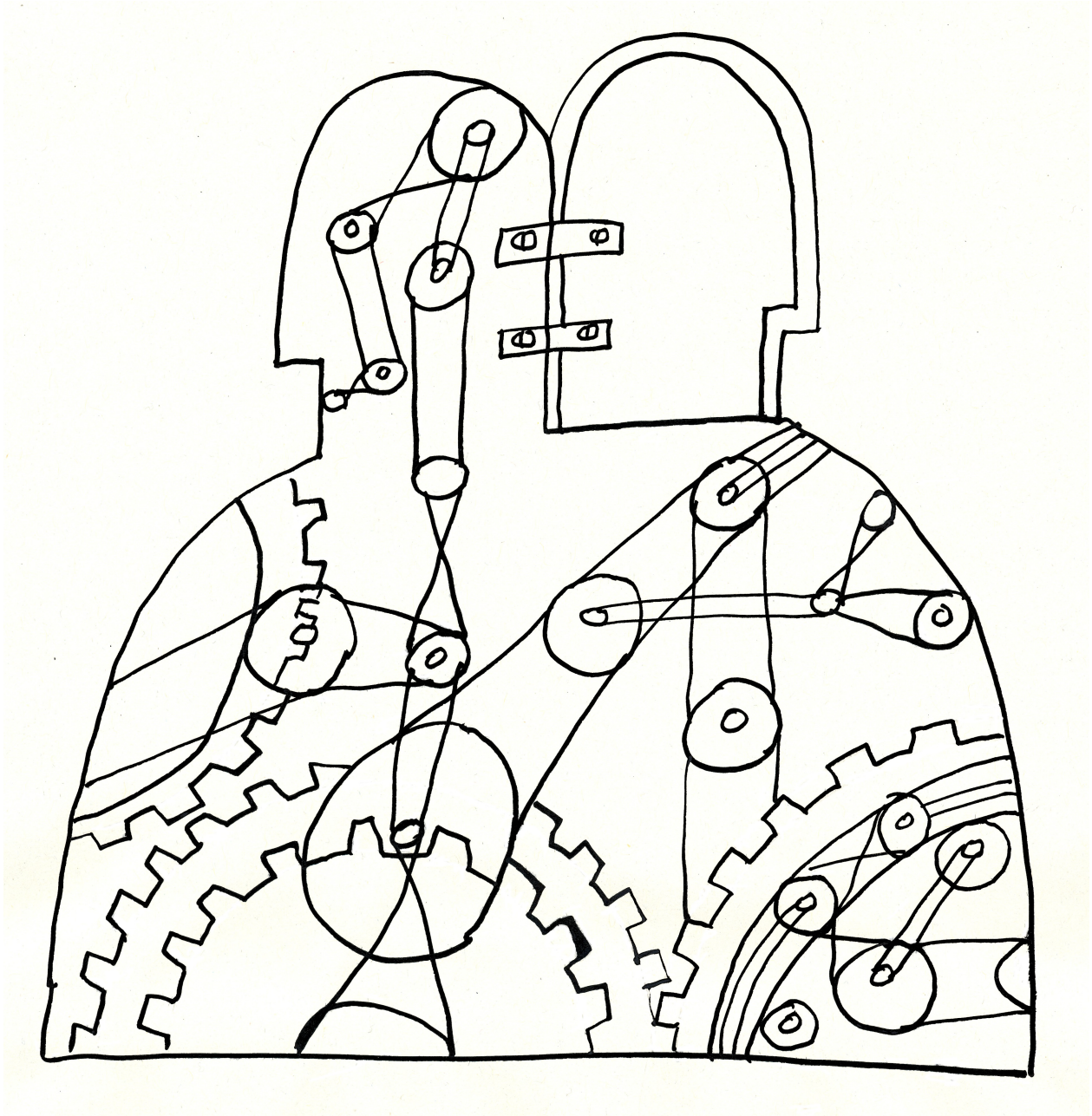
We are facing an evolution of technology which aims to encompass everything and everybody, including dominion and capital's need to absorb resources and energy from every part of the planet. From both the western societies now gleaned to the marrow, and those where wild nature and different ways of living still exist.

The infantilization of the individual is going ahead. Practically no one in the West needs to hunt for food and shelter, these elements of survival are more or less abundantly provided for. They are there, not in equal measure for everyone, but they exist. What about the rest? What is it? A perpetual search for new resources and the production of more food, more shelters, new demands, new needs, through sophisticated mechanisms. Needs change and increase according to the level of complexity and technological-industrial development of the social organization in which they exist. But as long as houses, shelter, free time, wealth and poverty exist, in some places there are various forms of domestication and authoritarianism, in others people are dying and people are fighting. The conditions of poverty, repression, life itself, vary greatly from one place to the other, but the roots are the same. Different consequences, the same principle.

We need to go out from our homes where we read about deaths, outbreaks of resistance and revolt, no matter how comfortable we are. *Home* is not just the physical place where we eat and sleep, it is the existential prison inside which we have relegated our ideas and passions.

The decision to offer reflections on the issues taken up in this journal to a wider audience than a narrow circle of comrades, by translating it for a start, is precisely linked to the will to destroy the *home* and make an effort to break through boundaries.

Mariangela Vella
April 2017



Technological control

Our general level of comprehension when it comes to one of the main aims of technology, control, is unbelievable.

Power wants to know the responses of the dominated at every level, from food preferences to average levels of education, from political choices in general to specific orientations (right and left now being obsolete terms), from tastes in clothing to distribution of incomes, as well as many other things promptly registered and just as promptly discarded by statistical research.

Great efforts and many investments have gone into understanding such orientations in order to keep them under control and prevent them from producing any excessively detailed or unpredictable demands. Even when previously unobserved behaviour suddenly erupts (up to a point), as in the case of May '68 for example, when power rushed to fix things, the phenomenon was examined in depth and it soon became clear that such trends were not entirely out of turn. It was enough to adjust the control on some of the prevailing models slightly and everything returned to so-called normality.

The massive presence of technology in every aspect of contemporary social life cannot be fully understood unless we realize that the old dualism between humanism and technology has disappeared. The distinction began to wane and finally disappeared completely due to a lowering in the general educational level. Technical studies, even at university level, are basically producing specialized workers even if they have degrees, whereas the humanist sector, which could have made a difference from a cultural point of view by pushing technicians to rise above their closed mechanical technical environment, has sunk to the point of churning out barely literate ones, despite their degrees. There are still a few exceptions, a few hundred people that power cultivates and uses to improve its research systems and projects of control.

Technology's entry into the cultural field has favoured the general flattening as not much basic education is required for the purposes of research, only specific technical skills. Under such conditions it has become extremely difficult, almost impossible, to understand the intrusion of technology into the whole life of contemporary man, and so be able to prepare some kind of resistance to it. Our dumbed brain tells us that by simply turning off the 'must have' cell phone or keeping away from CCTV circuits we can oppose a process that not only has quite a different potential, also has quite different intentions.

The construction of our taste or the codification of our extremely individual (so to speak) eroticism, involves far more sophisticated technological systems of control than the little light blinking in the supermarket. Technology is imprinting its shock system based on control so as to send an oppressive all-encompassing message, adding to our growing incapacity to see the limits and potential of this insidious project. Control is a metaphysical principle that lies at the foundation of cohabitation, the response to which, necessary in order to feel alive and not like some pigeonholed object on a conveyor belt, is being abandoned forever through the acceptance of a condition that is not in itself harshly repressive. The technological aspect of control is therefore aiming to build a soft condition, reducing to a minimum any reactions that could lead to pockets of non-control, intolerable for a mechanism that has already entered the ambit of daily life. What we now have before us is not someone in front of a panel pressing a left or right button, but a self-produced project that encompasses every conceivable dispute among the individual capitals, which are still always competing fiercely against each other.

In the face of this all-embracing presence with its self-directed tendency to take over the totality of societal living, it would be simplistic and inappropriate to see control as the main, almost exclusive, aim of technology. Basically, the unspoken aim of technology in its complexity, which includes all the possible subsets made up of the individual capitals competing against each other, is to reduce control to an ever more acceptable level and increment sharing through a series of processes of uniformization constructed by the technological potential itself.

The level of control could very well be lowered once taste and choice in fashion have been uniformed, and everyone aspires to the same model of man and woman. Not that shown in catalogues or fashion shows but below, well below that, impoverished and modulated in a way that is accessible and acceptable, or, better still, if any divergent responses are fragmentized towards minimal objectives with no real subversive content, all automatically set in motion by technology as a whole. If the struggle against power is fictitiously addressed towards linguistic symbols, gastronomic choices, billboards, graffiti, gender and everything else, and the subversive attack on real power turns into a circus where

drives are modelled to a minimum on the uniforming trends that already abound everywhere, technology will be able to reduce its projects of total control, now facilitated by the more advanced scientific discoveries. This means that not everything that could be done is being done yet, but generally speaking technology is producing what it needs to make its presence all-embracing in the lives of each one of us, without any unnecessary waste or great leaps forward.

These reflections open up a different perspective of attack to that of the past. The single physical structures underpinning the technological programme as a whole, not locally but globally, are still the cornerstones of the programme in question. Along with them, of course, are the people who, in the individual sectors and with little or no contact between them, help to put these projects into effect, even though they only know them in minimal part and always work for the profit of one single capital. So, two targets have clearly emerged, although they are not necessarily the most important ones for revolutionaries desiring to reduce the immediate consequences of the technology in act.

And then? That is what we need to ask ourselves today. The technological process does not stop at underground and overhead networks of wires and connections, or the 'cathedrals in the desert' that we identified a long time ago and talked about at length, it goes much farther.

