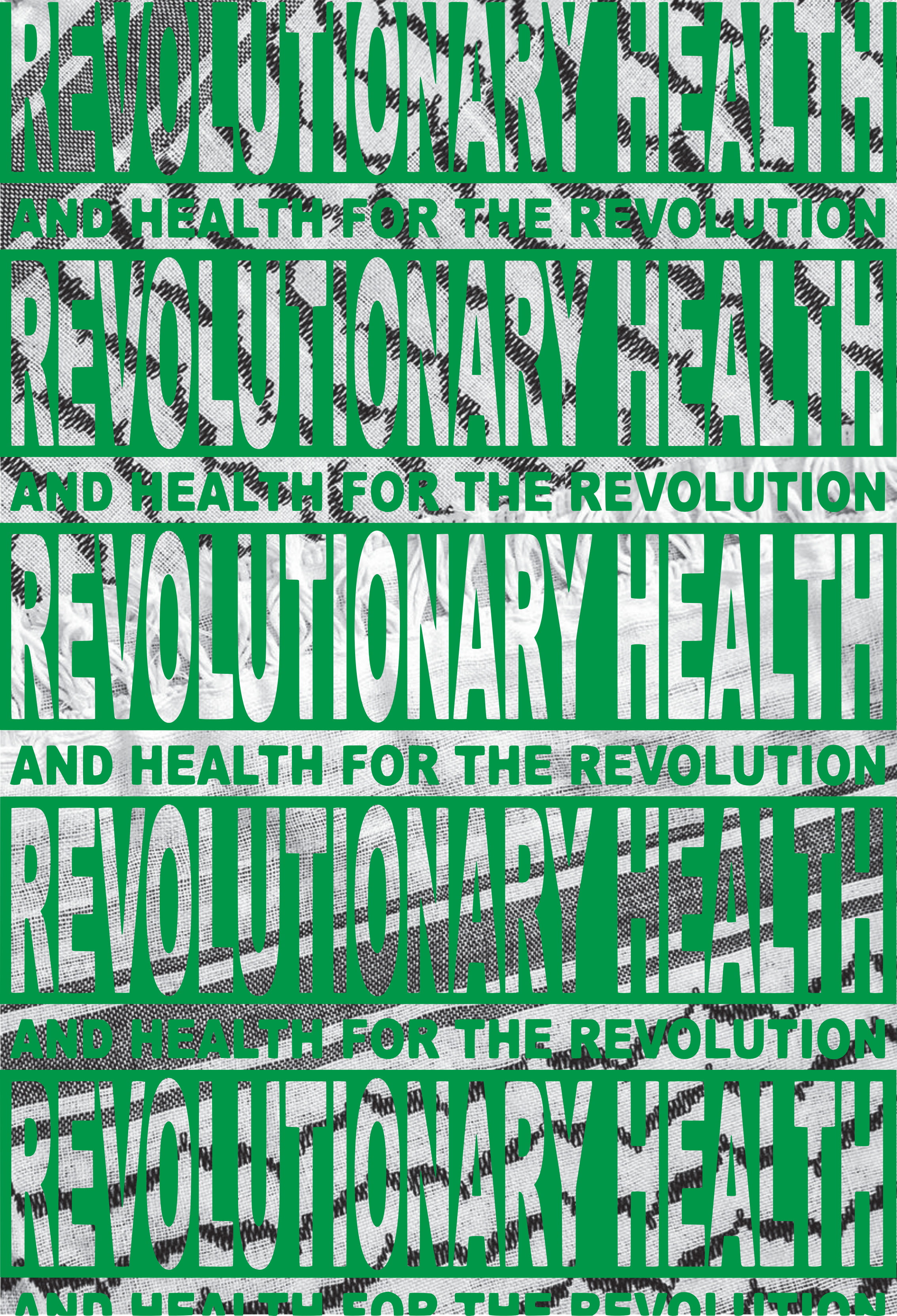




Dear reader, this newspaper can become a political brick, a manifestation of vulgar materialism for those who share our politics. It can destroy everything with which you disagree or it can make barricades. We agree with those who say **NO** to one thing and **YES** to many things. Our enjoyment of life is inexhaustible; no one can take it away, no one can reduce it to anything smaller than that.

We live in a time where catastrophes (which will intensify) and war against humanity have taken place in the establishment of a New New World Order. War is the last whip on humanity, controlling the political by violent, military means.

Our newspaper has been published irregularly for three years now and our friends are happy with what we are doing. The materials presented here offer those within the struggle a hope that might lift them out of despair so that together we can create an environment in which we want all want to live.

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PALESTINE IS THE WORLD

Silvia Federichi

Socialist Scholars Conference, April 2002

The Israeli invasion of Palestine is an act of aggression of such gravity that it is almost impossible for me to speak of anything else. When the population of six cities and many villages is tortured daily in front of the whole world, and when those perpetrating these crimes are granted total immunity, then we have to stop and speak up because new standards are being established as At the same time we should not make the mistake to think thatto what is permissible internationally, which puts us all in danger.

My first point, then, is that we have to oppose this aggression, these Israeli war crimes, in any way we can and there is a lot we can do since it is our money that pays for them. Without the United States Israel could not even function as an economy, much less have tanks to occupy every street in Palestine.

At the same time we should not make the mistake of thinking that the situation in Palestine is unique. Palestine today is the image of what, in different ways, is occurring across the world.

The Israeli invasion of Palestine is a classic example of colonial conquest. IN fact the very creation of the state of Israel was part of the British colonization of the Middle East. This was acknowledged by Sharon when he told the president of France, Chirac, three weeks ago that : “Palestine is our Algeria, with the difference (he added) that we are going to stay. “

Over the last two decades the same colonial relations have been re-imposed by Europe and the U.S. on every part of the former colonial world, this time in the name of the “debt crisis”, “globalization” or “the war on drugs and, more recently, “the war on terrorism.” The slogans change but the objectives and the consequences are the same : uprooting the local populations, turning them into refugees, into cheap labor for the global market, appropriating their resources, their lands, their assets, their oil, their waters, their labor, either by the use of tanks and bombings or through trade agreements, ‘structural adjustment programs’, currency devaluations, all means of waging war on the people and the lands.

Not surprisingly the same destructive policies that Israel is implementing in Palestine, with the use of deadly force (through land expropriation, the expansion of settlements, the theft of water, and now the systematic destruction of every infrastructure (like water pipes, roads, power plants, sewers, schools, houses) are also being implemented, with the same results, in Africa, Asia, Latin America.

What in Israel is destroyed by the IDF, in many African countries is destroyed by the World Bank, the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and the World Trade Organization WTO). In Palestine it is the Israeli tanks that bulldoze schools and houses. In Africa it is “structural adjustment”, the defunding of the public sector, currency devaluation, but the effects are the same. In Palestine the sick, the wounded, the women giving birth cannot go to the hospitals because the Israeli shoot them. In Africa people cannot go to the hospitals, even without the Israeli bullets - although Israel has played havoc in Africa too, propping every dictator, from Mobuto to the white South African apartheid regime. In both cases the results are populations of refugees, the transfer of lands from the local people to the new colonial powers, forwarding and protecting the interests of internal capital.

Comparing the role of the Israeli government and the Israeli army with that of the World Bank, the IMF and WTO is not to underestimate what is taking place in Palestine or minimize its gravity, but it is to show the continuity between war and economic policy and between the aggression of Israel against Palestine and the many wars that are now blooding the world.

President Bush has announced that fifty countries are on the US government list as candidates for bombings. But as a matter of fact an equal number has already experienced America’s warfare over the last two decades, to such an extent that it will take them decades to regain some degree of normalcy. Think of Chile, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Mozambique, Angola, Panama, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan ..Many of these countries have been so devastated that they are now economically dis-functional or have been placed under the UN trustship.

Indeed it is no exaggeration to say we are witnessing a new, extensive process of recolonization, with Palestine been the experimental field.

In the US as well warfare is the rule with mass incarceration of black and Latino youth, The use of capital punishment mostly against black people, and the attack on healthcare, housing, welfare provisions, immigrant men and women.

Capitalism is waging a war on the people of the world, a war that deprive us of all means necessary to reproduce our lives, a war that keep seeking for new names and justifications but at the core has one purpose: stripping us from our entitelment to the wealth of the world, turn us into refugees of one sort of another, homeless people who have no claim to this earth, allow us only to work and work when it suits our employers.

This is our destiny and the destiny of our children if we do not resist and if we refuse to become settlers, guards, policemen. Today the people of Palestine are being martyred, but we delude ourselves if we think that the destruction of their communities and their expulsion from their lands will have no consequences for our lives. Palestine is the world and blood that it is shed with the weapons and financial ais provided by the United states, will fall on us as well.



PALESTINE & THE COMMONS: OR, MARX & THE MUSHA'A

Peter Linebaugh
February 2024

In 1958 the assistant head master did the Bible reading at the morning assembly of the Karachi Grammar School (Pakistan) founded in 1848 by the Church of England. The reading from Acts 17:23 concerned St. Paul's declaration upon seeing the Athenian monument to an unknown God. "What you worship but do not know – this is what I now proclaim" at which point I, seventeen years old at the time, shouted the answer for all to hear - "Communism."

As a child of both British and American empires I had come to this conclusion two years earlier at the Frankfurt Army High School. Based on study of The Communist Manifesto which I conducted in the library of the Officers Club at the I.G. Farben building, I was able to answer this ancient question posed in the Athenian agora by a man from Palestine.

I approach the wars in Palestine neither as an Arabic nor a Hebrew scholar or even as a one knowledgeable to other forms of life in the region – olive, almond, citrus fruits, sheep, cotton, or the grains like wheat. I come as a student, with a life-long admiration for the radical and abolitionist traditions - Jesus and the prophets, Karl Marx, Gerard Winstanley, Thomas Spence, Olaudah Equiano, the IWW, Frederick Douglass, Shunryu Suzuki, Elizabeth Poole, Ann Setter, Ivan Illich, Malcolm X, William Blake, Silvia Federici, E.P. Thompson, Manuel Yang, Michaela Brennan, and then I became an historian of all the above. As Marcus Rediker and I said in the introduction to the Arabic translation of our Many- Headed Hydra, Herodotus, "the grandfather of history," explained that Palestine lay be-

tween Phoenicia and Egypt

Besides going to Athens, a home of philosophy (philia = love, Sophia = goddess of wisdom), Paul went to gatherings where they had "everything in common" (Acts 4:32). Jubilee was another Biblical thing I could cotton on to because I love its principles of land back, freedom now, no work, debt forgiveness, and rest for revered mother Earth. It all seems to me a beautiful combination of revolution and relaxation. Paul became a follower to Jesus who was thrown out of his home town and almost killed for proclaiming jubilee right now. He called for rest and forgiveness. The only economic basis of such a thing is the commons.

The struggle in Palestine helps us see this.

I believe that the musha'a, like similar practices anywhere else in the world, can help us realize a world based on just conditions of mutuality, name it as is your wont - true communism, the cooperative commonwealth, the commons.

The renewed thinking of the commons was born of struggles against the new enclosures of the neoliberal era and inspired by the commoning practices of autonomist Zapatista communes in Chiapas. It is now understood as a key conceptual breakthrough in orienting visions and pathways to postcapitalist futures. The commons also marks the radical escape from the paralyzing misfire and legacies of modernist state socialisms.

I must write about the musha'a, a Palestinian form of land tenure, or the commons, which the Ottomans, the Brits, and the

Israelis attempted to destroy. It includes collective ownership, cooperative labor, and periodic redistribution.

These are principles also found in the earliest promulgation of debt cancellation, freedom from servitude, and restoration of land tenures. It was by Enmetena, a

ruler of Lagash, around 2400 BC and evolved into general proclamations of amnesty. The musha'a was a defensive institution against the fear of taxation and military recruitment by the Ottoman authorities.

Palestine's planetary significance is three-fold: first, geography or the conjunction of three continents, Asia, Africa, and Europe, and the waters among them, second, extraction from the soil and under it (grains, minerals, oil), and third, religion or the spiritual inheritance of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Three big religions, three big continents, and original economies of cultivating the earth, mining the earth, and drilling the earth, making modes of production from the 'fertile crescent' to the petroleum present. The struggle has geographic breadth and historical depth. It explains why the struggle for Palestine is the 'soul of the souls of all our struggles.' The whole world has awakened to it.

On 20 January 1890 at the Victorian Institute in London James Neil, M.A., read a paper on how in southern Palestine the arable soil is apportioned by lot. He said, "the persons proposing to work the ground divide into groups, and the chief of each group draws a section of the land proportioned to the number

of persons in his group. Each section is composed of lands of various fertility and qualities.

These sections are again subdivided by measurement with an ox-goad, or a line called habaleh, the counterpart of the measuring line of Scripture. The farmers, in such regions as possess this custom, prefer this method of communistic division to holding in fee simple.”

“Fee simple” is feudal locution, an English legal term for private property: you can use or abuse it, you can bequeath it, you can alienate it, you can sell it, and above all you can exclude others. Roman law refers to fructus, abusus, and

usus, or fruits, abuses, and uses. The idea of individual, exclusive land ownership is, according to its historian, Andro Linklater in his book *Owning the Earth*, “the most destructive and creative force in written history.” The Palestine Exploration Fund was founded in 1865 and carried out surveys and ethnographies of Ottoman Palestine. It was an Anglican operation financing archeologists and clergymen. “We are about to apply the rules of science,” said the Archbishop of York in Westminster Abbey at its founding, “to an investigation into the facts concerning the Holy Land.” The Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund for April 1891 includes in its survey of land tenure and agriculture in Palestine this: “... in Southern Palestine, and in a few other districts, the land is held in common by all the inhabitants of a village, and apportioned at stated times to the individual cultivators according to their ability to cultivate, their standard being the number and power of the cattle used for ploughing. Such lands are known as, mushāʾah.”

