

## The reaction in Italy: *Message in the barrel about operation Sibilla and much more*

*The passion for destruction is also a creative passion*

— M. Bakunin, *The Reaction in Germany*

The story goes that one day Alexander the Great went to the barrel in which Diogenes of Sinope lived. Diogenes was the only philosopher who had not gone to pay homage to the great king. So Alexander went to him. Alexander asked him: "Tell me what I can do for you". And Diogenes answered: "Yes, move away, stand out of my light."

Reflecting on conditions of incommunicability, autonomy and refractoriness towards power is far more complicated today than it was in the 4th century BC.

Today power does not move, there is no longer a barrel inside which the shadow of the State does not reach. The only possible relationship with this global organism is violence. One hears all too often, like a plaint of bigots at evensong, that revolutionary violence is out of date. It is said that "times have changed" when, if anything, it is the possibility of escape that has changed.

The last two years have been a sad confirmation of this old story. A new era was heralded in with the massacre in the Italian prisons, the people locked in their homes while production continued to go ahead, the attacks and killings during the transport strikes, the countless repressive manoeuvres against anarchists, and finally through the green pass, the final (?) destination of the new society of control.

In so-called global civilisation, the disasters of capitalism reach us in every nook and cranny. The parable of the latest environmental movements seems eloquent to me. The "blah blah blah" of little Greta which falls back on her head: it is precisely you pacifists who only make "blah blah blah", meanwhile the bosses of the world continue to lead us all towards the catastrophe. What should we do then? Get out of the barrel, and act.

We can interpret the recent operation «Sibilla» from three points of view: the dynamics of desolidarisation; the new form of authoritarian turn; the nihilist phase.

### 1. The dynamics of desolidarisation

The investigation is aimed primarily at targeting Alfredo Cospito's writings and those who disseminate them. The magistrates' declared objective is to create a moat more powerful than the physical one surrounding the prison. So giving revolutionary solidarity to a prisoner like Alfredo means attracting the attention of the repression.

Some things cannot be said! Still not enough attention has been paid to a fact concerning the raids of 11 November. The ROS seized all and I mean all the traceable copies of *Vetriolo*, of the book *Quale internazionale?* [What international?], and the book *Mio caro padrone domani ti sparo* [My dear boss, tomorrow I will shoot you] (Edizioni Monte Bove) in an attempt to wipe out an important piece of anarchist publications of recent years. The words, analyses, proposals of revolutionaries must disappear, condemned to *damnatio memoriae*, they will probably be burned on the first night of the full moon, with the blessing of the bishop and the curses of the

holy inquisition. But the dynamics of desolidarisation are something creeping, they do not end in a night of witch-hunting. They are expanding like a toxic cloud.

How do we respond to the dynamics of desolidarisation? With solidarity, yeah, but what does solidarity mean? I am not in solidarity with Alfredo's ideas. Some of them I share, others I do not. I am an anarchist and I think for myself. I am in solidarity with the *practices* he is accused of. I think the practices of which Alfredo is accused are a heritage of the revolutionary movement.

And I am not using the word 'heritage' by chance. Our class does not possess wealth. It inherits nothing of the land of the bosses. Our only wealth, our heritage, are our struggle practices. They are our only inheritance, we must guard them jealously, but above all we must nurture them. Every generation can be a 'messianic', revolutionary, generation, Walter Benjamin said.

Of course, bread is made with the flour one has. When Diogenes was asked about the best time to eat, it seems the philosopher replied: 'The rich man when he likes, the poor man when he can'.

A great revolutionary strategist, Carletto Mazzone, said that 'technique is the bread of the rich, tactics the bread of the poor'. We do not have technique, we do not have science and we do not have millionaire foundations. We have our intelligence and our hunger.

And intelligence scares, that's why they seize our books and newspapers.

## 2. A new form of authoritarian turn

Speaking of analyses that scare, the Sibilla operation confirms an important hypothesis of *Vetriolo*. The advent of a "new form of authoritarian turn". To frame this concept correctly, we must first say something about the patron saint of the Sibilla operation.

Temporarily parked at the Perugia public prosecutor's office, Raffaele Cantone is one of the shining stars of the Italian bourgeoisie. A reserve of the republic on permanent duty, his name has been mentioned several times for the presidency of the Council, particularly by Europeanist and liberalist circles and by the clique that revolves around Matteo Renzi. For a government of parliamentary conspiracy of course, these people, as we have seen with Mario Monti, do not even vote for their mother.

Of all the accusations made by Manuela Comodi and blessed by Saint Raffaele Cantone, item M) of the order is undoubtedly the most hilarious. One is accused of having written a text signed "Circolaccio Anarchico [Bad Anarchist Circle] - Spoleto" in which a call is made "for a real general strike" - *fuck me!* - "so as to publicly instigate the commission of crimes against the personality of the State, seriously threatening unjust damage".

This is the new form of authoritarian turn: while the bosses' terror gangs are beating the striking workers to a pulp, those calling for a real general strike at the level of the clash are threatening 'unjust harm' to the bosses who hold Dr Cantone in such high regard.

In order to avoid any danger of "victimism" or "innocentism", it must be made clear that Cantone, how to say, has not made any *goofs*. His strategy fits into the new form of authoritarian trend perfectly. There is a red line connecting the Mottarone massacre in Stresa, the six deaths a day at work, the murdered trade unionists, the green pass and the Sibilla operation. This red line is called: recovery of the capitalist economy.

'Cantone the censor' is right, I am absolutely guilty of having advocated the sabotage of economic recovery.

Cantone's accusation has a nostalgic flavour in fact that takes us back to a little old world. In fact, we must remember that, originally, Article 270 of the Rocco code punished associations that promoted 'class hatred'.