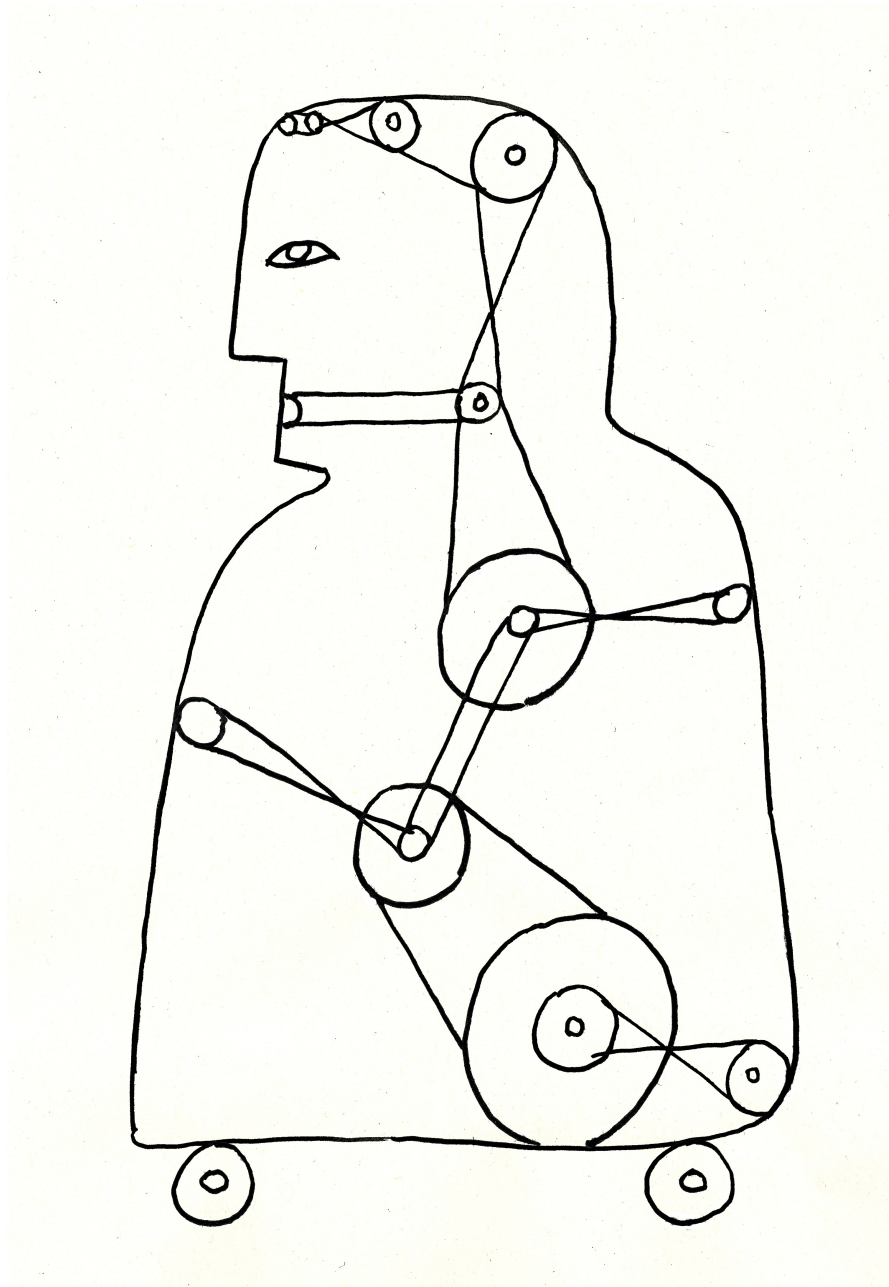
For example, it is easy to understand that the universal banking network is one of the essential elements for the technological functioning of the world, something so obvious that it is hardly worth mentioning. We are all immersed in the world banking system, without it none of us would be able to survive other than by having recourse to practices that not many could, due to lack of means and the effects of the technological system itself. On the same subject, the circulation of money permits the distribution of goods, therefore the possibility of consumerism and, as things stand at this precise historical moment, our lives. It is certainly no surprise to discover that our life is a life of shit because we delivered it into the claws of the technological prostheses that have been produced from the conflict between capitals on a planetary battleground a long time ago. This is just one aspect, definitely not secondary, nor is it the most important, because it is directly connected through the producer-consumer relationship. And banks have always been one of the privileged targets of revolutionaries who went beyond selling words on street corners.

Let's look at another aspect of the technological structure, the construction of individual eroticism. We are all aware of our sexual drives, consider them to be about as personal as it gets and give them little thought, or if we do talk about them we do so with a certain awkwardness, and so on. We know all that. But not many people think about the fact that the erotic model that we all more or less accept, with the necessary exceptions, is a construction of technology. The circulation of ideas, and by extension the average cultural level, as well as the very possibility of entering into contact with other human beings and possibly having erotic relations with them, is now managed by technology. In fact this is one of the most formidable functions that the latter is taking on, as other activities closely linked to consumerism lead off from it. And at this point a serious problem arises. How can we attack such an intimate repressive process that has penetrated all of us? Here again, there are many ways to attack. Basically, why should a fashion show, a lingerie boutique, a producer of porn films, a restaurant run by some culinary pontiff, be considered any less responsible than a high voltage pylon? Either we start asking these questions and start thinking in global terms regarding the problem of technology, or we will never get anywhere against an enemy that is overpowering us.

Let's continue, and the discourse could go far. School at the higher level, to touch a painful subject, is one of the terminals where the technological process in act is producing the raw material it requires for the phase that we can no longer even define post-industrial. Whichever way you look at it, the latter needs a helping hand that is literate but not too well-educated. A thousand stratagems have been devised to achieve this splendid result, even the detournement of the so-called revolutionary movements of the past which, once their initial idiotic requests were satisfied, did not know what to else to ask for and were sucked into the vortex of collaboration. The educational decline of school provides a global average for every other social sector. Now the world of work only requires foolish servants divided up into small isolated groups where petty chiefs act out the union dramas of the past, now completely devoid of any sense. Here again, as in the past, attacking should not be a serious problem. There are no privileged targets, any school-related target is a good one because the latter is bad, submissive, useless, ridiculously stupid. Perhaps at the very basic level it still has the irreplaceable role of providing literacy, but then at the higher levels there can be no doubt that one could very well make scorched-earth of it.

Technology merits a thorough examination, which we cannot carry out properly here, for reasons of space. We prefer to put this off to future issues of our journal. If what we are saying makes any sense, we are also waiting to find out what the comrades reading us think.

Ernesto Pris
March 2017



Sleeping

It is tiring to be self-aware and full of things to do every moment of our waking day. One needs to rest and, apart from cases determined by working conditions, we usually do this at night. Sleep recharges our energy. However, it is not the physiological aspect that we want to talk about here, but rather the deep existential sense of what sleep means.

We turn off our self-awareness at some point, either voluntarily or with the aid of chemistry, and surrender to the *vis dormitiva*, as they used to say. Is that all? No. No, because one can also sleep open-eyed, struggling, working, enduring the exploitation organized by the various repressors, and even believe that one is dreaming or thinking, in other words that one is using one's imagination and cognitive skills. How can this happen? Surely it is easy to clearly distinguish waking from sleeping. Yet it's not like that.

We spend a great deal of our waking hours—so with eyes wide open—asleep, actually sleeping with our eyes open. The preoccupations of technology, which are no longer isolated cases but belong to the technological process as a whole, are also turning to this dangerous state of being asleep when we think we are awake. The process is too discordant, too spontaneous, it is not sufficiently controlled and uniformed and is incapable of giving us one common direction in behaviour. Let's take a closer look at these questions.

During the time that we spend at work solving problems or carrying out mundane tasks, a part of our mind separates, reduces itself and dedicates itself to the task in hand, i.e. to problems to be solved, obeying orders, etc. Now and then the other part surprises us and demands to be heard, but this is usually just seen as an expression of irrational outbursts, scraps of dreams, desires, hopes, nightmares, regrets, resentment and all the rest, and is refuted. The control mechanism overseeing such a process is developed from adolescence onwards through the professionalization of study or work according to one's commitments, opportunities, responsibilities and everything else. Can we consider the waking state to be the condition of the part of the mind that is involved in work or study? Definitely not. Can we consider the spontaneous reappearance of the part that had been forced to rest to be true wakefulness? Of course not, not even that. It follows that for at least eight hours, if not more, we are asleep, that is, for a third of the day. If we add to that an average of eight hours' actual sleep, only eight hours remain in which we are truly awake. But are we?

So, the discourse concerns those remaining eight hours, and this is what technological attention is focusing on. The use of instruments widely available to educationally and economically advanced (so to speak) populations, is giving rise to many doubts. The use of mobile phones is widespread but the transmission of real communication with any meaning that could be disruptive as far as global equilibrium is concerned, is very limited. The same applies to television and the computer. Such a low level should reassure dominion, and in fact it does, apart from sporadic cases of insurrectional processes that suddenly erupt for a variety of reasons, which we will not go into here. But dominion is not technology, these are two different things, or rather they are the same thing in the sense that dominion is within technology and not vice versa.

As we said, the low level of content transmitted through the above instruments over a good part of the eight remaining waking hours reassures dominion. But, obtuse by definition, it wants everyone to remain calm during their so-called productive activity, spend the other blessed eight hours in the most innocuous and anodyne way possible, then crawl into bed at the usual time.

Technology wants more. It wants everybody to mess around the same way so that each person wants the same thing, opportunely varied of course, but all perfectly predictable. In that way there is no room whatsoever for any significant residual of subversive thought (this word should be underlined) capable of negating reality and dreaming of another in its place, a different one, so different as to scare like a terrifying nightmare.

In other words, technology also wants the other eight hours, the waking ones, to be spent asleep.

Let's try not to seem like old reactionaries dreaming of days gone by that will never return. Let's take a look at what facilitates sleep, acceptably for dominion but not for technology, because they are not homogeneous enough: daily newspapers, television, radio, mobile phones, computers, movies, mass music, etc. Of course, each of these media can have cracks in them, and that is exactly what technology is afraid of, but all together their task is precisely that of lulling to sleep.

Let's take the reading of the morning newspapers, moreover now extremely reduced and usually carried out by a strata of users less dangerous for the rulers of our glorious destiny. Nothing could be more superficial and stupid. Each

article is structured according to directives from above, not only concerning the content but also the form. Mediocre and great imbeciles are called upon to fill column upon column of shoddy accommodating judgments on everything and everyone. I don't think that television needs to be explained to the reader concerning its chronic mediocrity, which is getting even worse with every year that passes, if that's possible. The other two electronic devices, mobile phones and computers, are apparently left to the user's intelligence, but this is precisely what they are influencing, modelling it according to the use that it makes of them. There is an exchange in course that appears to be bipolar, in essence it is unequal. The user cannot compete with the machine if they do not possess sufficient cultural knowledge, which was taken away from them a long time ago through a thousand academic transitions and the intellectual context as a whole. The discussions that take place in cellular exchanges are flattened at every level, language is reduced to well below the hundred and eighty words available to American college students, and the average duration of each communication is reduced to a minimum due to the great increase in the number of contacts. The cultural use of the computer cannot go beyond what the user already knows, data can be augmented, controlled and perfected through the instrument, but never created anew.

And finally music, because we can no longer imagine anything else. This instrument of communication enters our heads, more or less continuously. The use that is made of it everywhere is absolutely passive. The recipient absorbs musical waves that attenuate their already derisible capacity for judgement, and favours the waking sleep so dear to the dreams of total domination. Except from the small minorities closed up in conservatories (the word says a lot) who have no influence on judgment as a whole, being dedicated to cultivating music from a cultural point of view both in instrumental and historical terms, ignorance reigns supreme, apart from the classic recorder put in the mouths of many children in the lowest grade schools. The history of music is also kept far away from teaching. The use of music to maintain constituted order is fundamental, naturally the music that favours and consolidates the abandoning of any kind of commitment. A gigantic lullaby for stupid children.