The same year 1865 evangelical Christians in England formed the Victoria Institute to defend “the great Truths revealed in Holy Scripture ... against the opposition of science so called.” Its leadership were Christian Zionists. The commons and communism were easily linked in the mind of the Church of England. The 38th of its 39 articles of religion simply states, “the riches and goods of Christians are not common as touching the right, title, and possession of the same....” Let us look at this more closely. First, musha’a, then communism.

In addition to Bedouin practices of common pasturage the musha’a as a village based land tenure and agriculture was another version of commons in land was collectively owned by the village whose individual members owned shares (ahsahm) in the use rights including the right to sow, to plough, to cultivate.

Secondly the musha’a allowed the redistribution and equalization of ahsahm to different family groups at one to five year intervals. These rights were heritable and were determined by the wants of the cultivator. The threshing barn, like the

land, was held in common.

The musha’a evolved over four hundred years under the Ottoman empire which claimed to own the land as rule for tax purposes on miri land. It arose in the village, not the state, as a system of collective land tenure for cultivators who comprised the vast majority of the population. Efforts to install private property met with determined persistent resistance in “the land-equalizing musha’a village throughout Palestine.” “There was no need for land reform, which only proved destructive to the economy of the fallāhin. It nullified the advantages inherent in the system and, unexpectedly, facilitated the transfer of lands from Arabs to Jews.”

Samuel Bergheim wrote an early description of musha’a for the Palestinian Exploration Fund. From a European banking family Samuel Bergheim bought property in Palestine with title deeds accepted by the Ottomans. “When my brother and I bought the lands of a village some years since from its inhabitants, the Turkish authorities recognized us as the freeholders, and gave us title deeds, in accordance with a law on freehold passed by the late Sultan about twenty years ago. Not so, however, [for] the inhabitants of the village, for when we came to portion out the land in plots for cultivation, the villagers protested and refused to accept the new arrangement. They would only have the land in mushaa.”

The Bergheim family bought land in 1872; in 1885 Peter Bergheim was murdered. Gezer was also the site of one of the earliest encounters between settler colonialism (the Bergheim estate) and peasant resistance to the imposition of the land privatization code of 1858, in which the communal (musha’) system was undermined. The murder of Peter Bergheim, banker, settler, and amateur archaeologist, by Abu Shusha peasants highlighted the dynamic relationship between archaeology, early European agricultural settlement, and peasant dispossession of land.”

Noura Alkhalili explains that the mushaa’ was “a once-prominent Levantine culture of common land.” She describes a major way that the village musha’a, a largely agrarian commons, was transformed in an urban environment following the violence of mapping, titling, buying, and selling which accompanied conquest casting people into cities and camps. The transition was catastrophic from the fellaheen to refugee to wage labor. It was aided by the Oslo accords of 1993 and 1995 which banked on neoliberalism private property and market relations and the neoliberal theory of “economic development.” In

Palestine, unlike England, it was more than fences and hedges – it included the thirty-foot separation wall on the West Bank built between 2005 and 2008 after the second intifada.

How has the diaspora of the fellaheen carried notions of reciprocity, obligation, and mutual aid whose origin the musha’a, values that lie with the family, within the heart of the community, and the breast of every person. How are such principles transferred from the country to the city? What do refugees carry in their heart besides the paltry few belongings in their cart or car? What practices nourish and carry the collective wisdom of survival and resistance? Food, dwelling, security, health care, and water are immediate needs.

Noura Alkhalili who did her field work in 2013. She writes “The fellaheen in Palestine did not need any borders to identify their plots; fig and olive trees were convenient landmarks for everyone in the community.” She also explains how both houses and trees could become private property. Trees were mnemonic too as reminders, survivors. “As long as grass grows” in the indigenous phrase of Turtle Island. Les Levidow explains that one Palestinian response to the systematic re-engineering of land and the expropriation of Arabs from it, has been the “unauthorized” planting of olive trees. The olive has been a primary cultigen of Palestine for at least eight thousand years. John Berger, the art critic with a Tolstoy-like love of peasants, writes of “the medlars and mulberry trees of Ramallah reminded him of the time before the Nakbah when it was a town of leisure and ease.”

Noura Alkhalili “The fellaheen resistance from below, against the British project of enclosure and commodification of land, was ultimately about the protection of the commons.” Alkhalili reports from the Shu’faat refugee camp of East Jerusalem and how Palestinian contractors built high rises on musha’a land preventing Israeli’s from using it to build the separation wall. She refers to “the quiet encroachment of the ordinary” street vendors, homeless folks. “Enclosures from below are what happen when propertyless subalterns encroach on commons.” 1114. They too take steps to private property. “a process of class formation has occurred, tied to the individual appropriation of musha’a land.” Raising the question, “is this rather a form of submission to both prevailing capitalist and colonial systems?”

“While in parts of the world we can witness indigenous and activist movements seeking to reclaim the commons from private ownership, the opposite is happening in Palestine.”

In 1895 Theodore Herzl, as author of *The Jewish State*, a founding father of Zionism, confided in his diary, “we must expropriate gently the private property assigned to us...” 80% of Arab land taken away since 1948. Among its methods was digging deeper artesian wells for water. A third of Israeli water supply is pumped from the West Bank. The hydrological system of domestic, municipal, agricultural, and industrial is controlled Israeli water company. Jabotinsky’s 1923 essay “The Iron Wall” as well as Herzl compared their Zionist project with parallels to the expropriations of the English and American colonists.

Noura Alkhalili bears close and scrupulous witness to the urban transformation of musha’a under conditions of hostile occupation. Gary Fields provides an historical mirror for our reflections. His study is in three parts: English enclosures, Indigenous American conquest, and Palestinian colonization. These are his three “cases” of enclosure. English ideas and practices “migrate” to America; English enclosures are in the same “lineage” as Palestine’s. An older study spoke of “stages” not “cases.” What is the difference? He does not write of money or work. The re-mapping and boundary-making conforms to modernization and territorial ambitions of estate owners. “In each case, systems of landholding deriving from custom and imbued with collective rights of use and cooperative forms of management came under attack by modernizers.”

Gary Fields employs Edward Said’s term “imaginative geography” as a first step in colonization, from which maps and a landscape will be realized. Land rights are rights of exclusion, delimiting mine from thine in the old phrase. Under the Ottoman cultivators of Palestine created “a unique system of communal tenure known as musha’a – gave villagers control over cropping practices and spread the risks of subsistence agriculture.

With the collapse of the Ottoman empire at the end of World War One the British were mandated to govern Palestine and its infamous Balfour declaration promised the banker Rothschild “a national home for the Jewish people.” The British mandate and 70% of village lands were still held in musha’a tenure.

English land policy was hostile to musha’a. Sir Ernest Dowson, engineer and surveyor, advocated enclosure and partition of common land. He completed the first cadastral survey of Palestine. In 1925 his “Preliminary Study of Land Tenure in Palestine” was in full continuity with Arthur Young, John Sinclair, and William Blith. The British succeeded surveying and entitling 25% of Palestine. This weakening of musha’a was a victory for the Zionist movement, as land could now be bought and sold. Even still by 1947 Zionists obtained by purchase less than 10% of arable Palestinian land – the village and aspects of

musha’a still dominated. The work of land registration was led by Ernest Dowson. He led the

cadasters, or those making the cadastre or register of extent, value, and ownership of property. Their work preceded Zionist colonization.

Then again in the Peel Commission of 1937 the musha’a was identified as a disincentive in face of stubborn resistance. The Arabs regarded the musha’a “as a safeguard against alienation,” to quote the Commission. Perhaps it is this relation to the land in the face of the British Empire that gave to the fellaheen its world-famous character expressed in the Arabic word sumud, or steadfast.

The musha’a village resembled the English village with its collective decisions making, resource allocation, fruits of open field agriculture, and basket of common rights. The struggle is for liberation not for a new state. “The British Mandate’s survey and cadastral and mapping project ... sought to centralize power and decision-making away from the indigenous population... [The] project’s largest obstacle: the musha’a, a land-equalizing system managed directly by the peasants themselves.” It is an Arabic word for “commons.” “the musha’a was characterized by the periodic redistribution of agricultural plots among peasant cultivators who held claims to parts of the land in the form of shares.” “the continual practice of negotiating land redistribution placed emphasis on relationships, accountability, and affective ties among villagers.”

Land in England: meadow, woods, fens, heaths, fells, moors, marsh, as well as arable lands. Each with a ecological features particular to it and therefore modes of customary appropriation also distinct. Robinson Crusoe (1719) the classic text of individualism, enclosure, possession, and conquest. The radical English poet, William Blake, at the peak of revolutionary movement, against oppressors and enclosers, those who sought in the name of profit and commerce (“improvement” they called it) to close the open fields, wrote that “to create a little flower is the labor of ages” and then again that “improvement makes straight roads but the crooked roads without improvement are roads of Genius.” The English “right to roam” is related to the Palestinian “right to return.”

The fence, the hedge, the wall, the haw-haw, razor wire, barbed wire, brick and cinder block became the means and symbols of this vast enclosing. Such architecture joined law (criminalization of custom) and cartography (theodolite, chains) to destroy communities based on common lands. In England they called such lands “waste.” In America it was called “wilderness.” Or in Latin, the language of the Roman empire, which instead were termed terra nullius or vacuum domicilium. Children sought “vacant lots” for their play, sports, and games. In contrast to the vernacular whose outstanding genius was the poet and commoner, John Clare, beloved two centuries later in Palestine.

The olive, the apricot, the vine, the pomegranate, the walnut, almonds, oranges and lemons were its fruits. 70% of arable land at the time of

the nakbah still was held as musha’a. This I learn from Gary Fields, *Enclosure: Palestinian Landscapes in a Historical Mirror* (California, 2017). Through the struggles the musha’a will be transformed. Vestiges of mutuality remain even in the city and its refugee camps following the violence of war, dispossession, and privatization of land.

That violence accompanies expropriation and even Lord Balfour in his diary compared it to the dispossession of the Sioux, or Lakota people, as I learn from Nick Estes and the Red Nation. The Brits themselves compared it to the Parliamentary enclosures of the 18th century.

“The most striking ... finding in *Enclosure*, is the enduring influence of ‘land improvement’ as the ideological inspiration for the reimagination of landscape and a driver of the process to enclose and take possession of land.”

Maps, laws, and fences are the techniques of acquisition and possession. For England it was profit, for America it became race, and for Palestine it was religion. “these three case studies of dispossession offer distinct pathways to modernity”

This needs to be contrasted with a method which instead of relying on stages depends on “cases” such as we find in the book *Enclosure*. In three parts Gary Fields book, *Enclosure*, analyzes enclosure in England from the 14th to the 18th century, it describes the conquest and reservations of indigenous people in north America, and finally it describes the Palestinian case or the settler colonialism of the Zionists. Capitalism, colonialism, and nationalism are the terms that are offered in an attempt to generalize from the “cases.” Maps, laws, and fences are the techniques of acquisition and possession. For England it was profit, for America it became race, and for Palestine it was religion. “These three case studies of dispossession offer distinct pathways to modernity,” he writes.

Enclosure brings about odium because it amounts to dispossession, impoverishment, depopulation, forced migration, dearth, , nostalgia, sadness and trauma. The hedgerow materialized enclosure, so did the straight road.

Indigenous people of north America cultivated plants with three outcomes the were corn people with the three sisters, women did the cultivation, and the village became basic unity of society. “A discourse of land improvement and property rights – supplemented with notions of savagery and racism – had settled upon the landscape Checker board grid of municipal, county boundaries within which indigenous people were enclosed in reservations.

Commoners in England were cast as “savages.” As such they belonged to far-away places (India, America, Africa) in far-away times (B.C., neolithic, feudal). To Arthur Young the theorist and first comprehensive chronicler of enclosures, commoners were “the Goths and Vandals of the open fields.” Linking commoners of the metropole with indigenous people of the world in the stadial interpretation of human history and its four stages leading to “civilization” or “modernization.” and likewise linking commoners and indigenous people against economic “progress,” and “improvement,” and “development,” the buzz words of planners, politicians, and policy makers everywhere.

Stages of economic growth or stages of the modes of production, the bourgeoisie has produced theories of historical change with economic determinism by describing human history in four or five “stages.” William Robertson’s History of America published in 1777 in the midst of the American War of Independence developed the “stages” theory of the progress of “mankind” from savagery to civilization. It was principally Scotsmen such as philosophical theory of Adam Ferguson, the economics of Adam Smith Primitive communism, pastoralism, agriculture, and commerce, or in another nomenclature: savagery, barbarism, feudalism, and capitalism. Fundamental in each was the technological relationship to the earth as well as to one another. Gathering herbs, hunting in the forest, cultivating the soil, subterranean mining, until quantity overcame quality in incessant demonic accumulation. It was a powerful but illusory theory. Marxism to the extent that it accepted these stages added another to follow capitalism, namely, communism. What was the dynamic of change from one stage or mode of production to another?

Marx writes Vera Zasulich about “all the historical twists and turns” or the “frightful vicissitudes” which characterize such transitions. To her he makes a powerful distinction between the “archaic commune” when communal residence was in a single house, as Iroquois or “people of the long house,” when kinship and communal membership considerably overlapped, and which was unlike the agrarian commune in so far as the open field was undivided into individual strips. Labor and land were collective. In the archaic commune while a dualism prevailed

in the agrarian commune with some collective elements and some individualist elements. He warned her that “to save the Russian commune, there must be a Russian Revolution.” Marx’s view of history is not linear but spiral where the past is not dead in fact it is not even past. Hence, “the return of modern societies to a higher form of an ‘archaic’ type of collective ownership and production.”

In March 1881 Czar Alexander II was assassinated in St Petersburg. A month earlier in February Vera Zasulich who herself had attempted to assassinate the mayor of St Petersburg and served time in prison for it, found herself with a “life and death question” to put to Karl Marx. His response was interesting. He wrote four drafts of a letter to her. In the end he sent her a relatively brief reply and no uncertainty in his conclusion: “the special study I have made of it, including a search for original source material, has convinced me that the commune is the fulcrum for social regeneration in Russia.” The previous four drafts provide us with an idea of his “special study.”