Imagine if I were not guilty, we anarchists have been promulgating class hatred for 150 years! Not only do I declare myself guilty, but in order to make my confession more convincing I intend to call in complicity:

- the industrialists' association (do you remember that scumbag from Macerata who said 'if someone dies, so be it?');
- the tradesmen's association, for those 10-hour contracts and another 40 hours off the books (so during the lockdowns we only took redundancy pay on those 10 hours);
- companies such as the SPK in Milan, which rent «thugs» for the terror gangs with which they beat the workers on strike.

I apologize to the many I've forgotten. I've done everything I can to stir up class hatred in my life, but it's only thanks to you that we've come this far.

If that's incitement, well, it's irresistible incitement!

Despite that little old world of the Rocco code that for 15 years has been making Manuela Comodi dream, it must be pointed out that the new form of authoritarian turn is *not* fascism. Just as the electronic tag is not the ball and chain. On the other hand, they promised that technology would improve our lives!

This clarification, by the way, keeps me far away from conspiracy. Those who believe, for example, that the State provokes tensions and crises on purpose, to then give an authoritarian twist. The State, if it could, would live in social peace. The State attacks us because it is attacked!

The truth is that the crises that capitalism is causing - environmental, health and social - are unmanageable. That's why an authoritarian turn is needed. That's what the technologies, digital control, internal passport to move around and work are all for.

This clarification, moreover, keeps me far from all democratic anti-fascism. It is true, as Bordiga said, that anti-fascism would become the worst product of fascism.

Immodestly, *Vetriolo* has always been the most lucid paper on these issues. In less suspicious times, when we had Matteo Salvini in government, *Vetriolo* always criticized those who spoke of the fascist/league danger. In the columns of *Vetriolo* it has always been written that the real authoritarian risks came from a tightening of liberalism, that we risked a Bava Beccaris rather than a Mussolini (just recently Bava Beccaris invoked machine-gunning the no green pass protests in the squares).

And in my history book, after Bava Beccaris comes Gaetano Bresci...

### 3. The nihilist phase

The last aspect that operation Sibilla tells us about is inherent in what has been called the "nihilist phase" in *Vetriolo*. The nihilist phase, in my opinion, calls into question two kinds of problem.

The first is inherent in the increasingly conflictual relationship with which science is now perceived at mass level. Bakunin prophesied this degeneration already 150 years ago. Linking

the idea of the State to the idea of God, and observing that every State power needs an ideological-religious apparatus, Bakunin predicted that in the full development of the bourgeois State, scientists would become the new priests.

Bakunin, it should be remembered, does not argue against science, as if it had its own subjective vitality, but with the constitution of scientists as clergy. In other words, Bakunin's problem is not anti-science, it is always a social problem, of the stratification of social classes in an ideological and not just a mechanistic key.

The scientist clergy, like any clergy, has its rites and its mysteries, its language envelops and excludes, composed as it is of vain idiocies that exclude the masses.

Today Bakunin's prophecy has become reality, millions of proletarians in the world are taking to the streets against the new «scribes». If even the very civilised Netherlands sees the police shooting at protesters, it means something very powerful is going on..

The greatness of Alfredo's gesture consists in having identified the contradiction of the century in a ferociously lucid way: the struggle between the exploited and the new clergy who want to redesign the world so that the order of the bosses becomes irreversible. At a time when we are all held accountable, Alfredo «redistributes» a little responsibility.

The second order of problems that the nihilist phase calls into question consists of the remotion of the class struggle. A real practical and cultural uprooting of this struggle has been carried out. Class hatred is the great extirpated of our time.

The nihilist phase therefore consists in this: the return of repressed class hatred in symptomatic, karst, irrational forms. To mock this irrationality because the angry do not worship science as the marxist churches predict, or because they do not adhere to the manual of the perfect green-fuchsia activist of the "new left", is to have failed to understand the nature of the nihilist phase.

On the contrary, we must counterpose the myth of science with the myth of the social revolution, bringing into the nihilist phase that radical negativity that is vengeful anarchy.

Alas, we must acknowledge a certain 'timeliness' in operation Sibilla. 'Long terms' are over, it seems that history has put on *seven-league* boots [Italian fairy-tale, boots enabling to cross seven leagues at a stride]. I am convinced, however, that these operations have no chance of success. I am very fond of a phrase from the *Platform*:

«Anarchism was born, therefore, not from the abstract reflections of a scholar or philosopher, but from the direct struggle of the workers against capital, from their needs and necessities, from their psychology, from their aspirations for freedom and equality.»

Being an idea inherent in the exploited, bars are not enough to lock up anarchy. It is not enough to close down newspapers. Inevitably, from anger, like the phoenix the unspeakable Idea will rise again.

Finally, since we are talking about «crimes of opinion» (definition of the judge for Preliminary Investigations, *sic*) we are called to answer a question: what does thinking mean?

To think means *to deny*. Every affirmation is a negation, Spinoza said. In our languages a sentence that does not contain a negation is almost impossible. Thought therefore arises as negation of being, as negation of what-is, of the *State*. Humans have always denied a reality they find unbearable.

There is only one entity that never denies: the machine. The machine is a 'positive entity', we are negative entities. We have within us a fracture between our self and nature, between our self and history, between our self and the State. This is the reason why it will never be possible for intelligent machines to exist, no matter what they say. The only intelligent machine is the one that switches itself off. Because only those who deny themselves, those who 'go on strike', have the dignity of the intellect.

As the odious Carabinieri motto goes, "obey by keeping silent". Obedience is mute, it is the negation that is the basis of language. As far as I am concerned, you will not succeed in *silencing me*: I am a proletarian, I am an anarchist, I am an insurrectionalist and I will never take one step back.

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[? of the Sibylline Mountains]