Although imperfect, the work done so far is colossal. We are at an optimal level of collective stupidity, cultural flattening is considerable, the ability to use the brain has on average been greatly reduced. Yet this is not enough. Dominion, in the broadest sense of the term, is not sleeping peacefully. It fears the continual contamination of the conditions of life affected by the influence, although indirect, of models even more degraded than by the mere aspect of survival, as well as the continental movements of peoples. The latter are not only giving rise to shock and fear but also to transformations in production that are not always controllable due to the prospect of colossal awakenings (as in China, for example) that are threatening to spill over into the more advanced world as consumers and not just producers. For all these reasons and more. But it is technology that is trying to accomplish what dominion in the strict sense, as an economic-political coefficient, can only dream of.

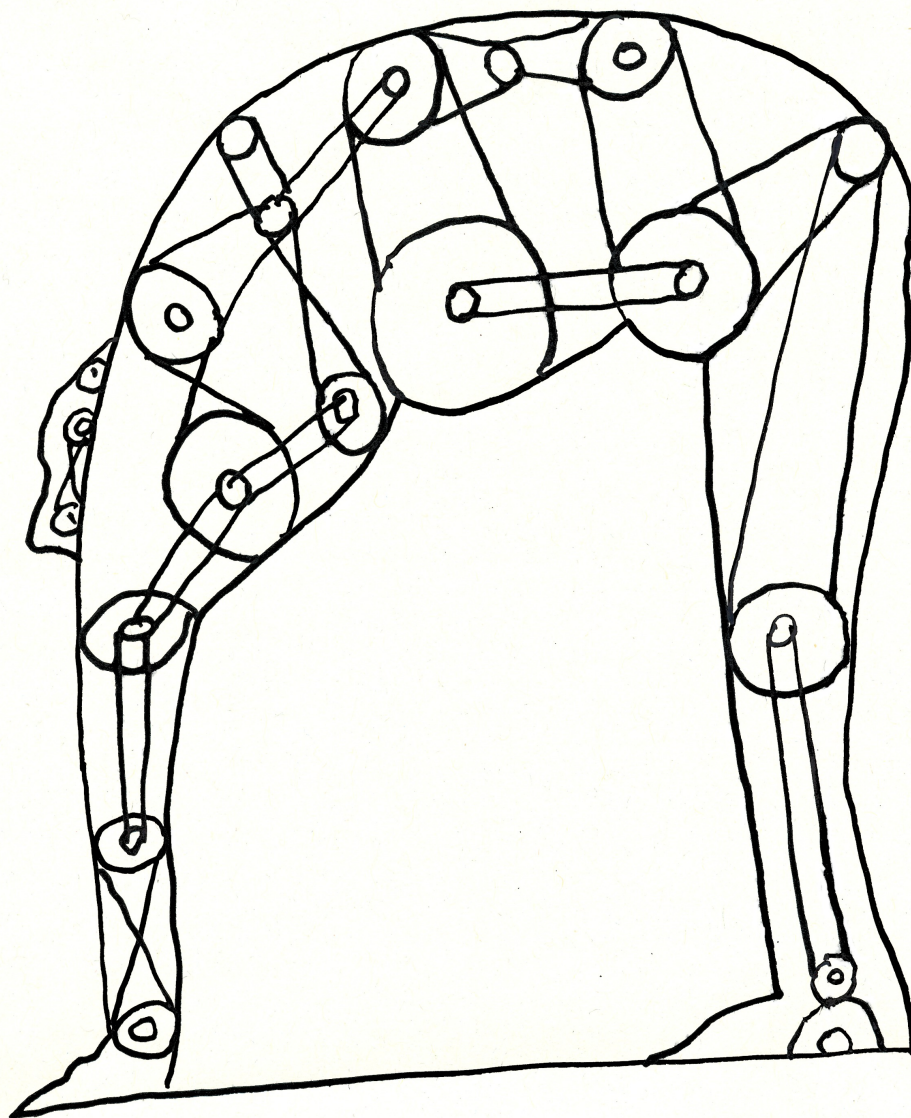
Technology's new horizons will not only be those of perfecting the three categories that we see in front of us, television, cell phone and computer. Others will undoubtedly be developed to better coordinate the overall cultural flattening, the uniforming of how we see things, the integration of collective thought now reduced to a minimum. And then the game will be over and we will only be able to wallow in our mire.

Unless first...

...first something happens. Whyever would we be writing these notes if the belief in this something that could happen did not grip our heart? Yet we cannot avoid doubt, or rather anguish. Slowly slowly it creeps into our dreams, threatening to wreck them. We are convinced that words are not enough, that is obvious even to us, assiduous frequenters of the same (but not only, to tell the truth). It is not a question of anguish concerning the ineffectiveness of words, they are what they are, they go where they can go if they are well aimed, but no further. The real doubt concerns ourselves, the privileged interlocutors to whom we are addressing this message, no longer simply in a bottle, rather in a stick of dynamite perhaps. The bang might awaken sleeping consciences. But wouldn't the paper that lovingly conserves the words also be destroyed? Of course it would. May words die once and for all and long live action!

For the time being it seems that everything is wrapped in the deadly silence of immaculate reflection, but who knows? From the cocoon of a larva a lion's paw might suddenly spring forth.

Don't bark, bite
March 2017



Drugs

I like drugs. How couldn't I? Why should I give up something that makes me feel good, that can alter my state of consciousness at various levels as I abandon myself to a sense of psychological and physical well-being. After all, it is easy to feel weak and helpless once we realize that we are not living in the best of worlds but in an environment where we are continually absorbing the conditioning of our tastes, feelings, opinions and impulses and are even called upon to contribute to their constant redefining in one way or another.

In a world of massacres and slaughterers where we struggle against all roles including those that we continually adopt ourselves, once we realize that attempting to attack will not lead to victory, it is not strange that between one militant activity and another, one discussion and another, we seek refuge in an altered state of consciousness in which to create an illusion of struggle and attack. In my altered state I feel fulfilled, the need to dig deep, to go all the way, has disappeared. Finding such solace helps me to put up with this world, live my life. And if, while I am enjoying this altered state of consciousness I find myself in the company of others with whom I normally exchange rivers of words on the use of fire and against all the rules, the result is even better and more acceptable.

Like everywhere else, drugs are spreading rapidly in so-called social relations among comrades. Although we are well aware of the effects of certain substances on interactions between individuals (lowered inhibitions, joviality, withdrawal from reality etc.), turning them into passive subjects like so many others, they are still widely used.

But it would be a mistake to condemn drugs as the problem and not just one of the problems. Society is already stigmatizing the latter as one of its main afflictions, the very same society that is based on the production and sponsorship of addictions of every kind.

If anything, it might be interesting to try asking oneself why one needs drugs. But not only. Why do we need prostheses in order to live? In fact, drugs are just one of many things that we choose from time to time as partners in life.

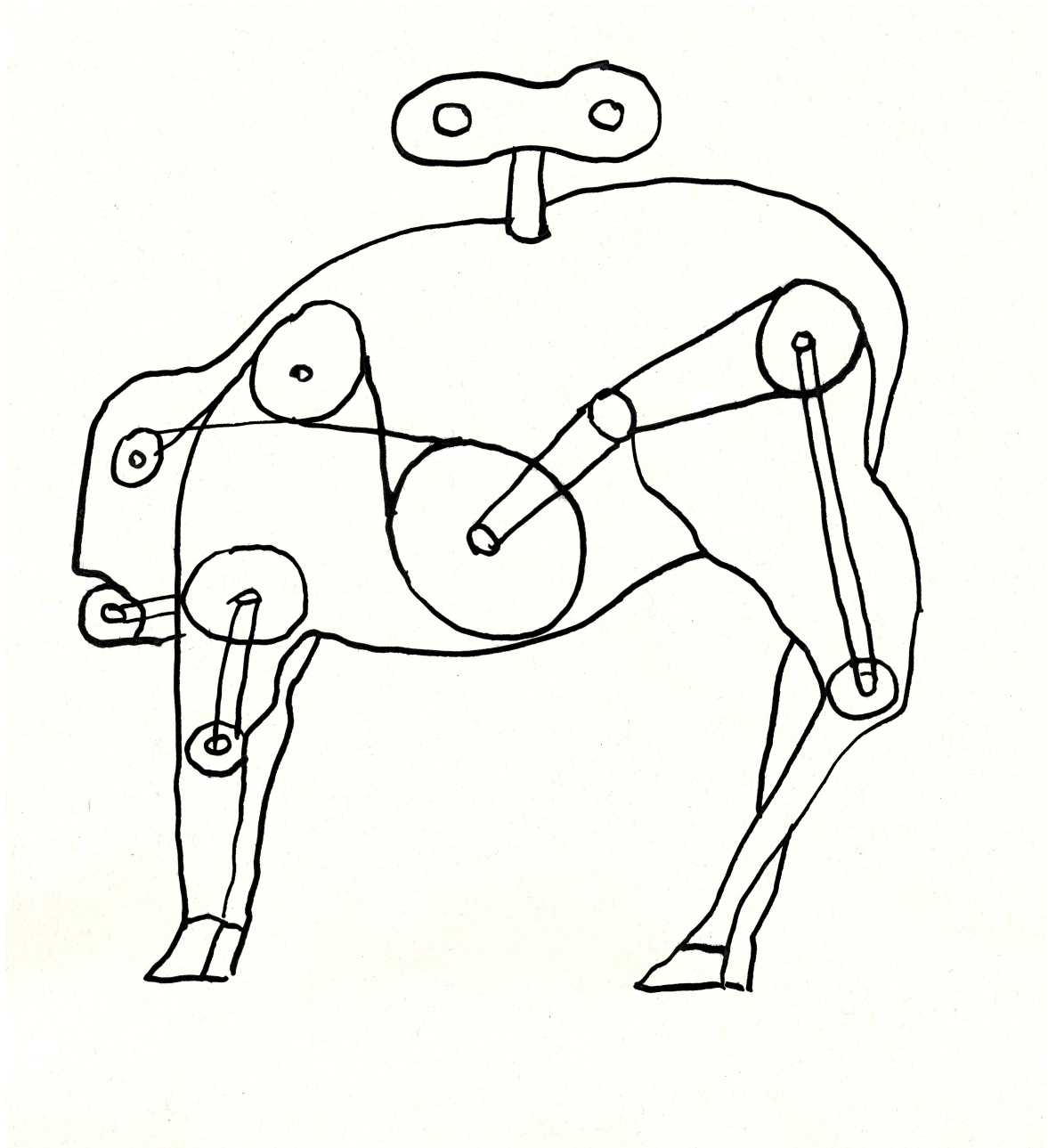
Anything that can alter our mood, our self-perception and that of our surroundings, illuding us by covering up the deep insecurities that we are unable to face and end up immobilizing us, can be defined a prosthesis.