In his response to Vera Zasulich Marx quoted from Capital whose first volume she will translate into Russian. He states that “the expropriation of the agricultural producer, of the peasant, from the soil is the basis of the whole process.”

What did Karl Marx say about communism? Yes, the scepter haunting Europe as he writes in The Communist Manifesto (1848). “In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.” What sense was he referring to? The employment of property as the means of exploiting others. For a definition we go to what he wrote a few years earlier in The German Ideology (1845), “We call communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things.” He puts practice ahead of theory. He says this in a context which rendered the great mass of humanity propertyless, destitute, and wanting. And yet it existed “world-historically.” Years later in The Critique of the Gotha Program composed in 1875 and published in 1891 he insisted that “every step of real movement is more important and a dozen programs.” Here he repeated the definition that was common among revolutionaries of ’48, originated earlier “from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs.” This principle applies to the ideals of the musha’a. Communism and commons begin to overlap.

“Not only was the musha’a seen as an impediment to local agricultural development and Zionist acquisition but it repre-

sented a non-productive use of natural resources inconsistent with European notions of ‘improvement’ and ‘development.’” These protestations did not originate with Karl Marx. The project is whrl- wide and History is full of them. Here are three examples. From England’s oldest settler colony, Ireland, William Drennan (1754-1820), founder of the United Irishmen, coiner of the jewel, “the emerald isle,” wrote in 1794 as part of his defense against sedition, “By attaching the oldest inheritance of the whole people to certain round spots of earth, gives a locality to liberty, inconsistent with its nature: turns legislators into land-measurers and land-measurers into legislators; extending lines of demarcation, on the one side of which privilege is heaped up, and on the other common right trodden down.”

Or at the time of colonization of Massachusetts the indigenous sachem Massasoit of the Wampanoag, asked, “What is this you all property? It cannot be the Earth for the land is our Mother nourishing all her children, beasts, birds, fish, and all men. The woods, the streams, everything on it belongs to everybody and is for the use of all. How can one man say it belongs only to him?”

George Jackson’s questions from inside the USA prison, “Who has done the most dying? Most of the work? Most of the time in prison (on Max Row)? Who is the hindmost in every aspect of the social, political, and economic life?”

Idealists seeking reform often return to study life on the planet prior to the privatization of property or the dominion of money and market. Land is the ancient foundation of the entire biome or human society. Neither state nor nation neither imperium (sovereignty, war) nor dominium (borders, property). Instead, omnia sunt communia.

The musha’a evolved with the miri agrarian policy of the Ottomans comprising 87%-90% of agricultural land of the empire. By the end of the Ottoman empire 1914 the musha’a amounted to 70% of total land. It constituted 55% of the cultivated land in 1922; 46% in 1930; 25% at end of Mandate.

However, only a fifth of the total land of Palestine had been divide into demarcated units. In 1947 Jewish settlement amounted to 8% of land surface in Palestine. By 1947 only 20% of land was settled with title. By 2017 Jewish settlement and infrastructure covered 85% of the territory.

Gary Fields distinguishes imperium from dominium following the distinction made under Roman law, where imperium refers to the territorial extent of royal sovereignty and dominium refers to the right to possess land within the imperial boundaries. 116. It may parallel the difference between discovery and settlement.

What is omitted is the transition from one to the other: war, disease, rape! Rule by the stick - beating wives, parents beating children, masters beating journeymen. The former inhabitants whose “discovery” was so heralded by Christian missionaries are “absent” killed, or if they survive to become self-alienated only shadows of their former selves poisoned by alcohol, shamed, dishonored, raped, destined to die young.

It was not just law that modern colonists took from the Roman empire of old. Soldierly virtues, honor, fortitude, suffering, wounds, loss of limbs, blindness – were extolled. A huge array of cunning military punishments were passed down.

It was a huge patriarchal affair, teaching the young men and boys how to die, obedience to the state, rape upon Mother earth, and white supremacy with its albi-fying powers to effect discourse, iconography, and structures of knowledge, for “whiteness” was born in the chromatics of alchemy. This is what the young Marx meant when he wrote, “To have its sins forgiven mankind has only to declare them to be what they really are.” (1843). The sin here is theft of land. To forgive this sin is to give it back. But as Caliban said, This island’s mine by Sycorax my mother, Which thou tak’st from me.

Was not Sycorax from the Levant? These are remnants of one European empire to another. Yes, true, but just as deep are the women, the foundation of life, the preserver of community, the keeper of the hearth, responsible for the reproduction of human social life.

When it was said by the Romans of the quasi-independent plebeians that the proletarians were good for nothing except having babies, they gave us a word understood around the world. It refers to women especially, to aunts and “aunties,” to nannas and grannies, to sisters and sisterhood. This is why in South African it is said ‘touch the woman, touch the rock.’ Women make the human community – cooking, safety, care, and memory. Whatever world-system, call it savagery, barbarism, feudalism, capitalism, whatever, you will find women responsible for its reproduction. This not only remains true, it is now truer than ever. The extended family, or hamula, was the basis of the village community and the

musha’a.

Christian Zionism is old as capitalism dating from the 16th century. In England it reached an important peak at the time of Oliver Cromwell, the great revolutionary commander of the English bourgeois revolution. His secretary argued that the

Jews should go to Palestine. At the same time after hundreds of years exclusion Jews were permitted to return to England under Cromwell. Most were Sephardim linked from Amsterdam to the Mediterranean and Atlantic by kinship and commerce. Cromwell asserted himself as an imperial sovereign ready to compete with the other imperial powers and none had as great a reach as the Dutch. Cromwell was a bourgeois commander exerting his people by war reducing obstacles to the enclosure of land, invading Ireland, defeating Spain,, capturing Jamaica, and a Zionist. This was Jihad, Protestant style for it was done in the name of Jahweh.

When Oliver Cromwell chopped off the King’s head inaugurating the capitalist state he appointed Walter Blith the surveyor of confiscated royalist estates. Blith summed up his years of confiscation with a linguistic sleight of hand worthy of George Orwell’s double-think. In 1649 he published The English Improver followed in 1652 with The English Improver Improved which links confiscation, simple robbery, the privatization of the commons with human progress. Robbery becomes improvement! Custom opposed improvement.

As Marx pointed out, “Cromwell and the English people had borrowed speech, passions, and illusions from the Old Testament for their bourgeois revolution.”

A number of Cromwell’s close advisors, came into contact with Dutch-based Jews and advocated Jewish resettlement in England (they had been banned from the country since the 13th century). Millenarian eschatology (2nd coming and all that), imperial competition for Atlantic commerce, and colonial settlement of Massachusetts Bay combined to welcome Sephardic Jews from Amsterdam. Two Baptists petitioned to in January 1649 for Jewish readmission: “That this Nation of England, with the inhabitants of the Netherlands, shall be the first and the readiest to transport Israel’s sons and daughters on their ships to the land promised to their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for an everlasting inheritance.” Christian Zionism was inseparable from the imperial beast and the English Revolution.

It is important to see the slave plantation and the settler’s trading posts as parallel in time even with causal relations and economic utilities with one another.

In other words if, like Fields, we compare the three cases as three “acts” in a drama, the unifying plot is missing. An explanation that would include the transitions from each to the other would have to include money, war, work, and Africa. His emphasis is on law, maps, and fences.

The “cases” have an actual, historical relationship to one another inasmuch as the enclosures in England led to the wars and colonization in Ireland as well as to the north American colonies, in a plundering search for new commodities and new means of expropriation and enslaving of labor, or inasmuch as the wealth generated by the eradication of north American indigenous landscapes (the railways, the great plains) leads to an insatiable demand for petroleum always lurking behind the great powers of the middle east (the pipe lines, Zionism). This was the bourgeois revolution (1649) whose effects are on a par with the French (1789) or Russian (1917) revolutions. One would not want to substitute “stage” for “case” to resolve the problem. Rather the issue of interpretation requires instead an understanding of enclosure that is a necessary feature of the expansion of the system capitalist relations.

At a theoretical level the three terms of capitalism, colonialism, and nationalism are inter-connected even though imperialism is inherent to capitalism which obeys the fundamental law, the impulse of the whole system: “Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the prophets!” writes Marx. National liberation is inherent to the resistance of colonialism though it may accommodate easily, as Fanon explained, with capitalism. To the formulation X squared (exploitation and expropriation) we add a shadow to each: exploitation + extermination, expropriation + extraction. This is where we are in Palestine now, with the genocide in Gaza and the extraction of land and oil. X squared is brought to X cubed by adding “excuses.” The devastation, genocide, poisoning, and plunder of the ruling class is fobbed off in a series of institutionalized excuses of economic development, modernization, social improvement, and security. Each of the excuses has its discourse, its militarization, academic set ups, racism, and politics. Like all excuses they seem plausible, normal even, until their shadows emerge. This is how the proletariat is created. In those parts of Palestine dominated by tenancy to landlords “the peasant cultivators are a shiftless class ... and almost to a man in debt,” according to the reporter to the 1891 Palestine Exploration Fund, and which inevitably leads to yielding his claim to land and he “becomes a Sherik- el-Hawa (Partner of the Wind).”

One might imagine how a poet might interpret this famous Arabic figure of speech. Mother Earth has expelled her ancient cultivators who now disperse through the world much as seeds or spores [?] to join the various other particulates in the atmosphere. One knows there are many winds to pay attention to, from the harmata off the Sahara into west Africa to the El Niño from the Pacific Ocean upon the hurricanes. The partners of the wind. The power of those partners of the wind will

be reflected down the ages in Anglo cultural productions from the painted murals inside restaurants reminding customers of home to sublime expressions of winds such as Shakespeare’s Tempest or Herman Melville’s Typhoo. Proletarians can’t rub two coins together, they have no land, no village relations, no subsistence, no wage. This is why the partners of the wind are so important: as proletarians they will carry with them the musha’a and as steadfast or sumud. Again the rock. To stand confidently, relaxed, firmly, a word similar to “upright” which also combines social virtue with the physical upright posture of the body as in righteousness associated with truth, valor, probity, and principle (what do you stand for?). It is nothing less than the transition from expropriation to exploitation. “The starting point”, Marx calls it, of the capitalist mode of production. This tearing apart, this separation, this wrenching asunder, the “irreparable break,” the “metabolic rift.” In that transition from expropriation to exploitation,

there’s a pause. Ed Emory after traveling with them in the Red Sea explains, “These are the people who wait – wait their turn, wait in line, wait in huddled groups, wait looking through the gaps in the dock gates, wait for some official to deign to notice their existence. Always waiting.” They are, he says, “the people of the earth.” The world system of empire, war, and slavery has only led to an earth system of flood, fire, poison, and disease. The multiple catastrophes we anticipate with the despoilation of the earth systems are the nakbah writ large. We have gone past the point of no return. Nevertheless, we are at a turning point. David Graeber with David Wengrow write, “we are living in what the Greeks called ... Kairos – the right time – for a metamorphosis of the gods, i.e. of the fundamental principles and symbols.” These chroniclers of the first or earliest world-wide human social formations call this “the right time,” the time of transition to another social formation.

Gendered, racialized, imperialist capitalism

has ruined everything, almost. Marx’s reply to Vera Zasulich, “it is a question no longer of a problem to be solved but simply of an enemy to be beaten.” Who or what among us will bring about the required metamorphosis? To answer we need not go to the dawn of everything. The musha’a helps our transition from one world, one outlook, to another – the commune, the commons. Although the psalmist (37th) promises “the humble will possess the land and enjoy untold prosperity” let us forgo archaic prophecies and conclude on a healing note of etymology. Gaza was a textile center and gave its name to a most useful weaving, namely, gauze, the loosely woven fabric of cotton, silk, or linen used in dressing wounds thanks to its ability to absorb blood and to act as a barrier to its further loss.

**THEY MAKE CONDITION
WE MAKE SITUATION**

**THEY MAKE FENCES
WE MAKE BARRICADES**

**THEY RENOVATE EMPIRE
WE EVAPORATE**

ECOFEMINISM

MARIA MIES AND VANDANA SHIVA

/ excerpt from the book - chapter 9 /

WOMEN HAVE NO FATHERLAND

Maria Mies

In 1989 when, every week, the dissatisfied people of the erstwhile German Democratic Republic (GDR) gathered in Leipzig for their ‘Monday-demonstrations’ they shouted the slogan: ‘Deutschland, einig Vaterland!’ (Germany, united Fatherland!) They expected that all their problems would be solved by the rapid (re) unification of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR). They hoped that with political unification they would not only enjoy the same freedom as the citizens of West Germany but also share the same living standard as those ‘privileged’ Germans in the capitalist West. In view of the euphoria surrounding this slogan it was pertinent to ask what this unification process meant for women in both East and West Germany. What could women expect from this German ‘Fatherland’? Or for that matter, from any fatherland? Were the changes in the socialist states of the Eastern block not accompanied by rising nationalism? What does this new wave of nationalism mean for women? What role do they play in these processes? And finally, what role did women play historically in the rise of the modern nation state — because it is the nation state that is referred to as the fatherland par excellence? Should not at least feminists remember Virginia Woolf’s words, that women have no land? Or, as I want to put it here: women have no fatherland? Moreover, from an ecofeminist perspective we have to ask whether these processes lead to further environmental degradation or not. Will the new nation-states protect nature better than the old ideological states? In the following pages I shall try to answer these and some related questions by postulating theses.

Women pay the price

As is now well-known women in both East and West Germany are paying the price for German unification.

In January 1990, in East Berlin, I attended one of the first congresses of the then GDR’s newly-founded Unabhängiger Frauenverband (UFV) (Independent Women’s Association).¹ The women who had founded this new organization in protest against the state-ordained socialist Demokratischer Frauenverband (Democratic Women’s Association) were full of energy and determined to participate fully and equally in the processes of political change that were taking place. They decided to take part in the spring 1990 elections — as a separate women’s organization. They were resolutely confident that this would enable them to preserve some of the benefits — denied to their Western sisters — women had enjoyed in socialist Germany; and simultaneously they wanted to fight patriarchal structures, which had remained intact under socialism.

The fast set-back to these high hopes came in the elections in March 1990: the Independent Women’s Association failed to win enough votes. It had formed an election alliance with the East German Green Party, but even the Greens were unwilling to give a seat to the women’s organization because it did not get enough votes. The next disappointment came with the FRG-GDR unification on 3 October 1990. After the all-German Federal elections in December 1990, when the Christian Democrats (CDU) under Chancellor Kohl won a majority (particularly owing to the enthusiasm of the East Germans) it became clear that the women would be unable to protect and preserve those institutions, structures and laws which had been created under socialism to ‘draw women into production on an equal footing’ with men. Among others these were creches for small children, job security for working mothers, the right to send a child to a kindergarten, a year’s paid maternity leave, the guarantee of a flat for single mothers, paid leave for mothers in the event of a child’s illness.

In addition, the GDR’s abortion law had been more liberal than in West Germany. East German women could have an abortion — on demand — up to the third month of pregnancy. It soon became evident that the fact that the East Germans had opted to ‘join’ West Germany, thereby accepting the West German Constitution as it stood, did not allow the women any room for negotiation: West German laws were simply extended to East Germany.

Meanwhile the euphoria in East Germany has given way to a deep sense of disappointment and depression. Women particularly suffer most from the rising unemployment in the East. They lost their creches, they became the first to be fired when factories were wound up, offices closed, or the universities were abgewickelt (de-developed) according to the laws of the market economy. East German women now experience the classic process of belonging to the capitalist reserve army of labour; they are being sent home to ‘Kinder und Küche’ (children and kitchen). In spring 1991, there were more than 1.2 million unemployed in East Germany, more than 50 per cent of whom were women.

The politicians kept assuring people in East Germany that their economic problems, particularly the high unemployment, were only temporary. They attributed the lack of growth to 40 years of socialism and to excessive wage demands of the trade unions. But even a year later, in February 1992, the economic and social situation in the so-called new federal states in East Germany was worse than the previous year, particularly for women.

In January 1992 the total figure for unemployed in united Germany was 3.2 million, an increase of 6.3 per cent for West Germany and 16.5 per cent for East Germany in comparison to the previous month. Of the 3.2 million unemployed 1.35 million live in East Germany, which has only 17 million inhabitants, whereas West Germany has 60 million; and, as expected, the greater impact of this rising unemployment falls on women. The proportion of women unemployed rose from 50 per cent in 1991 to 62 per cent in 1992. Among all women 21.8 per cent are jobless, whereas it is only 12.6 per cent among the men.²

For many of the women this means dependence on social welfare, particularly for those who have no ‘earning husband’: the divorced or unmarried, and those who are too old to find another job. One of the main points of the January 1990 UFV congress was that women wanted to maintain their economic existence independently of a male breadwinner. However, now, they are experiencing housewifization,³ as is common to many women under capitalism.

Confrontation with the realities of capitalism, which had so far been known only through propaganda and TV, came as a shock to many women in East Germany. At a conference in Dresden on ‘World Economy, Ecology and Solidarity’ (17 January 1992)⁴ I witnessed the bitterness, anger and depression of many women in East Germany. They were particularly bitter about the abrupt devaluation of their qualifications and education. Women who had been in professional positions and who had gained self-respect from their knowledge and experience are now unemployed and have to undergo a re-education programme for such flimsy occupations as, for example, a ‘European Assistant’. Due to these experiences, most East German women present at this meeting — and many East German men too — immediately understood my thesis, that capitalism always needs colonies, internal and external, and that as housewives, women everywhere constitute one internal colony. East Germany is now again part of the political German nation-state, but its actual economic, social and socio-psychological status is that of a colony. This is how people at least expressed their feelings at this meeting. West German ‘development experts’ are being sent to East Germany to help them to learn the laws of a market economy and democracy. The East Germans have coined the term for these Westerners: ‘Bessenwessi’, literally: ‘People from West Germany who know

everything better’. The dilemma for women and men in East Germany is that with the disappearance of the socialist alternative, capitalism appears as the only other possible solution. But they still have to realize that capitalism has two sides: the winners and the losers.

I was surprised, however, that the women formulated their rejection to the policy of ‘catching-up development’ (see Ch. 4). They understood that this catching-up strategy was neither a solution for women, for the colonized in the Third World, nor for the erstwhile socialist countries.

Women in West Germany too, have to pay for ‘Germany, united Fatherland’. Many of the projects and improvements for which the women’s movement had fought such as safe houses for battered women, creches for working women’s children, for example, are threatened because the cash to finance them is now either diverted to accommodate refugees from the East or for the reconstruction of East Germany. The united fatherland is proving to be more costly than was expected in the first nationalistic euphoria (including increased taxes), therefore, this extra money will be obtained by denying it to those projects women wanted in order to improve their situation.

As a feminist who has studied the functioning of capitalist patriarchy for a long time, I am not surprised by the cold blooded strategy which is used vis-a-vis women in East, as well as in West Germany. I am rather surprised at the optimism of East German women in hoping that the achievement of political unity in Germany would give them a greater opportunity to influence their country’s politics. But the history of the unification process is very similar to that of other revolutions. Women had fought in the forefront of the protest movement in East Germany, and played a crucial role in the round-table negotiations in the GDR before unification. But when political unity was achieved and when the distribution of the new power was on the agenda of history the women were again relocated to the place patriarchy had long since assigned to them.

Must we conclude from this that there is some unwritten law decreeing that men will always allow women to fight in the forefront of social movements and revolutions, but it is men who harvest the fruits of victory while women are relegated once more to their traditional position in patriarchal society? Is it, as Christina Thurmer-Rohr suggests, a kind of male ‘monoculture’ that always overrides the political will of women?⁵ In order to understand better what the relationship is between women and these so-called fatherlands, we must look more closely at the history of the modern nation-state and ask what its emergence had to do with women’s oppression and exploitation.

Colonization of women

Since the beginning of the modern nation-state (the fatherlands) women have been colonized. This means the modern nation-state necessarily controlled their sexuality, their fertility and their work capacity or labour power. Without this colonization neither capitalism nor the modern nation state could have been sustained. And it is this colonization that constitutes the foundation of what is now being called ‘civil society’.

Social analysts have frequently concluded that the most important modern division of labour is that between the so-called public wage labour of mainly men and so-called private housework of women. In this division, wage labour is directly controlled by capital, or the economy. But the economy cannot directly control women’s sexuality, fertility and work capacity; to do this, the state, with its family policy, is necessary. The state must also exercise control of women, because it needs soldiers to defend its territory, functionaries for its bureaucracy; and, too, the economy needs new labourers and consumers. Women are essential for this procreation of people. But

neither the state nor the economy need women qua women, but only to fulfil a particular ‘role’. In the erstwhile GDR women coined the slogan: ‘Without women you can’t make a state’. This is correct, but its precise meaning is rather contrary to what the GDR women had struggled for, that is: to be equal partners in running this state. In reality this phrase means that the women of a nation-state must be colonized as housewives in order to maintain this modern state.⁶

This housewifization is not the result of some inborn male sadism but is necessary for an economy which has as its goal unlimited growth. Within a limited world these goals can be achieved only by dividing up the world and exploiting and colonizing the separate parts. The task of the new state, of the nationstate, is to organize this external and internal colonization — and that means to legalize it. As Polanyi has convincingly demonstrated, the modern capitalist market economy did not emerge merely through the free play of the market forces, as liberalism would have us believe. This new market, particularly the market of labour power, and of land, had to be brought into existence, had to be created by direct state intervention and power.⁷ This state intervention also aimed to manipulate the reproductive behaviour of women; nineteenth century family policy was, and remains, largely population policy.⁸

In addition, the nation-state’s task is to mediate between what are universally declared human rights, according to which all people are equal and free, and the de facto unequal segments of the different external and internal colonies: between wage-workers and non-wage workers; between citizens and foreigners; between men and women; between ethnic and racial minorities and the majority. Here we encounter a structural contradiction of ‘civil society’. All modern democratic nation-states have written into their constitution the fundamental human rights of equality, freedom and fraternity. But if these rights, particularly the right to equality, were implemented for all people not only politically, but economically as well, the economic system would collapse. Therefore, foreign workers, women, those demanding political asylum and so on, are denied economic and political status equal to that enjoyed by the ‘normal’ male citizen.⁹

A similar contradiction can be observed when we look at the external history of the modern nation-state, that is: the contradiction between global world-market orientation and national self-interest.¹⁰

Global orientation and national self-interest

The modern fatherlands, the nation-states, were constructed and can survive only on the foundation of a colonial, world economic order. Since from its outset capitalism functioned as a ‘world system’ (Wallerstein) which overran and conquered foreign motherlands, it was able to accumulate more wealth in the centre and there construct the modern nationstate. These new nation-states, these fatherlands, also integrated, that is, swallowed up, smaller countries and tribes and homogenized them within a new ‘national culture’. In this process the competition of the modern nation-states about economic and political hegemony played a crucial role.

What appears as a contradiction in this thesis — global orientation on one hand and national self-interest on the other — is, at a closer look, a necessary precondition both for the nation-state and the market economy or capitalism. This economy needs borders open to the outside world, free access to foreign markets, environments, resources and labour power.¹¹ Economic liberalism therefore propagates the free world market and free trade. But this freedom is not meant to extend to the colonies; trade relations between the core states of this world system¹² and the peripheries or colonies are a one way street. The peripheries are denied equal access to the markets, the resources and the labour power of the core states. The relationship between the two, so-called ‘trade partners’ is not one of reciprocity, but the economically strong — the industrial nations — the USA, Europe, Japan, determine the price of the products imported from the peripheral countries.

The GATT-negotiations are further evidence of the asymmetric and hierarchical relationship between the rich North and the poor South (see chapter 14) and of the contradictory policy of free- trade and open, world-market orientation, the rhetoric ‘one world’, and the pressure brought to bear on Third World countries (particularly by the USA), to eliminate all ‘trade barriers’ against the importation of goods produced in the USA. In particular the clauses related to the new patent rights and intellectual property are meant to open up Third World markets for new US- products, such as genetically engineered seeds, for example, and intended to facilitate control over these new markets (see chapter 11). The service sector, too, expects new markets in the South. This policy no longer respects the sovereignty of the South’s nation-states, which

might have opted for a policy of self-sufficiency and import control. This sovereignty has to retreat before the trade interests of the North’s transnational corporations, above all their needs for new markets. Thus, the global orientation of the North’s nationstates and their national self-interest are two sides of the same coin.

Violence and the state

In order to protect these contradictory relations from opposition either from within or outside, the modern nation-state needs to exercise violence and coercion. The nation-state, as Giddens shows, was constructed by means of direct violence,¹³ but it cannot be upheld without state monopoly over direct violence and means of coercion in the form of the military and the police. This monopoly of direct violence implies the militarization of men, with the army as the new school of manhood. Militarization of men, on the other hand, always implies violence against, and the degradation of women.TM

Susan Brownmiller was one of the first feminists to show the close connection between warfare against foreign peoples and warfare against women in the form of rape. The discussion on rape and warfare or militarism for long centred on the question of whether men are inherently more aggressive than women. The root cause was thus sought in the psychological and physiological differences between men and women, while the economic and political context was often ignored. Similarly, Cynthia Enloe’s analysis of the construction of the new Rambo-image as the model for modern maleness, and its counterpart the weak, feminine, passive woman, describes correctly what is happening at present. But she explains these new strategies merely by the role-theory and suggests a change of role-images of men and women.¹⁵

Such analyses are useful for an assessment of the situation, but by ignoring the fact that the capitalist-patriarchal nation state, the fatherland, needs exactly such images of maleness as Rambo personifies in order to pursue its economic and political goals, they fail to explain why, in modern nation-states, men are being militarized and why this militarization always hits women. Not only the women of the ‘enemy’, but also the women of their own nation.

The Gulf War clearly illustrated this combination of Ramboism and political economic interest on both sides. Neither George Bush nor Saddam Hussein were prepared to relinquish their position of ‘the strong man’; both interpreted withdrawal as a sign of weakness, that is, femaleness. Mitterand, the French President, even talked of a quasi natural ‘logic of war’ which had to take its course, irrespective of all warnings of the consequences of such a war, when two brutally armed Rambos confront each other. Neither he nor any one of the men involved in this war were willing to admit that this so-called war-logic is nothing but Rambo-logic, patriarchal male logic which is simply betting on the survival of the strongest. The victors are always right. But this Ramboism was/is closely linked to the economic and political interests of the USA, and the other rich industrial countries of the North, to control access to the oil reserves in the Middle East. The industrialized North’s living standards depend to a very high degree on their free access to cheap oil, most of which comes from the Gulf countries. As is well known, these oil reserves will be exhausted in the foreseeable future. The Gulf War can also be seen as the first of the new colonial wars about the distribution of scarce resources between countries of the North and the South; wars of distribution that will need more Ramboized men and also a strengthening of the concept of the nation-state!¹⁶ The main victims in these wars are not only women and children, but also nature.

Today we experience the dissolution not only of the big hegemonic military blocks but also of states like Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. But this does not lead, as was expected, to an era of global peace. Instead, the external enemy is replaced by internal enemies, particularly in the former Soviet block. New nationalisms are emerging in the Soviet Union, in Yugoslavia, in Rumania, for example. All these nationalities, which supposedly were integrated in the big socialist fatherland, now demand and fight for autonomy and against each other. Moreover, most want not only autonomy, but a separate nation- state, a separate fatherland. In these new civil wars young men play the main role. The militarization of these young men goes beyond the immediate aim of these wars, it determines the concept of their role- identity for a whole generation.

As Cynthia Enloe has shown, this also applies for the young men who fight in the guerrilla forces of liberation movements, as, for example, in the Philippines. The circumstances of militarization have formulated an identity of manhood as manifest in one who carries a gun and can shoot and kill.¹⁷ All they have learned is to be a soldier, as can be observed today in Lebanon,

Sri Lanka, South Africa, Israel, for example; and particularly in ex-Yugoslavia; eventually these young men are unable to distinguish friend from foe. Warfare has become a way of life. He who is able to kill determines who may live, not he who is born of a woman.