Alone or with friends, we listen to deafening music that fills our souls with slogans and strong words to inciting rhythms. We spice up these moments with alcohol and drugs, posters on the walls, collecting funds to support comrades who have ended up in prison, and surrender to the excitement of the sound of bass and drums in confused mental states full of violent images of acts of vengeance, with overwhelming sensations. We spend whole nights like that, nights when we often thought of going out and striking, going out to attack. Because what we really want is to destroy this world, see it reduced to rubble as we often prattle on. But, what with one thing and another—eating, exercise, games, videos, comics, music or work—if our mind is so taken up during the day that there is no space left for reflection, discussion, research, procurement of means, acquisition of knowledge, study, checks, what will we be able to do at night? So, feeling the need to escape from the stifling atmosphere of everyday life we end up slipping back into other, no less stifling, sensory alterations. We get stuck, unable to go beyond the boundary between what we want and what we simply imagine we want.

Like the days, the nights pass by indoors, inside more or less messy places where time is marked to a background of discordant notes, following the latest look, pricking designs into the skin, playing with gadgets, shouting ferocious words, rushing off to the latest emergency, spitting judgment on this one, on that one, all bolstered by the thousand refuges where the mutilated ego finds sustenance to compensate for its deficiencies.

Repeating a song that exhorts us to rebel will not tell us how to act. Tattooing a gun over one's heart will not confront us with an enemy in flesh and blood to wound or kill, nor will it show us how to hold and use that weapon. Filling one's mouth with calls for revolutionary solidarity will not get the comrades out of jail or automatically carry their project forward.

Anarchism cannot be seen as a mission, a lifestyle or a subculture, but a tension that triggers revolt within oneself, a constant transformation which, exploding, seeks to sweep away everything. Around and within us. By surrounding ourselves with prostheses, alterations, crutches, we weigh ourselves down. We give ourselves more chains.



Litanies

All religions have lists of words, often barely comprehensible, that are repeated ad nauseam by the faithful in order to beseech deliverance from their god. These lists are drawn up and perfected by professionals who study the best way to blunt the brains of their flock.

The aims of such repetitions vary and of course have nothing to do with the god to whom they are addressed, who, not existing in any known shape or form, doesn't give a damn about so much wasted breath. The first aim is to let the devotees' minds loosen their perception of their surroundings, giving them the benefit of a kind of cheap ecstasy that relaxes the nerves and helps them to endure oppression, in whatever form. The second is to stimulate a collective feeling when more than one person is present, as these litanies are hardly ever recited by one devotee alone, though this should not be excluded in absolute. The third aim is to establish contact with the divine but given that, as previously mentioned, this doesn't exist, the contact is reduced to the act of repeating the same words obsessively over and over.

All this, along with other aims that I cannot recall right now, but which could be gone into by the benevolent reader, is to let the sound of the words prevail over their actual meaning. After all, it is the intonation of the litany that one hears, not the concept relayed, which obviously only exists as an intensification of the absurd. Like any other music that is intended to lull people to sleep, it must be repetitive, monotonous, predictable and comforting to allow thoughts and perceptions of things to fly low until they fade away and finally disappear. Strange as it might seem, the unification and repetitive modulation of the litany produces dumbing down effects far more easily than one might imagine. The practitioners of any religion, i.e. the officers of the god being prayed to, know this very well and take advantage of it one way or other, to prepare the attention (so to speak) of the believers for the discourse that they want to channel their way. Whether preaching or a sermon, a summons to faith or fierce threats, it makes no difference, the listener's ears must be captured and the brain dazed before the new words appear, often violently in contrast to the previous chanting.

But why are you talking about litanies in an anarchist journal, one might ask.

I'll explain right away.

Anarchist comrades do not recite litanies together, at least not yet, but some of them draw up lists, which are devoutly sought, read, solicited, identified, discussed; they are applauded and used as tools to promote the anarchists' self-satisfaction. So, not litanies but lists.

But lists of what?

Lists of attacks that have already been carried out or could be carried out in the future. And this is just the best case scenario.

Even the writer of these lines, presumptuous as a scowling Cerberus with three heads, committed this sin from the mid-seventies onwards by drawing up the *Proletarian Chronicle*, a list of all the attacks on manifestations of power in the bimonthly journal *Anarchismo*. Along with the two comrades with whom I began the undertaking (note to the reader and also for my wounded heart: in actual fact my comrades were not two but only one, Tito Pulsinelli, as the other, Vito Messana, was a man of the secret services under the name of agent "Meta", as we discovered forty years later), we thought that this list could be helpful to spread both the action and the model employed in the operation, etc. This might have made sense at a time when there were so many comrades disposed to act, so many things being done, such great confusion and lack of clarity. Which is not an excuse, I just want to say that I wouldn't do the same today.

Explaining why is not easy but that is what I am trying to do.

At the present time, a list of attacks being carried out can only apparently be an impulse to act. Yes, it can fill the vacuum left by our demolished and afflicted conscience. Well, someone might say (actually, many, as I can see when I am moving around), at the end of the earth, it doesn't matter where, someone is acting against power by attacking it in its interests, its structures, its technological components and everything else. My turn will come, of course it will, the little comrade says, holed up in their eternal doubts as perpetual preparer of the next action in the near future, always still in the making. For the moment it is enough for me to know what is being done, everywhere, even at the end of the earth, it doesn't matter. I don't care about differences of background, about the fact that the conditions are radically different from one place to another, it's enough for us to go forward heads down. It's enough to simply read this long list, it cheers me up and makes me feel proud to be an anarchist.

The same kind of bitter reflection could be made concerning another kind of list, one specifying all the actions of attack possible: burning a police station, sawing down a high voltage pylon, pulling a policeman's beard and so on.

Why did I write "in the best of cases"? Because sometimes among the actions of attack these lists also include sad manifestations of dissent called *presidi* [sit-ins], a horrid word of military origin that anarchists, along with many of those who borrow other people's words, use without noticing. Let's say, a full-blown *presidio* with a giant sheet carrying the words "let's destroy prisons." I have discussed the meaning of such initiatives elsewhere, here I just want to repeat that prison is a total institution, which in order to exist requires structural and economic connections spread throughout the territory. Are we sure that we know these connections, do we know who the contracted suppliers are, which power plants provide the energy, where the water tanks are located and everything else? Or are we only able to write "let's destroy prisons", which would be the same as saying "let's destroy society", since society as it is today cannot exist without prisons? Do we really think that we can suggest the slogan "let's destroy society" to the poor unfortunates who find themselves behind bars, as that is what we are saying to them? Under such conditions wouldn't it be better just to stay at home and read our manuals for becoming the perfect anarchist? Something similar, if not the same, could be said about other events.

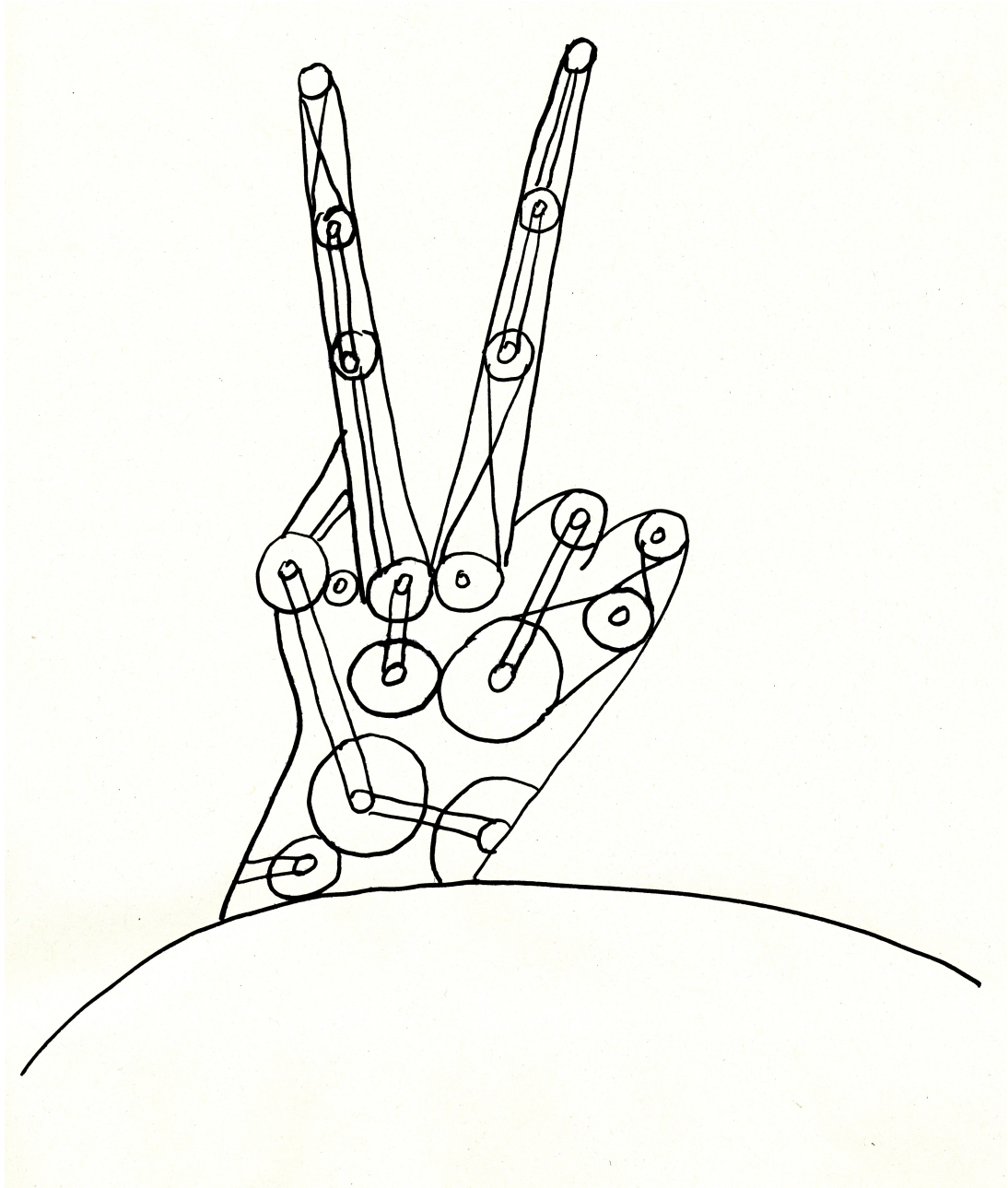
Perhaps it would have been better to have drawn up another kind of list, one containing the tools required for a planned action, in plenty of detail so as to avoid unpleasant surprises or sudden blocks because the lighter to light the fuse is missing? Including the maps required in order to reach the objective, the distance from the nearest points of repression, timing, possible escape routes, the number of participants required, a thorough discussion on the significance of the action, a decision about who should take the lead and give the appropriate orders in the event of things not going as planned (yes, I'm talking about "command" and "orders" and I confirm that I am an anarchist and I repeat that I hate windbags), and everything else.

This would be a good list to draw up and one that I would read with interest, but I'd never publish one like this in any of our papers, journals and so on, because it only concerns the comrades who have decided—after finding and choosing themselves on the basis of reciprocal affinities—to carry out a precise action of attack.

If we want to dirty our pages with technical topics, well, let's do it by going into detail about some action which, due to its complexity, we consider deserves to be gone into in depth, and publish the experience of comrades who have lived (attention to this word) such an action, not just heard about it by reading lists. For example, in Italy, between the end of 1977 and 1989 1200 high voltage pylons were cut down. A few of these actions ended up in these blessed lists. But do you really think that was what triggered the proliferation of such actions, which I not only agree with but believe are good for one's health, being a question of night walks in the countryside? At the time the above-mentioned journal published an article in which one method (among the many) was examined, explaining how you can cut down a pylon without making any noise and without any specialist technical equipment, cheerfully sawing away. I was tried and sentenced for that article, but that's not the point. I believe, given some of the reports in the local newspapers at the time, that this effort of the pen had not been in vain. But, of course, it wasn't a sudden inspiration resulting from a list.

Let's leave litanies to the priests of every kind.

AMB
April 2017



The long shadows over the wall

The “different” has always put fear in the dreams of the self-righteous, colouring their innermost drama with the most excruciating nonsense. He prowls around at night, black of skin or amber-coloured, with almond eyes or flat nose, it doesn’t matter, it’s always him, bearer of contrast and unrest. Now he is about to strip us of our happiness, albeit modest and hard won. He doesn’t have it, and can’t understand it. At best, in his desperation he can content himself with a few crumbs from our dinner table and, all things considered, should be thankful for such magnanimity.

Although we are always complaining, we are actually proud of our state of affairs, rolling around in our troughs with the fervour of pigs, dreaming of how to get more of what we already have. We are so intent on defending our wretched lives that we don’t even see that we are getting paler and more scared. Not only those on the brink of poverty are afraid of plunging like stones into the abyss of total destitution, the so-called rich are also scared, but at a different level. The wealthy are asking themselves how they can defend their well-being, and in this warped thinking there is no room to really do anything for the “different”. When they feel indignant about so many deaths at sea in desperate attempts to land on the coasts marked by well-being (if you could call it that), they placate their souls disturbed by the deaths of so many children by funding in part—in small part, given that government spending usually benefits most those who pay least tax proportionately—the opening of concentration camps, free clinics run by the army, dormitories no one wants to go to because you need papers, refectories that serve meals to poor unfortunates, run by pale ghosts full of hopes and shattered dreams.

These contradictions are rampant in Europe and survive through recourse to a thousand legal expedients: expulsions, real and open-air prisons, State and religious handouts, underpaid odd jobs, mafia regimentation, ferocious gang-masters and everything else. Everything necessary to keep the fear of the “different” at arm’s length.

For the moment we are referring to self-righteous compassionate people who believe in the basic humanity of those before them, staring at them eyes wide with fear and uncertainty. And being good people they set to work (in good faith for the time being), because those eyes are still watching the world from above and not from below, i.e. from the roots of the grass that often serves them as a bed. And the others? The so-called realists who see things through their reactionary dogmas, fanatics of aberrant idiotic theories dating back to the old-style positivism where everything was measured, from the tip of the nose to the shape of the feet, telling us how to educate our feelings and keep at a distance those who stank so differently to the way we stink? This lot don’t just put up fences or more or less coloured signs, they don’t just try to keep the different at a safe distance, they want to keep them out altogether by building walls.

Yet the poor wretches who are currently arriving on our shores in numerous groups, but not all that many really, or at our borders in dozens, hundreds, sometimes thousands, fleeing from war, famine, an invasion of their country or the horrendous repression of unimaginable dictatorships, should move one to compassion. They should melt hearts of stone, even, I am daring to say but am not convinced, those hardened by the perverse ideologies of the racists and company roaming all over the world today in disguise, but it’s not like that. Fear dominates all these feelings, turning them into a perverse need to hold on to what one has got.

Behind the mean hypocritical charity that we see today, and behind the obscene cursing and rhetorical abuse of those who want to throw them all into the sea, there is fear, simply fear.

Let’s take a look at this widespread much-reviled feeling.

Feeling afraid is a human sentiment that is common to all of us. It is impossible to draw a sharp distinction between being brave and being scared. We all know fear and we can all call on a vestige of courage to face dangerous situations at any given moment. There is no shame in that. Admitting that we are afraid and recognizing that this prevents us from acting on what we consider to be morally right according to our status as human beings, is the first step towards finding the courage for action. Personally I do not trust swaggerers, braggarts, because all too often I have seen some of the noisiest of them back away at the first signs of danger.

We feel frightened in dangerous situations because they harm us and those we love, damage our belongings, and, in extreme cases can lead to our death. That is the root of fear. And, in fact, it is sometimes right to feel afraid. But who can tell us when we should feel so? How do we know when we are in danger? How can we assess particular situations? How can we discover the perverse ideological source of our fear in situations that are not in the least bit dangerous?

And, likewise, how do we identify the source of the deception that disarms us when we really should be confronting a frightening situation?

Now, one thing sure is that anything that looks different to us at first sight makes us feel uncomfortable. We are used to seeing people and things, relationships and languages, symbols and colours, contrasts of light and dark, according to a code that we carry inside us from birth to death. The itch that pushes so many idiots to go around the world as tourists in the belief they are seeing something exciting—whereas what they actually see is filtered through the protective screen raised by the trip organizers as well as the baggage that each of these explorers of the inexistent takes along with them, the same shirts, underpants and everything else so as not to sever all ties with their own world—is almost certainly also based on fear. But that is not what we are talking about here.

However, we can start off at this basic level, just a tickle or a pleasantly appetizing itch, to see how the sensation of fear is extremely modulated and rich in variation. Suddenly, the very exoticism that gives us a pleasant thrill elsewhere appears right outside our home, peers through the window, and turns into something else. We see a face contracted with pain and hunger, gasping for a sip of water or even something more than the crumbs that we might be prepared to give him, making a mental effort and remembering the Gospel if we are a believer. But what he is asking for, no. How dare he? How dare he assert his values, his dignity, his incomprehensible language, his faith (why not!)? How can he turn up and say that he, with features so different from our own, which for us, in our brutish stupidity, represent the most advanced, only acceptable, model of civilization? What does it matter if the face that we see (or imagine we see) peering on the other side of our re-enforced window has Chinese or Indian features, so is bearer of a far more ancient civilisation than our own, a far more articulate and philosophically grounded culture? Our appalling ignorance protects us, and, knowing nothing of these cultures and civilizations, we feel a pathetic sense of uneasiness.

Uneasiness, just to start with. Because if that barely glimpsed face materializes into a human being asking for something, careful, something that was once taken away, if not from him personally, from his ancestors with a thousand brutal military or commercially sophisticated expedients, the uneasiness becomes astonishment. How dare he expect anything, this man? How dare he ask, he should just be holding out a hand trembling in shame waiting to get what we are generously prepared to give him. So, astonishment gives way to indignation and we seek every possible defence. We entrench ourselves behind our walls, the battlements of our ruined castles, the thresholds of our hovels, with the full force of the law. We erect the armour of property, which their insistence cannot seriously threaten, but over which a long shadow is cast, harbinger of more pressing demands in the future.

And behind the defences that we all know, which we put up a long time ago and opportunely fed, these defences in uniform or the shirtless ones visibly flexing their disgusting abject muscles, behind these obscenities that would offend the sensitivity of a tree trunk, we start to tremble. Indignation gives way to naked fear.

As a rule, when left to itself this feeling magnifies shadows, feeds the imagination, turns gusts into storms. With critical thinking and reasoning, documentation and the right disposition, fear can be traced back to its source. To do this, however, you must have a stout heart and hands ready to strike. We must fight. That's the point. You can overcome fear through the struggle against those who feed it, against all the ideological chatter and mystification put into effect by the political vision of things. What does "political vision" mean? We are not referring to the interpretation of reality charmingly supplied by right, left and centre according to taste, they are all the same anyway. We are referring to any interpretation of reality that claims to give priority to our own personal interests. If you think for a moment you will find that it is not only politicians that "do politics". We all do when we dully turn inwards like all those who cultivate so-called common interests, which turn out to be those of the small group or clan or owners of the specific goods that they say they represent. If, out of fear, we close in on ourselves, inside our private world, taking it to be the only frontier to be defended at any cost, if we hoist the flag of ideological chatter—be it of right or left, revolutionary or reactionary—on top of this wall, we are precisely the ones who are becoming the real "politicians". Actually, in this case we would be the worst and most ferocious on the market. From this list, ladies and gentlemen, anarchists are not at all excluded. On the contrary.