Mother nation and father state

To legitimize this militarization of men and the ‘logic of warfare’ and to bring about their identification with a fatherland, it is essential that the yearning for the destroyed and lost ‘motherlands’ (homelands) be mobilized and projected on to the nation-state. Nationalism, as well as religious fundamentalism, thrive on the social-psychological plane, on these yearnings and projections.

In spite of all wars that took place historically to create the nation- state, in spite of colonial expansion and the material benefits this brought to the citizens of the North’s nation-states, and in spite of the competition between different nation-states and all internal pacification by the bureaucracy and police, the modern capitalist nation-state would have been unable to procure the loyalty of its citizens, to mobilize people in order to create their emotional identification with this new state, without taking recourse to the older category of the nation. Father State had to be married to Mother Nation.

What is the meaning of the term ‘nation’?

The Romans used the word *natio* for the tribes they had conquered. They themselves called the people living in the Roman Empire ‘*populus romanus*’, the Roman people. *Natio* is obviously derived from *natus*, that is ‘born’. *Natio* is a person’s place of birth, his/her tribe, territory, homeland. We could therefore also call these ‘nations’ the motherland. An individual was identified by the motherland where he/she was born, the place where his/her mother lived. This terminology, ultimately, has its roots in the mother-right traditions, where the clan and tribal organization was based on matrilocality, matrilinearity and where all were equally children of the tribe or clan.¹⁸ This organization, as we know, was destroyed through warfare and conquest. But even the fatherlands, whose patriarchal systems were built upon the ruins of these tribal motherlands, following a different logic, had to legitimize themselves by rooting the sentiments of the people in the old category of the nation, the home- and motherland. First the feudal aristocracy claimed this term ‘nation’ for the construction of the new absolutist state, later the bourgeoisie, after it became strong through colonialism, organized itself in nation-states. In this process it integrated a number of nations — former tribes — into a new nationhood.

The sentiments connected with the term ‘nation’, however, differ from those connected with the term ‘state’. The former are characterized by such qualities as warmth, community, personal, informal relations, freedom, closeness, homeliness, closeness to nature, in short, memories connected with childhood. These emotions also include the community created by a common language, culture and history, but not necessarily a state history. An Indian friend who was born in the Punjab which is now part of North Pakistan expressed these feelings in the following way: ‘I can never hate this country, because it is my ‘*janma bhumi*’, the land where he was born, the motherland. *Bhumi* means Mother Earth in Hindi, sometimes *Bhumi-Devi* is also referred to as Goddess Earth.

When politicians and journalists talk of the ‘arch-enmity’ between India and Pakistan, such feelings are ignored.

During the Indian Independence movement this shifting of sentiments from ‘mother nation’ to ‘father state’ was a deliberate tactic by such writers and propagandists as Bankim Chandra, who wrote the text of the national song *Bande Mataram* (I praise thee, Mother). In the beginning, this ‘mother’ was Bengal, the homeland of the poet, later it meant all India, the mother who had been ‘raped’ by colonialism. Against the ‘rape’ every man who still felt some manhood in himself had to stand up. India is a land, however, of many nations (tribes) and identities. In order to build a modern nation-state these particular identities and the sentiments connected with them had to be projected onto the nation-state of modern India. As we know, this was a painful process. The Muslim-majority parts of the country were separated and formed into Pakistan. And today other parts of India want to form their own independent nation-states. This movement demonstrates the desire to return to what they consider to be their original motherland, their original regional, cultural and religious identity.

The Japanese feminist writer, Yayoi Aoki,¹⁹ described another example of this process. She explains how, during the Meiji reforms, the sentiments of the young men — still rooted in

partly mother-right traditions like the wakomonoyado, the youth houses of rural Northern Japan — were devalued and destroyed and then projected on to the new modern Japanese state and the emperor. According to Yayoi Aoki rural Japan, before the Meiji reforms, was less patriarchal than it is now. In the wakomonoyado, relations between the sexes were quite liberal: young people had common bathing places and toilets, they had free zones where they could learn self-management. All who had shared the same wakomonoyado were united by a bond of loyalty even stronger than family ties. They were obliged to practice mutual help and solidarity. During the Meiji reforms all these traditions were regarded with contempt, and devalued as backward and barbaric. The new values were derived both from the West and from patriarchal Confucianism. ‘Civilization and Enlightenment’ became the slogan of the time and the desire to emulate the West was combined with the Confucian family ideal, thus wedding the two patriarchal traditions. The young men’s loyalty was separated from the now backward-looking wakomonoyado and geared towards the modern Japanese nation-state. In this process the patriarchal traditions and values of the warrior class, the Samurai, who were the first to accept Western values and Confucian morality, played an important role. Now the young peasant men also began to identify with the morality of this modern warrior class and with the Japanese state. The former Youth Houses and Clubs became a spy system for the new government.

When these were turned into Seinendan (youth groups) and Shobodan (fire-fighting groups) the lifeblood of resistance was, in effect, drained away. And now the village network was turned into a spy system, in order to ensure co-operation with government policies. This may even help to explain why it was the farming people who co-operated most wholeheartedly in the militarization of Japan from the time of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895-6.²⁰

National identity or catching-up development?

The rise of the new nationalisms which we witness today is inspired not only by the modern values of ‘civilization and enlightenment’, by the desire for ethnic and cultural identity but perhaps even more by the myth of ‘catching-up development’, that is, by the hope of sharing as soon as possible the material wealth and living standards of the rich nations of the North. They want to join the club of the rich EC. The slogan: ‘Germany, united Fatherland’; also meant: ‘Germany, united land of equal consumption’.

As we saw, the goal of catching-up development, the emulation of the European industrial-colonial-patriarchal nations already played an important role in the nineteenth century reforms in Japan. Also, as is shown elsewhere in this volume (chapter 4), it plays an important role in the development strategies imposed upon the poor nations in the South; but for them this goal turns out to be a myth, a mirage.

A similar hope or myth also seems to underlie many of the tendencies towards greater ethnic, cultural or national autonomy and identity, which can be observed particularly in those nationstates which had been held together by a universalistic socialist ideology: the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and other countries of the erstwhile Socialist bloc. But these tendencies can also be seen in other parts of the world. This search for national identity, based on historical, cultural, racial, ethnic or religious difference is motivated usually by a strong rebellion against centralism and the totalitarian rule of a dominant political, economic or ethnic group. This rebellion goes hand in hand with the demand for regional self-determination or autonomy. From the outside and from an ecofeminist perspective this development might be welcomed, because the huge economic and political power blocs are strongly criticized by both ecology movements and feminists who demand small economic regions for the maintenance of ecologically sustainable systems. But a closer look at the processes taking place today reveals a less optimistic picture. Yugoslavia may serve as an illustrative case.

The emotions aroused by appeals to nationalism and a sense of ethnicity do not reflect the real aims of so-called nationalist struggles, but rather, in Yugoslavia, for example, these passions are harnessed as a driving force in the struggle for a fairer distribution of ever-shrinking shares of the economic cake. It is economic and political power that are the real stakes in these new civil wars.

The regions in erstwhile Yugoslavia which demanded autonomy and secession from the Yugoslav state are those which had benefited most from the tourist industry and their closeness to the EC: Slovenia and Croatia. As the EC is about to establish itself as the new regional economic power, these regions want to join the club of the rich Europeans before they close their

doors to ‘outsiders.’ Basically, they are unwilling to share their relative wealth with the poorer areas of Yugoslavia.

Therefore, their demand for self-determination in the name of religion, language, culture and so on, does not mean that Slovenia and Croatia want to establish themselves as economically self-sufficient, self-reliant regions. They reject the centralism of the socialist nation-state but are keen to join the new superstate of the rich EC: Slovenia, and particularly Croatia, are seeking recognition as sovereign states by the EC or the UN.

This brings us to the next point. The search for national identity is almost always understood as the search for separate statehood. And that means that these regions or provinces want to establish themselves as nation-states according to the model of the big nation-states. This implies the need to have their own army, border security force, and bureaucracy and government. Necessarily, these movements towards self-determination thus lead to increased militarism and violence.

Moreover, this demand for self-determination by one province or region inevitably leads to antagonistic relations with other provinces and regions, with which these secessionist provinces had lived in peace for many years. As the struggle is de facto about economic and political power within a given territory, cultural and historical differences are mobilized to prove why, for example, the Croats can no longer live together with the Serbs in the same state. Once these differences can no longer be settled by negotiations but by arms, old memories of injustice and atrocity are being revived. Thus the Serbs accuse the Croats of fascism, because they collaborated with the Nazis, and the Croats accuse the Serbs of imperialist tendencies in that they want to create a new Serbian empire.

The result of the breakdown of the universalist ideology of socialism, which still holds that all people are equal irrespective of sex, ethnicity, religion, culture, language is not, therefore, the blossoming of cultural diversity, but universal civil war. These new civil wars are not fought in the name of ecological and cultural regionalism but to establish ever more new fatherlands. The legitimate desire for cultural and ethnic roots and self-determination is again transformed into machoistic and racist wars of a genocidal nature. The sexist and racist character of these new civil wars becomes evident when one hears of the atrocities committed against the respective ‘enemies’ by the fighting warriors. Thus one reads that the Serbian Cetniks who massacred Croatian militia men, cut off their dead enemies’ penises and put them into their mouths; or sees TV pictures in which the enemy’s genitalia were shot off.

Women cannot support these wars, not only because the victims are mainly women and children, but because all victims are children of women, even the massacred soldiers. Moreover, this search for national identity even if it is subconsciously inspired by the desire to return to one’s ‘motherland’ leads everywhere to increased machoism and further militarization and brutalization of men. It is always men, young men, whom we see in these pictures fighting, supposedly, for their own nation-state, their fatherland. And within the framework of capitalist patriarchy this means they are fighting for control over territory and women.²¹

In the ongoing and potential civil wars about new fatherlands and self-determination, however, women and children alone will not pay the price, but Mother Earth, the environment too, as has already been noted, these wars are also about bigger shares of the economic cake, therefore there will be further contamination and destruction of the still remaining commons; air, water, the soil, forests, fields. Although all ‘civilized nations’ recognize nations’ right to self-determination it seems that this right is also based on exploitation and destruction of some ‘others’, as may be observed in the case of the individual (see Ch 12). These new civil wars could be avoided only if those who struggle for ethnic and national identity would accept an economic policy of self-sufficiency and restraint.

It would, however, be wrong to see women as only the victims in these new wars about fatherlands; there are many examples of women’s support for patriotic wars. The First World War was supported by patriotic women’s organizations, in Germany and elsewhere; Hitler’s national socialism as well as the Second World War were also supported by women, some of whom were enthusiastic admirers of Hitler’s system. In Yugoslavia, too, as elsewhere, we also find women who support these civil wars and even volunteer to fight against the ‘enemy’. In the erstwhile USSR, one of the movements for a new, independent nation-state — Tatarstan — is even led by a woman, Fauzia Bairamova. Even more surprisingly Fauzia Bairamova is a Muslim woman who fights for a Muslim fatherland. It would be naive, therefore, to conclude that all women, because they pay the price for the fatherlands, together with Mother Earth, would reject these suicidal and fratricidal wars.

On the other hand, there are organizations and groups of women who still hold on to some degree of feminist internationalism, an internationalism that has not lost sight of the fact that we are all born of women, and depend on the same Mother Earth.

Without a recognition of this ecological, feminist and international aspect, the search for national identity, within the framework of capitalist patriarchy with its consumerist incentive can lead only to ever more sexist civil wars, wars that will destroy all life, including human life, and ultimately the planet itself.

Notes

1. For the first UFV programme see Merkel, Ina, ‘Ohne Frauen ist kein Staat zu machen’. Unpublished paper, Berlin, 1989.
2. Die Tageszeitung, 6 February 1992.
3. Mies, Maria, Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour. Zed Books, London, 1989.
4. This Conference was organized by the Heinrich Boll Stiftung in co-operation with the Green Party.
5. Thurmer-Rohr, Christina, ‘Gedanken zur deutsch-deutschen Sturzgeburt’, in Die Tageszeitung, 2 April 1990.
6. See, for example, Bock, Gisela, and Barbara Duden, ‘Labor of Love, Love as Labor’ in Development, Special Issue: Women. Protagonists of Change, No 4, 1984, pp. 6-14. v. Werlhof, Claudia, ‘Women’s Work, the Blind Spot in the Critique of Political Economy’, in Mies, Maria et al Women: the Last Colony. Zed Books, London, 1988; and Mies, Maria (1989) op. cit.
7. Polanyi, Karl, The Great Transformation, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1978.
8. Heinsohn, Gunnar, Rolf Knieper and Otto Steiger, Menschenproduktion. Allgemeine Bevölkerungslehre der Neuzeit. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1979.
9. Mies, Maria and Saral Sarkar, ‘Menschenrechte und Bildung für alle? in Vorgänge, No 5, October 1990, p. 85.
10. Thurmer-Rohr, Christina, op. cit.
11. Potts, Lydia, The World labour Market: A History of Migration. Zed Books. London, 1990.
12. Wallerstein, Immanuel, The Modern World System. Vol I. Capitalist Agriculture and the Origin of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century. Academic Press, New York, 1974.
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14. Brownmiller, Susan, Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1975.
15. Enloe, Cynthia, ‘Beyond Rambo: The Gendered politics of Militarization’ paper published in: Sangharsh, Vimochana No 3 (no date). Women’s Book Shop, Bangalore, India; and Chapkis, Wendy, Sexualität und Militarismus, in Antimilitarismus-informationen, Vol. XVII, No 8, August 1987.
16. See Chomsky, Noam; Öl schmiert auch die Moral, in Wochenzeitung, No. 4, Zurich, 25 January 1991; see also: Chomsky, N. The New World Order. Open Magazine Pamphlet Series. Noam Chomsky was one of the few intellectuals in the USA who openly criticized the Gulf War as a neo-colonial war, carried out by the US Administration for the control of the oil-rich Gulf region. A year after the Gulf War, Chomsky clearly accuses the US Administration of corrupting the UN, so that the Security Council agreed to this war, and of lying to the world’s public about this war of aggression, mainly against civilians, children, women and nature. (Interview with Noam Chomsky by Martin Milker in Frankfurter Rundschau, 30 January 1992).
17. Enloe, Cynthia, op. cit.
18. In the 1860s Bachofen had already pointed out that the original clan and tribal loyalties to a particular region or land were based on mother-right traditions. Bachofen J.J. (1975) Das Mutterrecht, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt. See also Eric Hobsbawm Nation and Nationalism since 1780. Programme, Myth and Reality. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990.
19. Yayoi, Aoki, ‘In Search of the Roots of Sexual Discrimination. Thoughts on Japan’s Modernization and Confucian Ideology’. Unpublished paper, undated.
20. Ibid., p. 19.
21. It should be mentioned here, however, that these two aspects were understood by thousands of women all over the world who protested against the Gulf War, who were in the forefront of the peace movement, and who now oppose the civil wars.