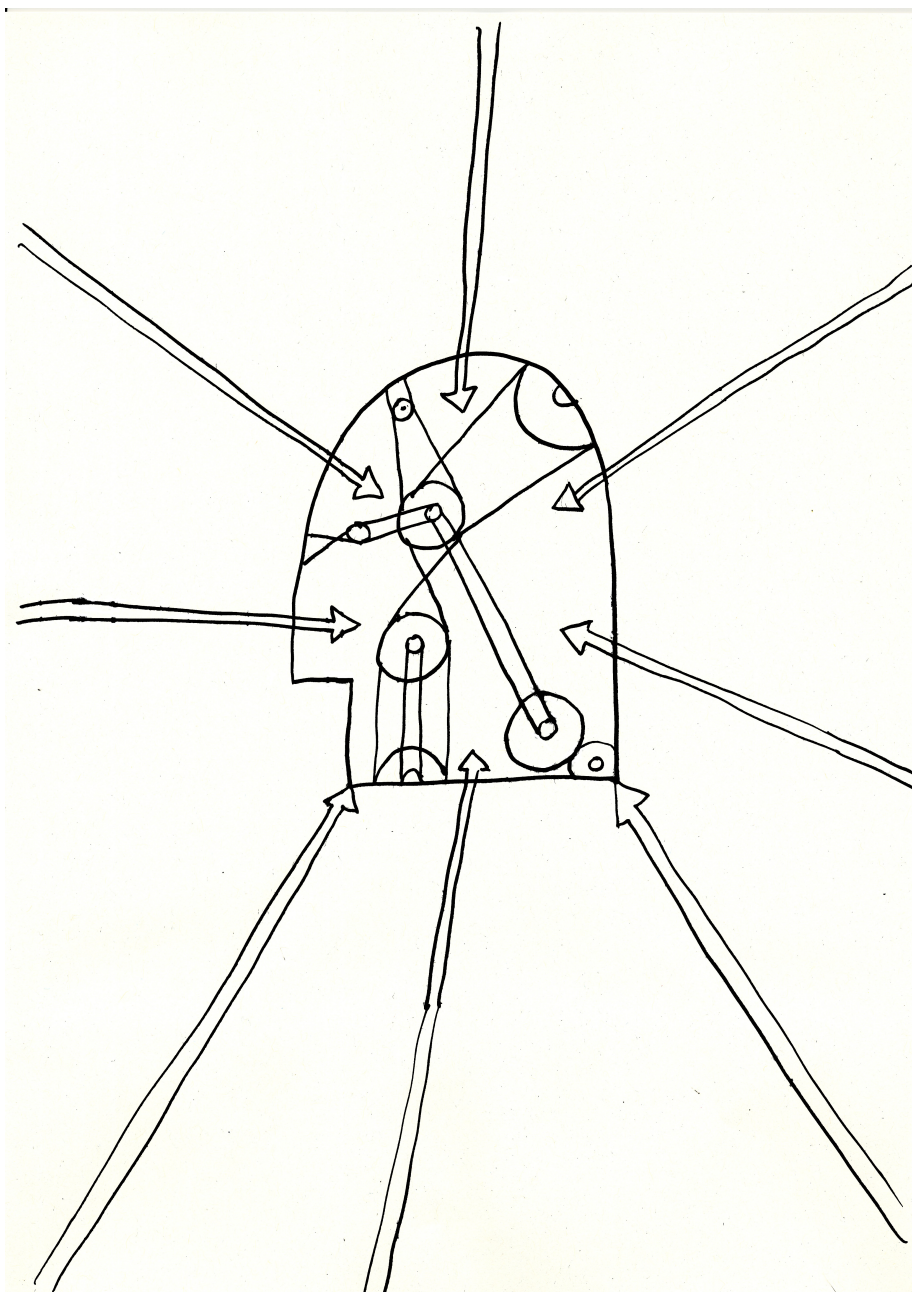
And so here we are in the stands, armed to the teeth, defending our blind stupidity. And this defence will have everyone, or nearly everyone, on our side, apart from some Florence Nightingales and a few pale veterans of radical battles, or perhaps some post-pacifist anarchist rereading Tolstoy, given that for the time being (so to speak) there is no talk of action. And we will be a good bet because facing us will be a few tens of thousands of old men, women, children and young men exhausted from fighting. We will have, that is, the remnants of a humanity in flight bled from wars, genocide, pursuit, bombings, fires, systematic house to house massacres and rape, everything obscene and horrific that man has invented since he climbed down from the tree. We will all be happy after having taken this suffering frightened humanity and pigeon-holed them into our patterns of judgment, captured and imprisoned them, distorted them and turned them into second-class Europeans.

But we cannot seriously think we will sleep in peace thanks to such a quick fix. What we have before us now, which alarmists are calling “invasion”, is no more than a tiny part of what could show up at the gates of our ultrafortified castles. Let’s reflect for a moment on the not at all unlikely eventuality of the approach of an army, not of tens of thousands, but of millions. Unfortunately, the addition of one or two zeros to the figures that we continually read in the newspapers does not leave things as they are. Our social structure, meaning with this rough formula the whole of Europe currently affected by the pressure of the migrants, could not withstand the impact of the arrival of millions of people. A collapse doesn’t require the arrival of tens of millions, four or five million would be sufficient. In that case it would no longer be a question of building walls or voting in more or less permissive or liberticidal laws. It would be the collapse of a social concept that cannot tolerate the eventuality of slaughtering two or three million people on our coasts in order to accept a couple of million of them. We are not prepared for such an eventuality.

No one can predict what will have to be done. What will the revolutionaries with their mouths full of words devoted to little pinpricks on the body of the governing whale do when these forebearers of humanity arrive at the gates, the gates of our so-called civilization, and set about destroying it? Will they contribute to the more than welcome destruction? Will they do everything possible to prevent the reconstitution of a new power with the sign changed and some strange coloured flag on the ruins of the magnificent temple of the now fallen Christianity?

Who can tell?

AMB
March 2017



Seeing

Seeing is a complex system that involves the eyes. Everyone sees, apart from the blind who try to make up for their lack of vision with the other senses. But it is not only the eyes that are involved in the mechanism of vision. First of all there is the brain. Without going into all the physiological details, it is precisely the brain that sets memory, feelings, intuitive, constructive and deductive capacities, conceptualization attainable through our cultural baggage and goodness knows how many other complex systems that we have omitted simply due to ignorance. However, this should suffice for what we want to say.

The vision suggested to us by our eyes evokes a complex picture that tends to become more detailed in time, not due to “seeing better” but to remembering, sensing, deducing, understanding, deconstructing the initial confused picture into simple concepts that gradually become more complex. This astonishing mechanism is at the basis of our existence and permits social relationships as we think we know them. All our yearning for change, to improve things as they say, right to the transformation of the world that we desire so much, a radical transformation if ever there was one, is seen through the vision that we activate from the moment we open our eyes in the morning until we close them at night. But this vision is not always the same, it does not remain the same for us throughout time and it is not the same for everyone.

Constantly modifying itself, it enables us to assess the levels of our cultural awareness and how it relates to what we want to achieve, to our thoughts, dreams, impulses, disappointments, bitterness, discouragement, in short, to our lives. The wider our cultural level—not just our knowledge but also our capacity to make logical connections between aspects of it and draw conclusions so as to be able to do what we want to do—the more our vision stimulates our memory and all our other faculties. In short, the more we know the more we desire.

Starting from vision, this relationship sets in motion the will that seeks to master its surroundings, not always in a coordinated way. This is often used for one’s own exclusive benefit or that of the elite group to which one belongs. So there are exploiters and mechanisms of exploitation, and from time to time single individuals who might struggle to destroy exploitation and abuses of power, but that’s another story. Setting aside the few exploiters that power uses to improve its functioning, there remains everyone else, the billions of women and men who on average use their eyes to see, so to think, act, and everything else. This is a source of great preoccupation for power.

It is impossible to uniform the pulsions that govern human decisions indirectly, but something can be done by acting on vision. This is the conclusion that some of the technicians studying behavioural psychology seem to have reached. Let’s say something about these studies. The old behaviourist theories (for example from the fifties) have seen their day. Behaviour is now being studied from a global point of view by attempting to extend the model, taking it to seemingly unattainable heights (which in fact they are, but it doesn’t matter because it is just a model), then suggesting in practice, through the many daily opportunities, more suitable achievements that barely resemble the original model. This is happening in the evolution and development of fashion and sexual preferences, as well as the gastronomic, cultural, sporting, etc. ones, by acting on vision. So acting at the base the economic projects of the single capitals, as far as their eternal competitive conflictuality allows, they are attempting to channel productive choices starting from behaviourist research in psychology.

This, at least at the moment, is insufficient, the response has not reached the required levels of uniformity. Vision is still too varied, too uncontrollable, it is necessary to ensure that everyone starts seeing the same thing, or at least something similar, as soon as possible. The roads being suggested are those that are colonizing our minds in a massive way today—television, mobile phones, computers, and related programs. I think we are all aware that the world is now populated by millions of zombies holding mobile phones that keep them constantly in touch with their fellow zombies, in the carefully constructed and fostered illusion that they have the world in their hands. Add to this the accompanying music, and for the moment a partial short-circuit is realized, enough to predict many future steps in the downward spiral of the control of vision, brains and hearts. However, this is a topic that merits further discussion elsewhere.

Robots have been built that are capable of learning rudimentary gestural sequences and making linguistic connections, i.e., that can make choices. In order to put such mechanisms to use however it is necessary to lower the level of the human intellect. This concept was intuited more than thirty years ago but remained non-operational, and has now become one of the main objectives to be reached in order for robots to be deployed massively to replace humans

in production, even if only in their most elementary functions. The consequences are still hard to predict: many have endeavoured to give answers in recent years, which have all been systematically refuted by reality.

What interests us most here is the reduction in the average cognitive capabilities, indispensable for the general deployment of the robotic prostheses. This flattening is a long-term project that began almost half a century ago in response to pressure from below (see May '68 and the movements of '77) which, among other things, were demanding changes to the school's set-up. Faced with such pressure, which took violent forms of protest at some point, power started to reprogramme and update study courses by lightening their content, eventually draining the whole of school education from within. A few years later, given the excessive costs of a workforce guaranteed by rigid union contracts and production based on fixed installations (such as assembly lines), it was decided to smash the trade union front and transform production, leveraging the concept of productive islands and flexibility. Free of the old obstacles, the cultural requirements of the economic system changed radically. If this once required vast numbers of averagely-educated people, now it only needs a few very highly educated people, with all the others kept at an extremely low, barely literate, level. School has been hastily adapted to meet this new request, even higher education levels have been reduced to the point where it is now estimated that an American college student needs no more than one hundred and eighty words to complete their studies and get a degree. For the rest, everything is expressed in a jargon that allows them to survive through personal exchanges devoid of any real content.