Handwritten text in Hebrew, appearing to be a signature or a name, written in a light, possibly white or very light green, ink. The text is written in a cursive, flowing style, with the word 'אחיה' (Achiya) being the most prominent part of the signature.

PSYCHOTIC LITTLE WORLDS

Tamar Shirinyan 2024

In *Psychoanalysis Under Occupation*,¹ Lara Sheehi and Stephen Sheehi provide a deep analysis of the psychic effects of Israeli tactics of “reality-bending.” They show the ways in which Zionism is in-subordinate toward reality – that it refuses to abide by the rationality and material reality of Palestine as a country populated by Arabs to which European Jews hold no legal, hereditary, or historical title.² Zionism, a settler colonial and imperialist project, compels Palestinians to live in a world in which reality is consistently disavowed. This reality-bending is a psychotic mechanism, at least clinically defined: “a cognitive slippage that seeks an omnipotence that can, at its heart, snuff out the psyche of another, rendering the ‘abnormal,’ ‘normal.’”³ Sheehi and Sheehi refuse normalized forms of psychotherapy, including psychoanalytic practice in the state known as Israel, in which Palestinians must choke on their own dispossession and dehumanization as these realities are left outside the doors of the clinic. Rather than any form of actual healing, they argue, normalized apolitical psychotherapies in Palestine train minds and bodies to learn to cope with ongoing militarized occupation as normal. Reality-bending contributes to life as asphyxiation. Under Zionist settler imperialism, the regime dominates through the taking of *breath and life*, both individual and collective, psychologically rendering Palestinians as dis-membered – as individuals out of political, collective, and historical context. And, of course, it is in Gaza where this asphyxiation has been not just metaphorical, but a literal reality, regularly choking breath out of life.⁴

I start with Palestine because these days it is the beginning of everything – from my gut to all over. But this conceptualization of reality-bending is instructive. It allows us to understand other worlds that have lived in bent realities, that have constructed their own psychotic social mechanisms, that have produced revisionist histories and narratives and then naturalized them as if...as if.

A friend said to me recently – pained – “It’s like you know what happened but they are now telling you something else happened. You lived it, you remember, you were there, but they are telling you something else.” During the 2020 “44 Day War,” Armenian soldiers, who were obligated to go and fight and die, went scared, went unwillingly. Now, history tells us, they were heroes, who voluntarily sacrificed themselves for their country. For nearly twenty-five years, the country’s post-Soviet oligarchy robbed the people blind – of what commons had been produced by the Soviet system, of their daily bread, of any sense that they were living under social organization. Today, according to some people, it is those who came after – to “clean up” – who committed those robberies. How does one so quickly forget *what really happened?* Bending reality has the potential to drive one mad and especially when it happens on the scale of an entire society.

Reality-bending, however, also has its micro-formations, creating psychotic little worlds. Almost twenty years ago, a group of queer feminists founded something – a space, a blog, a concept, a world, a possibility? – called Queering Yerevan. Queering Yerevan was a collective of artists and writers. It was never a closed space: some came and went, producing one piece of writing or participating in one happening, and some saw themselves as shaped by this formation. I was not a founding member of the collective, but I was brought into the fold a few years in and had the privilege of witnessing the making of queer feminist work in Yerevan and in Armenia. This is not to put Queering Yerevan in a grave, as if the project is dead and gone. What Queering Yerevan was over the years has consistently transformed and not too many happenings are claimed in its name anymore. While somewhat faded, it promises to awaken and to act again at any moment. Today’s historical revisionism has all-but completely destroyed memory of what Queering Yerevan meant for feminism in Armenia while also resignifying toward destruction its political potential. Permit me to feel historical. 2010-2014 were tumultuous years in gendered and sexual reformulations in Armenia. From national sex panics to the sharpening of divisions within political struggles between nationalists and non-nationalists on the basis of gendered and sexual reformulation, to the grounding of gender and sex as critical political concerns in the country, these were formative years on which today’s various queer and feminist formations have established themselves.

Queering Yerevan had a massive role to play in this historical moment. It produced an uncompromised space to work out critical questions: the possibility of creating a queer and feminist literature, art, and discourse; women’s creativity and the potentials of collaboration without men’s interference; the relationship between patriarchy and the state; the issue of borders and its intimacy with boundaries between persons, nation and diaspora, concepts, and bodies; gender as something that can be made and remade; gender

as a critical *feminist* issue, inseparable from feminism and inseparable from woman; and sexuality as a public issue. Perhaps most critically, and something that seems to have been forgotten within the micropolitics of queer and feminist psychotically little worlds of revisionism today, Queering Yerevan conceived of queer feminist possibility independent of, and in many ways counter to, any queer feminist project dictated by capital. In the work displayed on its blog, through its “happenings” in Yerevan and elsewhere, by way of the narrative and the discursive possibility that it produced, and in the personal encounters between its members (and especially its founding members) and others and amongst members – Queering Yerevan acted as an obstacle for any emergent project that would speak in a compromised language. Here, by obstacle, I mean as a hostile entity that refused to give in to the disciplinary forces that came with the neoliberal agenda to produce a kind of feminism (perhaps we can call this a liberal feminism) that could exist, nicely and neatly, side- by-side, with capital. It provided a *critical* space.

It is important to be clear about this as there are today so many misunderstandings about critique. Critique is not in itself a problem for capital. To write volumes on neoliberalism, on capitalism, on inequality does near nothing against those realities. And, indeed, if the critique is commodifiable in some form – creates a space in which the critique can be commodified or in which the critique provides cover for a space of commodification otherwise – then it is always welcome. At times, what looks like critique is actually the production of particular kinds of subjectivities that can cope with capital’s interests: who can see themselves as objects of development who progress toward the better when they invent (or, more accurately, appropriate) new concepts and ideas that they incorporate into their selves. At times, activism or humanitarianism – both of which might offer critique – are created not as actualizing gestures toward the making of new worlds, but as one’s products in capitalist non-profit circulation, which ultimately leaves capital unscathed while appropriating political discourse and narrative. Feminism becomes a resume, listing various skills (including agility with certain terms), and past experiences in order to sell oneself within non-profit capitalist circuits, which include grants as well as social capital that can be exchanged for grants.

Self-care, collective care, toxicity, safety. Whatever justice-oriented or struggle-oriented meaning or weight these terms and concepts may have had at some point are being entirely reconfigured. They arise today instead to police, to compel, to divide, and to compete. To shut down struggle.

Queering Yerevan, for me, was a space where we borrowed, appropriated, invented, and discarded concepts with the ultimate purpose of consistently challenging compromise with capital and its encroachment. Queering Yerevan was a space of constant debate, discussion, argument, anger, love, and laughter. It was not an easy space. And by that I mean the best of things – an obstacle to any formation within ourselves that might drive us to adapt. Queering Yerevan provided shelter and protection from a world that wanted to be okay with liberal reality as a political economic worlding. This protection was often created through hostility. *We were hostile toward the status quo as well as reconfigurations of that status quo that threatened to create a new, adaptive, liberalism.*

This queer feminist legacy has been lost in time and what it means to be queer and feminist in Yerevan has been bent out of shape and almost unrecognizable. “Feminism” now seems to belong to those who can garner the largest social networks. Queerness is an image sculpted out of signifiers that are no longer allowed to be challenged: marginalized and oppressed identities in whose name struggle comes to mean wild affirmation. Any relation that stands in the way of capital’s investment in future projects can only exist with a target on its back; it must be demolished lest its negative (and negating) energy spread. Queer feminist struggle: a diversified investment portfolio. “Safety” is no longer a possibility for which there is collective struggle – so that we all might one day have it – but has become shelter from struggle. Lest we forget that struggles for actual collective safety have always been termed terrorism while genocide occurs in the name of “safety.” Securitization. Counter-insurgency feminism. Acts, actions, projects, ideology, narrative, and history become the product – a kind of prototype – to be marketed for future investment. Venture feminism.

It is hard to notice the time-space at which reality bends. One must very carefully attune herself to the feeling that something is just not as it should be. Reality’s bending happens smoothly – never at a sharp angle, but a gentle arc. A contradiction occurs, nonetheless. It can be felt in the feeling of having a lump in her throat – unable to speak because the words that one might have used have been tak-

en and reshaped and delivered back to her, robbing her of what she thought she once knew. It can be felt in in the phenomenon of coming up against a wall – having a thought that one has thought because it is actually what is going on, but learning (often very quickly) that that thought is not allowed to be thought. What happens in these moments of contradiction are quite violent. It resubjectivizes under a new psychotic reality, creating psychosis within the self and then disavowing the very history of how that psychosis appeared. These contradictions become quickly adapted to already-existing narratives, assumptions, and concepts that allow psychic reality to disavow that moment as a particular moment, bending with a perverse reality. Psychotic situations: an international feminist camp, at which there also appeared an Israeli couple who produced themselves as the victims of political repression when a Lebanese woman announced that she could not be politically free in their presence; a screening of a queer pornographic film at which the ways that bodies react to that film are policed and then shamed; a mass email that labels two women – both of whom are lesbians – as “bullies” and accuses them of causing traumatic injury (defined as asking a question at a public forum); the perversion of “the personal is political” so that any political discussion becomes one about personal experiences and one’s own feelings of exhaustion and alienation; the disciplining of feminisms into suzerainties, with demands to remain loyal to one’s own clan.

Here, we might learn through the experience of Israeli settler colonial reality-bending, which works at the level of genocidal dismemberment. Psychic healing for Palestinians, thus – as Sheehi and Sheehi argue – is necessarily a collective struggle. Re-memberment, re-joining back to the community that has been cut up and separated toward unrecognizability. Back to life and breath rather than empty signifiers. Back to social relation, which – in case we have forgotten – includes conflict and difficult emotions like anger. Back to reality.

History is written by victors. Yes, this is still true. The end of World War II, however, saw the rise of a new moral economy in which victory was no longer celebrated as military triumph (the triumph of force), but as moral perseverance through suffering.⁵ It was the sufferer who became victory’s figure par excellence – the one who they had tried to destroy, but survived against all odds. The one who they had no regard for, but lived to tell the story of overcoming. This moral economy has done some strange things in the bending of our reality. Victory has meant that one gets the right to name themselves as the victim. And naming oneself as a victim provides immense moral cover for very large crimes (genocide). But also small crimes.

There was once a time in Yerevan during which feminism was *not* a struggle between who had endured more trauma and who had inflicted this trauma. This is the tale of today. And, it turns out, that it was queer women who were the biggest patriarchs against whom the struggle had to turn. Psychotic reality-bending.

Yes, of course it is true that patriarchy is internalized in all of us. But, when did these concepts – feminism, patriarchy, the political – become signs completely detached from any signified? History – both what happened and what is said about it – bends when the words with which we want to describe it mean different things. Criticism and conflict become *bullying*. Spaces of actual debate and dialogue become unsafe spaces. To take apart already established meanings of concepts and assemble together other meanings is not just something anyone is allowed to do. Resignification is for the powerful – those already interpellated as victorious sufferers. Those who have recapitulated to the making of a kind of struggle that is okay with no longer struggling.

Making struggle palatable, maybe even delectable. But ensuring its painlessness. Fun, comfortable, *safe*. But for whom?

Resignification in itself is not necessarily destructive – it has the potential to be a creative process. Eros, not Thanatos. But resignification that *empties potential* toward making a new (and more just) world, toward destroying structures that incapacitate, turns concepts into empty caskets that circulate and circulate, in melancholic grief, until they are long, long forgotten and cast aside. Patriarchal violence, once the cause of the historical enslavement of women, is now what lesbians who have chosen to not participate in the processes of inclusion into structures of violence do to straight women in charge of large grants and networks of non-governmental organizations. A horror show of historical revisionism as simulacra. Our own little psychotic world where the postmodern nightmare is awakened.

For, if *not* psychotic and not living in a false reality that goes against any reality principle, wouldn’t one have to ask if it would ever even

be possible for capital to invest in projects actually geared toward its own destruction – projects that are really invested in struggle?

I am not of the mind that we need to demarcate what counts and what does not count as something. What is and what is not feminism. What is and what is not care, love, toxic, dangerous, violent, and so on. Today, globally, we see that feminism has been the agent of militarization, securitization, imperialism, commodification and many other mechanisms that lead to the destruction of life (of women and non-women). Instead, it seems to me, what matters is an analysis geared toward the actualization of making a world that can hold down the barricades against these mechanisms and, more, create possibilities of their overturn. Can these new emergent feminisms – that create concepts that shut down discussion and real relation (which, of course, we all know includes conflict), that commodify particular styles of life and brand particular forms of activism and that reify worlding into commodifiable images, and that ultimately call out women geared toward analysis and struggle as the ultimate patriarchal violators – make a world that can hold down the barricades against the encroachment and destruction of

capital? It is not that these are not “feminist” but that perhaps it is time to move away from feminism as a project when this is what it comes to mean. Or, it is time to produce new forms of feminism. Naming but putting aside righteously suffering victors, investment portfolios, resumes of past projects, securitization, and counter-insurgency dispositions toward feminism – signifieds no longer *for us* – and creating new pathways.

Jean Laplanche demands that “[i]t is time to abandon slogans and think on our own.”⁶ What Queering Yerevan offered was precisely this space of abandoning slogans and thinking on our own. We talked incessantly of desire, of pleasure, of violence, of exploitation, of the various contradictions that informed our own beings as well as our relation to one another. We asked uncomfortable questions; we admitted uncomfortable desires; we understood uncomfortable realities. We refused to allow concepts to become reification. We refused to allow any discourse to become our internalized narrative – asking, asking, asking, incessantly. Those encounters were deeply troubling – at times excruciating (if I were to be honest). But they were immensely inventive, challenging me to imagine how I cre-

ate, what I create and how I am also myself in constant creation. By the standards of today’s “safe space” diktat Queering Yerevan would have been intolerable. Today, any form of struggle, questioning, and indeed *reality* seem to have become intolerable. All while maintaining themselves queer and feminist in name. A perverse historical revisionism that has produced psychotic little worlds.

1 Sheehi, Lara, Stephen Sheehi. 2021. Psychoanalysis Under Occupation: Practicing Resistance in Palestine. New York: Routledge.
2 *ibid.*, page 14
3 *ibid.*, page 82
4 Puar, Jasbir. 2017. The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability. Durham: Duke University Press.
5 Fassin, Didier, Richard Rechtman 2009. The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
6 Cited in Saketopoulou, Avgi, Ann Pellegrini. 2023. Gender Without Identity New York: The Unconscious in Translation, page 30.

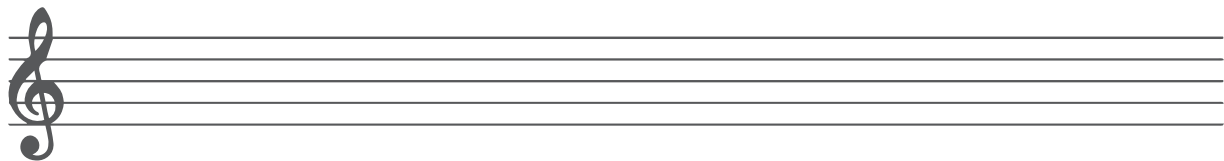
hey are you a weak nation or a strong nation
are you a failed nation, a pretend nation
a dead nation, a satellite nation, a haunted nation

hey are you a super power colonizer capitalist
imperialist fascist misogynist corporation

all the nations are haunted
by dead white men
all the nations are haunted
by dead white men
all the nations are haunted
by dead white men
all the nations are haunted
by dead white men

hey do you prey on the poor
do you steal the shore
do you mine to the core
do you close all the doors
out of oppression
emancipation
education
to be a nation
to be a nation
to be a nation

all the nations are haunted
by dead white men
all the nations are haunted
by dead white men
all the nations are haunted
by dead white men
all the nations are haunted
by dead white men



Song by Milena Abrahamyan

The reports during the “Not eternal enemies, but?...” - About positive images of apparent opponents in the literature of the peoples of South Caucasus brought literary evidence that people like Armenians and Azerbaijani can live peacefully together. The problem of the whole conference was exactly that - raising “Can ethnicities live peacefully together” as a question, as if it was something under question, as if we all don’t know that **WAR IS ABNORMAL NOT PEACE**. Raising such a question means legitimizing war.

One of the organizers said on the first day of the conference that when a peaceful time comes, governments will hire us to teach people to peacefully live together because we are the only people who have been doing that for years. The

idea that people need to learn how to live together means putting the responsibility of war on people instead of governments, not believing in the brotherhood of people, and again, legitimizing war.

On 4th day, the Armenian coordinator of the project, made a presentation titled “Forbidden Love in Armenian and Azerbaijani Societies: about the novel “Artush and Zaur” by Azerbaijani exiled writer Alekper Aliyev” during which he read his poem where he is positioning loving each other against nationalism. This was followed by his declaration that he is partly Jewish and, just seconds after his anti-nationalist remarks, he ironically stands next to Israel, please pay attention, not Jewish people, but Israel, which is well known for its aggressive,

even sadistic politics, and plays Israel’s national anthem. I condemn playing any national anthem in a peace conference and I think the organizers should have stopped him from doing it, but instead, people listened and clapped to it. Of course, some of the participants were silent because being German makes it twice as hard to be rational about topics involving Israel. This reminded me of a very important fact which happened last year when it was declared to the world that any critic of any action by Israel is going to face claims of antisemitism:

Documenta, which is an exhibition of contemporary art taking place every five years in Kassel, removed the panel “People’s Justice” by the Indonesian Taring Padi collective from the exhibition, because The Central Council of Jews in Germany,

and the President of Germany, the Ministers of Culture of the Federal Government and the State of Hesse accused the artists of anti-Semitism. The anti-semitism of the artwork was that on the left side of the panel were soldiers from Israeli Mossad, Soviet KGB, American Army, British MI6, Indonesian units, fascists in uniform, and corporate fighters walking over skeletons.

I am stopping here and leaving the rest to your judgment. Facts: in October of 2023, we were at a conference dedicated to peacebuilding where one of the organizers played Israel’s national anthem. Ignoring such principal and symbolic action is unforgivable.

Anna Evoyan

Cruising - walking or driving about certain areas, called cruising grounds, looking for a sexual partner. These meetings are usually one-off, anonymous encounters.

Cottaging - term used to describe anonymous sex meetings in public toilets

Pleshka

Pleshka - A place for meeting, socializing, and finding partners for same-sex activities (including for payment). These are usually located in city squares, parks, around monuments, or fountains. They are mainly frequented by workers.

Komaygi (in Soviet Yerevan: Commissars' Park, now Children's Park) - The most famous gay cruising spot in the city center. Meeting places also include the sidewalks adjacent to the park, Karmir Banaki and Marx streets (now Grigor Lusavorich and Khorenatsi).

We live in a time where being gay is turning into being LGBTIQ+. This gives the impression that there were no homosexuals and homosexual practices in Armenia and other post-Soviet countries before the import of NGOs.

A conspiracy to blur and erase history.

The neoliberal project of general colonization is strengthened in the violent atmosphere formed by the cooperation of the police, the government and the bourgeoisie. They have created a situation where people trust only them instead of trusting each other. In the most brutally occupied territories, they raise the LGBTIQ+ flag as a symbol of freedom, justice and democracy.

A situation where young people in post-Soviet countries, even those who do not work in NGOs, carry their ideas and agendas, come out against their parents to defend police approaches, trust and believe that their freedom is conditioned by its existence and is possible only within the community.

A community that creates a feeling of loneliness and incompleteness.



COLLAPSES

non linear terms	mistakes, destruction
waves	collapses the obedience and linear law
macroscopic systems	collapses nature and all differences
collapses all measurement	[initial state]: $[a/bk> + b/bj> AO>]$
time	[final state]: $(A bk> ak>+b bj aj>)$
equations, spaces	
collapses empires	collapses the order
central problems	and the chaos
collapse success	collapses the collapses
history	collapses all control/power
magnates	collapses ego
bureaucrats	
collapses all models	collapses modulus, density
	conditions
collapses normality	
the infinite dimensional	collapses
collapses all vectors	the existence
the principles	
all evolution	collapses the universe and all apparatus
and arbitrariness	collapses reality and all hypothesis
	collapses all governments, police and military
collapses knowledge	
representation	collapses anticipation
and all physical systems	and expressions
collapses all information	collapses we all
the self	collapses all theories
and all names	process
collapses all possibilities	dynamics
	collapses your choices
collapses private propriety	quasi-collapses for end
and the nuclear family	
collapses men women she he and all pronouns	collapses the random
collapses	collapses
all configurations	now
all positions	instantly
and variables	unnormalized
collapses	
all discussions and meanings	disintegrating
the unacceptable and ambiguity	disappearing
collapses all consciousness	

The AnarkoArtLab collective was created in 2007 at Judson Church, situated in Washington Square Park, NYC, before relocating to The Living Theatre in the nearby East Village on Clinton Street. Comprising visual artists, performers, musicians, poets, and dancers, the collective predominantly consists of immigrants hailing from various regions world-wide, notably Eastern Europe and Latin America. Its artistic endeavors are characterized by their interdisciplinary nature, encompassing urban interventions, performances, happenings, transmedia events, as well as environmental and community-based projects.

The group draws upon historical antecedents situated at the intersection of experiential and activism, notably referencing movements such as Fluxus, Dadaism, Situationism, Antonin Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty, as well as the legacy of Judith Malina and Julian Beck's The Living Theatre, and Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed. Also firmly rooted in current social demands, AnarkoArtLab enriches the contemporary anarchist agenda by adopting an intersectional perspective that interrelates feminist-queer and decolonial politics. Central to the ethos of AnarkoArtLab is a commitment to autonomy, anti-normativity, with the experimentation with anti-hierarchical practices, underpinned by a fervent advocacy for equal opportunities and individual liberty. Mutual aid is deemed paramount within the collective, serving as both a mode of alterity and a catalyst for collaborative action, which in turn fortifies cooperation and collective creation from uniques.

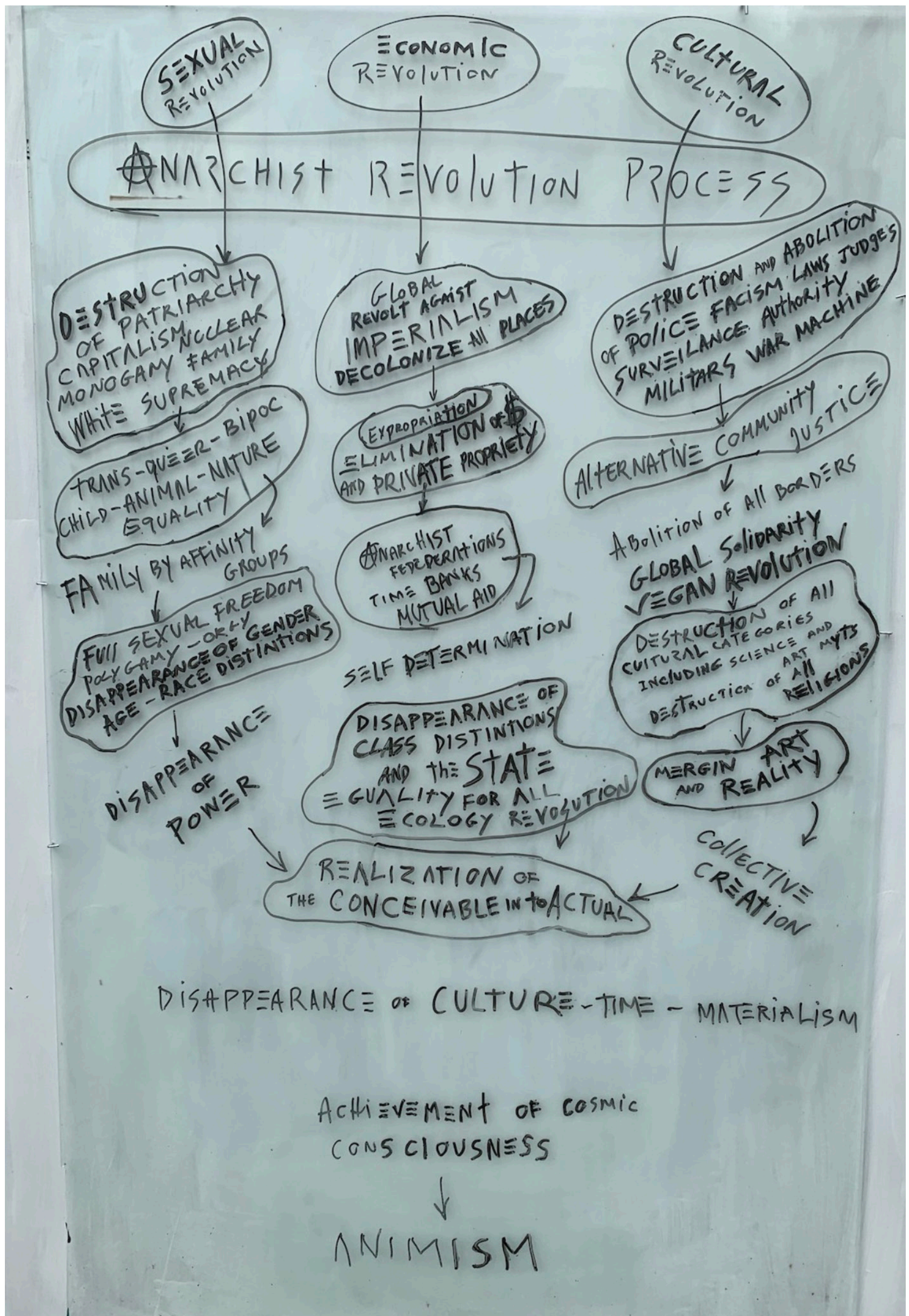
AnarkoArtLab also envision alternative futures through its artistic endeavors.

The first Manifesto was made in 2006 in Brasil and the second in 2023 in Estonia

The collapse poem was made in 2022 in Woodstock NY, all written by Adrians black, one of the founding artists of AnarkoArtLab and the NYC anarchist book fair, both started together in 2006 in NYC.