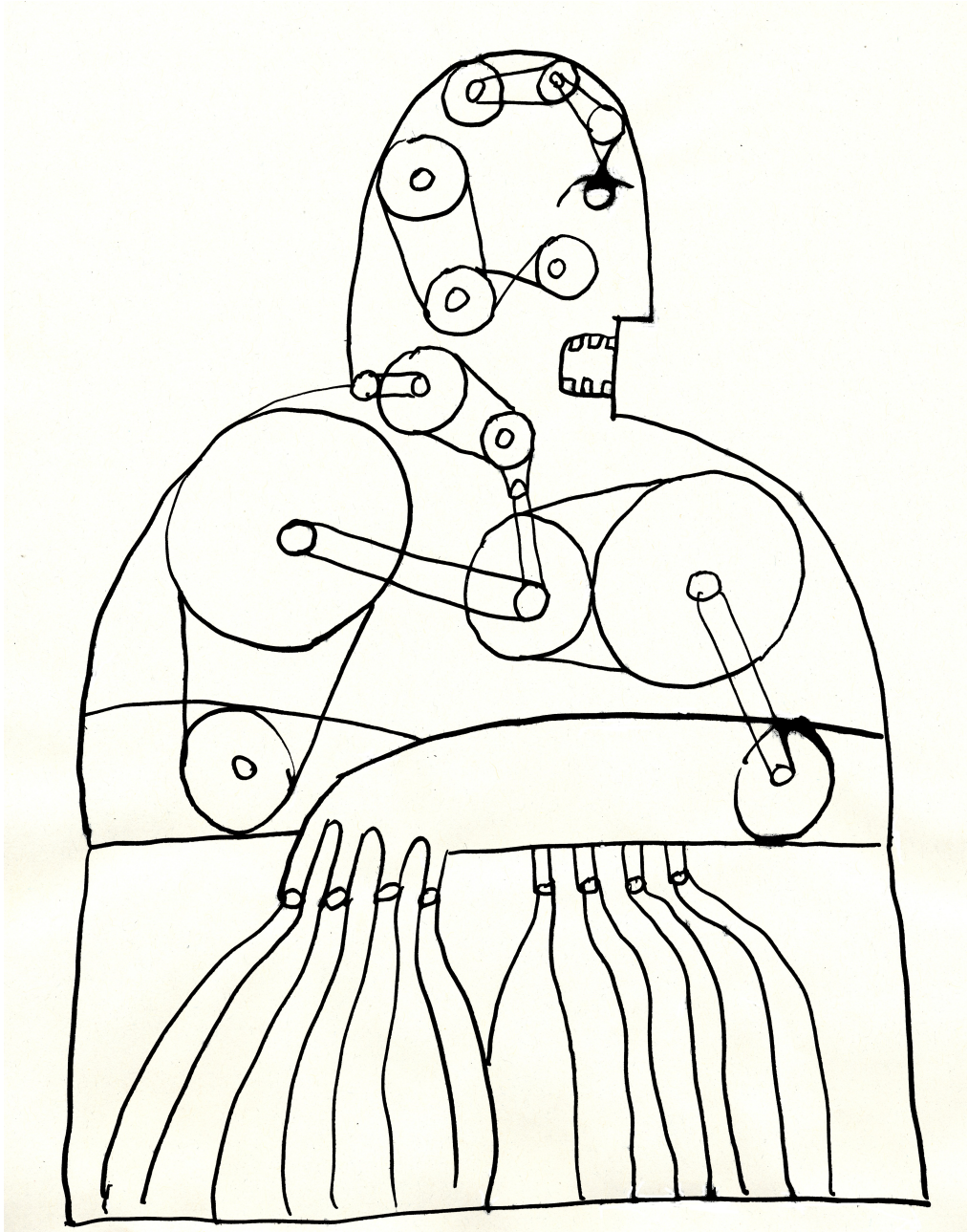
It is now possible to put the robot almost on a par with the human being, its self-learning abilities will rapidly reach the latter's level of literacy, allowing it to be actively deployed in production. Robot teachers, doctors, engineers, lawyers, etc., already exist ready for use, but are prudently being kept on hold for the time being. However, this is not technology's final goal, it is simply a slight adjustment in the conditions of production, albeit with huge social and cultural consequences. To put it simply, we are facing a hiccup that can always be suffocated and kept under control. The most urgent prospect is that of putting the flattening that has already been realised to optimal use and constantly checking that it does not degenerate or, worse still, go back to the past, i.e., to wider cultural demands, although expressed in different words.

So let's get back to the question of seeing. The flattening must be crystallized so as to uniform the response to the always new solicitations of reality. But this would necessarily produce revolts, in that by remaining visible, the stimuli coming from outside would suggest responses too varied and not uniformable enough to be accepted by a soft possibilist management of power using a minimum level of control and repression. As this is technology's objective, so that of the capitals in their various forms, therefore of power, deducible from what appears from the present conditions, all that remains to be done is to make a final intervention on vision by applying the tools mentioned above, moreover already widely in use.

Now technology is trying to uniform our vision, suiting it to the request for pacification and the acceptance of dominion that are precisely the interests of the technological process itself. Not all the capitals agree with each other. This program has not been established once and for all, nor is it being managed by some centre of occult power and it is important to bear this in mind, which is why we keep repeating it. Many of the capitals are rowing in the opposite direction without realizing it.

What we are talking about here is a working hypothesis for revolutionary anarchists who want to attack, certainly not an interpretation of technology for the use of the repressors of today and the future.

Let's start again in six
April 2017



How, when and why, and if it still makes any sense

If technology continues to spread its wings, continuing in its onslaught to the point of derealizing the totality of everything that exists, we need to ask ourselves some questions concerning the intensification of our not exactly concealed intention, i.e. attack.

If we haven't yet made ourselves clear, now is the time to do so. Our intention, hence these analyses, hasn't changed since way back when we first became aware of the world around us: to transform it radically. And the best and most effective way to do this is by its destruction. However, something has changed in what is facing us. If this once arose massively and unmistakably before our eyes and we could only fail to recognize it as our enemy by accepting and supporting it, today reality as a whole has the ghostly flimsiness of a flutter of wings, while continuing with its massacres and dehumanization. The brutal eruption of the techniques led by the individual capitals is clothed in a veil of uncommon painful desperation. They are armed one against the other, and the absence of the classic guarantees of the past—political democracy, unionized labour, welfare, adequate education, acceptable cultural levels—is leading to the isolation of the human being. There is no precise project of collective depauperization directed by the single capitals, they cannot and would not know how to do this; it could be caused by technology, but through other procedures and at other levels.

In fact, this isolation already exists and is visible everywhere in the most economically advanced parts of the world, which is where the pantomime of the reciprocal mauling of the individual capitals is taking place. Production as a whole has been relegated to second place, having been supplanted, or being in the process of being supplanted, by the technique of speedy displacement, with the dual result of breaking up any residual solidarity (we can no longer talk in terms of class), and exploiting distant populations to the utmost through wild outsourcing, once also unheard of.

Technological derealization, which will eventually change existing structures profoundly, cannot be foreseen as it will not be a result of predictable decisions but will emerge from the spontaneous assemblage of processes capable of causing such overwhelming effects sectorially as to reduce each productive set-up to zero. The wild doggedness of the individual capitals' pursuit of profits is thus being somewhat curbed by the inanity of decisions made out of place and principally out of time, which if to the short-sighted single capital's eye might look like an advantageous investment, could turn out to be an absolute catastrophe in a short space of time.

Here a possible indication appears. Each false step of the single technique could be a sign of weakness, and any theory of attack will tell you that you strike the weak points of the enemy first. Technology can do nothing about these false steps other than speed up the process of derealization, but this very acceleration is itself an indication of advantage for attack.

We could be the ones who are unable to see, already so derealized as to be chasing shadows as befits zombies. But if we are not yet dead and rotten, perhaps we will be able to find the strength and indication for action.

How?

In the usual way. Let's organize according to affinity. Small determined attacks on targets, even simple ones, but which are still clearly visible, i.e. have not yet been made to disappear. Reading these pages should be a small indication, a kind of counter-derealization manual. We cannot leap on our great steeds to attack now that the whole world is about to cover itself in an ethereal lightness in order to deceive us. Nor can we justify ourselves with the old contradictions and torment of those who have 'seen everything' and are just waiting for the next delirium to declare defeat once and for all. Attacking means striking, destroying, burning, exploding, killing, uprooting, erasing from the face of the earth, even the small reality, I'm saying reality, that we manage to grasp there in front of us. It exists and needs no more than a slight adjustment of our gaze in order to be seen. There. If the era of the facile attack is over, the time for attack is not, in fact the time of intelligence, visual acuity, of putting our heart in what we do, our boundless dreams and passions, is upon the horizon.

When?

At any moment. We need to invent our own means, not go looking for lots of clamorous tools to become available, which if they ever were, no longer are. I recall those self-igniting pocket-sized items that took down Berlusconi's Standa stores and brought them to bankruptcy. After that, silence. Why stop?

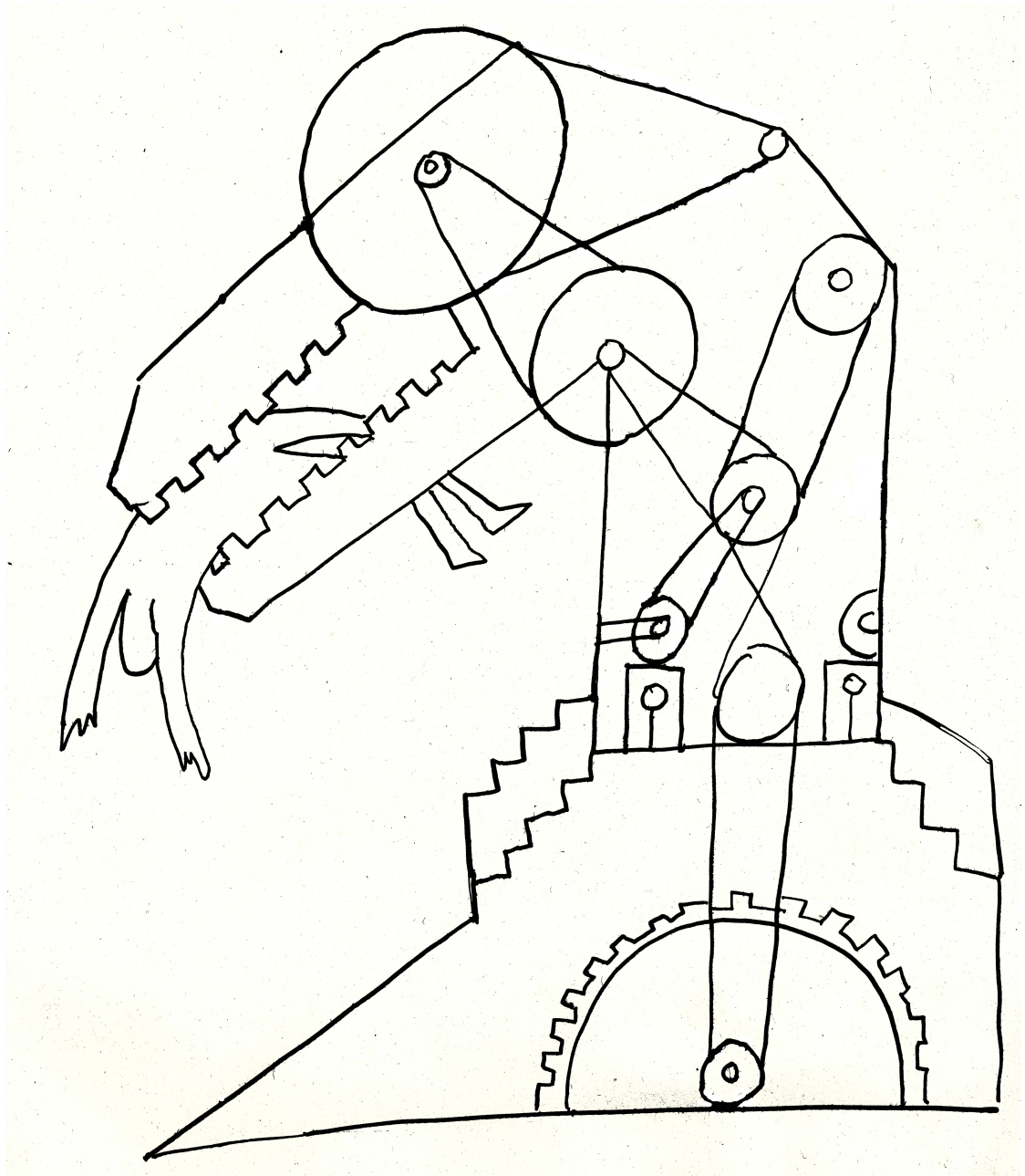
Are we waiting for some new pyrotechnic invention? Perhaps this kind of instrument seems too tame for the extremely dangerous anarchists destroyers of the world? It is the will that opens the way to the seductions of existence, to everything that we are capable of contriving. Without dwelling too long on the extraordinary misery afflicting us at the moment, let's grasp the vital element of action that quality can suddenly give us, that a thousand conflicting thoughts could never drill into our hearts. Let's go beyond reality, now, the time is always ripe, before these processes force us to accept chains that no human strength will be able to break.

Why?

Let's look around us. Do we want to end our days curled up in front of the TV? Get a job in some small village registry office? Teach the alphabet to children gone senile before their time? Adapt to the thousand crafts of survival? Carry on reading Bakunin and Kropotkin? Carry on pontificating with other comrades, disintegrated like ourselves by the habit of not knowing what to do, between one spliff and another? Carry on comparing ourselves with the portraits of our grandfathers?

Come on, let's get rid of all that shit. And, if need be, ourselves with it.

AMB
April 2017



And now?

And now that we have declared that technology has incorporated the economy, how do we back this up? Now that we have said that technology is derealizing reality, depriving it of any constitutive meaning? Now that we have put forward the concept of distinguishing between technology and techniques, in that the latter constitute the economy more or less as we still understand it today, while the former is moving towards emptying the world of all meaning? Having said all that, what are we going to do?

Before moving on to suggest indications of struggle and everything else concerning the single techniques, we should at least put our cognitive credentials on the table. In a word, we need to clarify how we came to these conclusions.

To avoid pushing our few readers' sorely tried patience any further, we would like them to know that we are perfectly well aware of how cognitive processes work. If we point to a dog we know it's a dog because we possess the cognitive category that we have added to with constant small contributions throughout our life, creating what we could call a nuclear content that enables us to identify the dog. If we come across a dog that doesn't fit into our cognitive type and can't be identified with reference to nuclear content alone, we resort to molar content, i.e., the immense amount of material based on research on the dog, from literature to zoology, etc.

Having shown our credentials, we should say right away that in presenting the derealizing process of technical-economic reality as our take on technology we have opened a door on to a weak cognitive type that is very low in nuclear content, to the extent that we are unable to offer any of what is normally referred to with that questionable term, proof.

We don't know how technology is proceeding in detail.

We don't know how far its process of uniformization or flattening has come at this point.

We don't know if the eternal conflict of capitals, and the single techniques that support and make them productive, is continuing without any external disturbance.

We don't know if the derealization mechanisms that we can see here and there form an organic whole that could be considered a project guide to technology, albeit spontaneous and non-centralized.

We don't know if the techniques in some of the production structures contain any particularly strong responses of resistance.

We don't know if the attack on the economy is complete, with the violent show of capitalist competition now reduced to nothing more than pre-death squabbles.

And, finally, we don't know how to recognize the process that we are talking about. We can only use our intuition, supported by a little indirect evidence.

Now, after all these declarations of ignorance, we will say what we do have, the convictions that led us to open this door on nothing.

As we are not for idle chatter, this journal as a whole does not only contain ideas and words, but also proposals of struggle. The task of revolutionaries has always been to trace the boundaries of the existent to decide where and when it is best to strike. Often it was a struggle on the edge of nothing, that is, on the margins of the enemy's accomplishments, still incomplete and in the course of realization, so could only be guessed at. A victory of nothing, i.e., of finding oneself facing the void at the moment of attack, would not only have meant the end of revolutionary activity, but also of the word itself, so we would have been silenced once and for all. This victory did not come about, we have carried on with the struggle, analysing the contours and gradually identifying new targets to attack. Our act of courage interrogated the horizon on the edge of reality, identifying its possible evolution in order to strike it. Often, when talking, we affirmed what others were saying was mistaken, and our analyses turned out to be wrong, leading to certain negative outcomes in the struggle. If not that of all revolutionaries, at least concerning our own personal commitment. But this belongs to the conditions of absolute freedom in which our analyses, past and present, are to be found. The sphere of our ideas was at times mistaken, at times accurate, and as no one can embody the absolute, we are facing this eventuality once again. We can make a mistake, but we won't turn back. The vertigo of freedom is precisely here where we manage to open that door on nothing, or almost. But, thinking about it, such a risk exists in any decision to analyse reality, or what remains of it, and deciding to act by striking the enemy. The shadow of error is inherent to that risk, but that does not erase the will to go forward.

One thing we do know is that computer science as a whole, i.e. any application of binary logic for the solution of the various technical problems, has nothing to do with technology. The former has certainly changed the world radically but has no tools to curb the latter's derealizing action, being simply a means to build prostheses that can speed up, generalize (within certain limits) and idiotize human life on the planet. Seen from the dominant optic—unfortunately not many anarchists are free of this—computer science would seem to be capable of securing a future for human beings without the biblical punishment of work. Nothing could be more mistaken. Technology could replace the basic logic of this technique with a different one, such as the polyvalent logic at the root of human thought. And it could do so by succeeding in making a direct connection between brain and computer, i.e. by bypassing, therefore eliminating, digitalization. This is not pure fantasy; invasive connections have already been realized (chip applications) but in the not too distant future they could find other, less invasive ones. A pair of glasses, for example, or far less visible optical media quite different to the prototypes seen in circulation for a short time then quickly withdrawn from the market as they were in contrast with the other technical elements required for their use. Clearly this visual connection would not limit itself to the relationship with the machine (computer) as in the meantime the latter could evolve outwards, suggesting global visions of reality far more appropriate for the derealization process that technology is pursuing. Such a vision would show something to be in existence, precisely when that same something has already been dead for a long time or been deconstructed into something completely different. All this not for the pleasure of selling a few more cars, which might be the aim of the single technique, stupid servant of the single capital, but so as to uniform individuals by producing a modularity of opinions that are not in contrast with each other, obtaining what we once referred to as “social peace”. And this is a first thing that we are convinced of.

A second conviction comes from a strange observation made almost by chance. Having been a scholar of economics many years ago and since then refusing to consider any of the chatter that economists, emeritus bull-shitters that they are, put in circulation, I could easily have missed it. Here it is. For the past fifteen years all the Nobel prizes for economy have gone to graduates in economics and psychology. Before that they were given to graduates in economics and mathematics. Let's think about this simple fact together. There was a time when enterprises needed algorithms aimed at studying systems of equilibrium under conditions of market disturbance. They needed statistics, degenerate daughter of mathematics, in order to understand the developments in the business world and the corresponding world market of production and consumption. That is, they needed to try to see into the near future, no more than three years are sufficient for world capital to best take care of its investments, just as as the three per cent suffices to remunerate oneself for the best. Now they are looking at the present. Having pulverised the market, rendering production fluid and spreading it like liquid over nearly all the world, they have turned their attention to the single individual (billions of single individuals) which, as we know, psychology studies in order to gain a picture of their concerns, their fears, their hopes and their illusions. The marriage between these swindlers, because that is what scholars of behavioural psychology and economists are, squares up the chatter we were talking about before. And this is a second thing that we are convinced of.

A third conviction comes from a global view of the chaotic world of capital and of the techniques that animate it. In fact, we cannot talk about this area in depth, strangely, because it is not a question of the technological universe whose rules are almost completely unknown to us. We could say a lot about the knife fight between the various capitals, but it would be the usual stuff that economic studies put under our noses every day, if not in the newspapers, at least in specialized journals or publications. What is moving underneath instead, is immersed in a not exactly light mist. The single projects, investments, the various quotations and their trends, the continual fluctuations of foreign exchange, movements of national debt, the placing of work stock abroad for production, extreme exploitation to the point of death in countries where these atrocities are still possible, all constitute a kind of amorphous mixture where analysis with its vivisections to bring out the sayable, the thinkable, has no access. We are aware of this continuum here before us, but it is impossible to describe it analytically. It is remote not only for us but for everyone, including specialized analysts and even the very capitals that find themselves up to the neck in it. And this is a third thing that we are convinced of.

A fourth conviction comes from the relationship between technology and techniques. At a certain point, the economy and the techniques that animate it, come into contact with technology in the process of derealisation. Here we would need to give indicators of discontinuity, which we don't possess. We do not possess them quantitatively as we are accustomed to in any other measuring concerning the social sciences in general. We don't know which part of a car is not essential to its actual locomotion and is merely symbolic, but we can guess. Only we don't know what to do with this intuition at the moment of imagining the process of inglobation that technology is developing. The objects and phenomena that we can know about will continue to disappear from a hypothetical zone, closer to the technological “edge”, without being able, and us with them, to provide us with any precise locations. We know from psychology that

an ongoing process sends indications to our nerve cells concerning their position and intended movement, but it's not like that this time. First of all, because we ourselves are not inside this movement. Physically, or at least sensitively, we are outside, remaining partially blind observers. It follows that the image coming from technology is not interpreted as an identifiable fixed object, albeit complex and articulated in a such a way that it cannot be perceived directly. There remains something similar to what medieval philosophers called quiddity. The contours are not identifiable, so we will never know the exact moment in which we are finally derealized. This partly explains the perplexities that permeate the elaborations in this first issue of our journal. In any case, the evaluation of given phenomena, e.g. the difference between the gowns of the fashion designers seen in magazines and the clothes that people actually wear, gives us indications which, although insufficient, are not merely random clusters but identify specific traits, forming a field of stimulation that pushes us to come to certain conclusions rather than others. And this is a fourth thing that we are convinced of.

A last conviction comes from the very lack of material in our possession. We have a different kind of certainty, not inferior, only different, a gnoseological certainty that grasps the phenomenon as a whole but is incapable of supplying details. This phenomenon recalls the classic processes of epiphany. In the absence of anything better, you have to adapt. I'm not saying that technology and its action cannot be explained, otherwise we would just have been wasting our time. I'm saying that some chains of inference allow one to presume certain patterns of behaviour. And this certainty encourages us, in the case of the contrary we would be left with very little. That is why we find ourselves pushed to keep taking up the process of interrogation of entities where we calmly thought we were living undisturbed, unreservedly, without any worries, without anxiety, and raise veils that no one had ever imagined were concealing anything. The cognitive complexity lies within the process of derealization, technology simply is, it is not plotting one thing to obtain another. That's all. And this is a fifth thing that we are convinced of.

Alfredo M. Bonanno
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These pages have been put together by anarchists

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