A book about anarkoartlab will be released in April in Berlin, written by the artist, curator and critic Natasha Marzliak

MANIFEST





To Shulamith Firestone

THE M@NIFESTO

(FOR ALL ARTISTS IN ANARCHY)

We want constant instability through movement
chaos = TRANSmutations
our laboratory is a party where authoritarian structures dis-
solve and turn into feces
it stands at the intersection of many forces
in the junction of lines = parallel realities that hatch eggs —
continuously exchanging
self-management, autonomy and TRANSGression through the
experiment of the process
we are not interested in the outcome or product
we practice the destruction of myths
we are not producers of entertainment but destroyers of spec-
tacles
we produce disturbances—ruins—dream that dreams
in our laboratory everybody can do art
from invisibility to the individual sovereignty
creation of the unique in delirious imaginary and incompre-
hensible words
devoid of structure
we don't explain anything ... we build moments, situations;
we are all renegades and synchronous
we are not interested in any notion of property (personal, in-
tellectual or creative)
we are interested in different possibilities and combinations
nothing belongs to us and we do not belong to anything
we experience momentary ambia{e}nce, lapses, random
TRANSformations, disorder
we like to be in the flow ... decentralized, destabilized
we practice telepathy ... TRANSlanguage = without future or
past = present moment

by coercion we bring the spectators to integrate the process
we want them out of passivity, participating with us in the here
and now
(with the head into the imaginary of the unconscious collec-
tive)
and the body-flash also ... if possible
we want the free communion of “the unique”
we need open deserts and oceans
we are interested in the non-existent, the incomprehensible
and indescribable
we want all the pleasures not permitted
we continue the work of our ancestors (dada, fluxus, futurism,
situationists, vagabonds, etc.)

we make noise, performance, poetry, installation, drawing,
movement.

We dissolve and TRANSmute, with no hierarchy
we are polymorphs, bon vivants and rebels
raw savagery of the latent state of the soul
we experiment with the TRANSitory, the perpetual revolu-
tion—the intuition
we are TRANSsexuals—we want the abolition of gender to-
gether with the abolition of classes and free from any kind of
government ...
our delirium makes us plan cities and utopian places—but we
look for abstractions
we are ungovernable

we are interested in ideas and actions—and vice versa
everything is process, process, process—with no routes
witnessing the states of full and empty
we want the ocio, the imaginary, the illogical,
the delirium, the variation, the irrational, the party, the dream
and the free instincts to experiment with human existence in
its totality.
We want continuous revolutions and trans-h(er)storical
space—
where all effective revolts are projected in the direction of
being free
TRANSforming this biopsychic space
absorbing the violence that generates antagonisms
for the birth of subjectivity
our laboratory detoxifies and ends the boundaries between
realities
we want TRANCE

for the realization of the TRANSindividual
for dispersion and vulnerability
we practice free love, we are orgies

we connect poetic intuition with dust creation and artistic
action—

for the freedom of childhood through perception ...the reality
is what we imagine / we want the inversion of everything
ecstasy ... excess ... amazement transmission
we experience the unfinished and we subvert ... subvert and
subvert ... always
we are not spectators of survival—we aRe aLive
and long live the unfolding
we invade and penetrate all “impossible” spaces
we are amoral—immoral debunkers
the outside is the inside—Möbius—we neutralize criteria ...
TRANS-tropias
we ask, what about space-time?
imagine ... they are empty

and in “between” we jump o u t—we are free from time-space
we experience the synthesis of the surprise of the unexpected
the collapse, we want the marginal-trans-conscious
in the age of fools we have a point of action
art below—above—in between ... without limits
we are within the imaginary in a free zone
with total subversion
stripped of any quality or possession
we are wild

we are naked

and in fire ...

by

Adriana Varella is an Anarko-Feminist-Artist-Queer-Trans-Mul-
tiracial-nomad, co-founder of NYC Anarchist Book Fair/
AnarkoArtLab.



POSTFACE

Christophe Kotanyi Berlin 2024

Postface
Christophe Kotanyi
Berlin 2024

Critique of Alienation

On the 30th of November 1994, Guy Debord shot himself near the little French village where he had retired in his last years. He had been the chief theoretician of the Internationale Situationniste which had triggered the great revolution which changed the world. His book “The Society of the Spectacle”, published twenty seven years before, had submitted postwar Western society to a severe criticism, which will lead to the May 1968 events in Paris, to a deep transformation of that society and also, as I claim, to the end of the Cold War with the victory of the West. In my opinion, Debord was the first and so far the last who succeeded in updating and in continuing Marx’ thinking instead of just repeating it or adjusting it here and there.

For Marx, the essence of capitalism was the alienation of the people among them and even from themselves (merchandise as fetish). Then capitalism got the message and took the next step. Beyond the merchandise as a fetish it developed the spectacle of the merchandise as the instrument of a general alienation unheard of in the history of mankind. The ultimate purpose of the movie industry, of this industrialized “total spectacle”, of commercial advertisement as the merchandise turned into a spectacle, of the “communication” technologies and even of motorisation, is no longer the amusement of the masses, the commercialisation of the merchandise, bringing people close to each other and their mobility. The real purpose

is to alienate the people from their own life. The subject of the total spectacle does no longer live his own life, he and she lives the life which the spectacle dictates and imposes upon him in crooked ways, stealthily.

Guy Debord’s suicide may have had multiple motives, but the first was most certainly that the spectacle had very well understood his message and did all it could to silence it. Debord’s book vanished very quickly from the market and did not reappear quasi until his death. The great May 68 uprising against the spectacle was very quickly recuperated by the latter and turned into its opposite, into a new form of consumer culture, into its intensification. This recuperation by the spectacle for its own profit of the revolution aimed against it had in fact been predicted by Debord himself in his today classical 1961 “Critique of Separation”.

As to what was to be done to avoid this recuperation, his close friend and collaborator Attila Kotányi had made a proposal. His proposal was to deepen the situationist theory. The theory had hit it right but was not yet deep enough to avoid being appropriated like a vegetal with too thin roots. And deepening required to go to the sources of revolutionary theory, in the case of Marxism to medieval, Renaissance and baroque German mysticism. For Kotányi, Marx’ revolutionary theory fed on these sources as transmitted by Hegel and German idealism. He was thinking of names like Meister Eckehart, Nicolas of Cues and Jacob Böhme. He could have quoted Hegel who called Böhme the “first German philosopher”, meaning the founder and the source of entire German philosophy¹. And we know that Nicolas of Cues and Meister Eckehart were among Böhme’s sources.

Unfortunately the proposal led to rupture instead of the deepening of the theory. It was too easily misunderstood as a plea to return to religion, which for French and Marxist revolutionary theory was of course fully excluded. Böhme, Cusa and Eckehart may belong today to the great philosophical classics, but they were deeply religious thinkers all the same. (The Parisian friends even nicknamed Attila “monsieur l’abbé”, “the Reverend”, because of the registration plate 622AB of his car.) Instead of even discussing his proposal, Attila was excluded, which he took very badly personally from Guy Debord, because it reminded him too much of the Stalinist exclusions in Budapest, which meant a death sentence.

Take it Easy

Soon after this incident, the Situationists interrupted their theoretical work and turned to the preparation of revolutionary action, which led to May 68, which was basically a big party, a big exercise in “taking it easy”. The idea was to ease the stifling and alienating grip of market economy. But it was also about easing the much too tense political atmosphere. We might dwell upon this latter point, because precisely this had a global effect and precisely this was discarded by the Marxist left deploring the lack of the classical objective of aiming to take the power. But this was not about taking the political power, it was about reclaiming the power over our own life, over everyday, intimate life, over ourselves.

This deserves further comments, because of its high actuality today. Attila Kotányi noted that one important result of May 68 was to liberate the people from the still very militarist post-

war atmosphere. Remember that the head of the French state was still the General de Gaulle, who incarnated the victory over the Germans even if he had not played such a crucial role himself in that victory, and who still used to appear in public in his uniform. May 68 liberated them from the militarist atmosphere left over by the repeated world wars and the colonial past. I would say that the East missed that. The Soviet empire stiffened instead, which led to its collapse. Attila had a high esteem for the Soviet historian Andrey Amalrik, who had predicted this collapse in his book “Will the Sovietunion survive until 1984?”, if the Union remained unable to easy its policy first of all toward Maoist China². As we know, he hit it perfectly right too, including the very symbolic timing. Andrey Tarkovsky’s “Stalker” came around 84, and we can see it as a preview of Tchernobyl. This catastrophe was the last straw which triggered the unavoidable collapse of the Soviet empire. The empire was already much too stiff to be able to react to the emergency of the moment within the tenth of a second required. Michail Gorbachov called out the same year the “perestroika”, unfortunately much too late. The relaxation turned into a collapse.

Amalrik was the youngest university professor in Russian history and also the first so-called dissident whom the secret police never succeeded in frightening so they had to evict him to the wild wild West, where he was soon run over by a car.

Tradition

Attila Kotányi’s proposal of a deepening of the theory had to do with the teaching of his two philosophcial masters Lajos Szabó and Béla Tábor, whom he had met in the autumn of 1946 in Budapest, through Béla Hamvas whom he called his frst philosophical master. Szabó and Tábor had just returned from deportation, Szabó from Auschwitz and Tábor from slave labor on the Eastern front and from Theresienstadt. Hamvas returned from the Eastern front where he had been mobilised. Attila had joined before or during the war the very popular circle of artists and intellectuals around him. There he met among others the avant-garde composer George Ligeti and the poet Sándor Weöres, who took him, according to some (perhaps Weöres himself?), as a model for his today classical epic poem “Istók the Fool” (“Bolond Istók”).

Hamvas, Szabó and Tábor agreed as to the importance of tradition for modernity. Szabó and Tábor emphasized the tension between them, while Hamvas tended to overvalue tradition and to depreciate modernity, to a certain nostalgia for the former and a certain negativity toward the latter. But they agreed to see a continuity there instead of a break. Kotányi would call that later a “knuckle joint” kind of continuity. For Hamvas, that continuity had rather the shape of decadence, while Szabó and Tábor saw it more as an occultation, as a quasi Freudian “repression”, including the dialectic of repression and the return of the repressed. Modernity arises from repressed tradition which comes back in “neurotic”, hitherto unkonwn and misleading shapes, just like repressed desires, impulses and emotions. We could see the pathological symptoms of modernity, such as the alienating and destructive character of modern technique and the tendency to dictatorships and to world wars and other “total” crises, including those economical, in general to totalitarisms and state and other terror, as such return of the repressed³. Yet this repression must be recognized as inevitable, as necessary precisely in the Freudian and Lacanian sense. Tábor characterizes the relationship between personnality and individuality as follows: individuality, the multiplicity of the individuals, is very existence, principium individuationis, the drama of individuation, the inevitable repression of the one personality, its decay, its fragmentation, and the meaning of existence is to find back to personality, this is spirit⁴.

On this Attila Kotányi and Guy Debord fully agreed, but this was also the origin of their disagreement. Bourgeois individualism, the fragmentation of society into individuals alienated from one another and from themselves, social atomization, had to be considered as a pathology. But their ideas as to the cure were different. Debord kept to the primacy of the individual, say of individual subjectivity as the founding postulate of both bourgeois modernity and Marxism, while Attila proposed personality as the starting point and as the goal of revolution, that from where we come from and to which we return.

Mathematics

This is no easy subject and Szabó maintained that to grasp it effectively, one had to go to its live core. This core is buried today in the foundations of mathematics, which provide also for the foundations of our scientific era, of bourgeois, scientific-technical-captialistic modernity. This is the most abstract level but that is what we must go for. Again to misuse the Freudian

analogy, if we want to access what has been repressed, we must dig deep, dive into inhospitable dephts⁵. And like in the case of psychoanalysis, this diving cannot be performed unpersonally, anonymously. It requires the most personal dialogue, eye to eye, man to man, called by Freud the analysis. This is the major difficulty. Because one does not access the foundations of mathematics in an unpersonal way, and what is worse, not even mathematics. That is what we were never told at school, and that is why we mostly have a not very good relationship with mathematics. Already Archimedes, the great mathematician from Antiquity, warned us: there is no “royal access” to mathematics. If we have a bad relationship with it, that is probably because we have never found the personal access. But of course that is true for culture, for art and for many other things too. In spite of that, we will have to go into it.

We might ask in hindsight why Attila never succeeded in convincing his situationist friends of the soundness of his proposal. That will be easy in hindsight. As Michel Foucault once said, we are in the position of the “Monday morning quarterback”. My answer would be that he never really understood the mathematical ideas of his master Lajos Szabó, and he expected me his son to learn mathematics so as to explain them to him. But he could never really make it clear what it was all about. The fundamental questions of mathematics, he said as an encouragement, are most elementary and most simple. In that he was right, but to grasp them, you must be able to place them within the context of entire mathematics. Another elementary truth: the part without the whole is nothing, it has no erotism. It is just pornographic.

I did not succeed in a first step to make friends with deep mathematical abstraction I chose instead the round trip through physics where things are at least tangible. Then I became an astronomer, after the loving father reminded me that that was what I always had wanted to be, and after the architect father convinced me that the use of astronomy is that we build our houses according to our image of the sky. In earlier times harmonically, today functionally. The beauty of our houses today is quasi secondary, what matters is that they have running water, electricity, heating, a well-furnished kitchen and a clean bathroom. They may be beautiful, but that is quasi a luxury. The same in astronomy. The starry sky may be breathtakingly beautiful, the moonlight enchanting, but what counts is to compute them with accuracy. Even the modern city does very well without the starry sky, the main thing is good city lights. Safety first. Not that that makes it safer, see the “roman noir” as a leading genre in modern literature.

My round trips allowed me eventually to pick up enough mathematics to grasp some of the fundamental questions. They are about none less than the question of infinity. And that brings us immediately to what Tábor called the personality. What he meant was the very infinity of medieval Christian scholasticism, the only real being against the individual with its very finite and limited existence (mathematicians say openly “of zero measure”).

The whole issue of the foundations was raised by the introduction of infinity into mathematics. Its introduction is associated with the names of Giordano Bruno, Galileo Galilei, René Descartes, Isaac Newton and Gottfried Leibniz. It has also to do with the invention of the zero, but we will omit that here. Until then, infinity was strictly reserved for the one Christian personal divinity. Its transformation into a mathematical concept, in a sense the profanation of a supreme symbol, its instrumentalization as a scientific concept, had Bruno to be burned at the stakes. This devaluation, this repression of the one infinite personality, of the one fully existing being, of holy wholeness, of sacrality, could be seen as the beginning of modernity and of modern science, including modern economy. Yet the theological concept of infinity carried openly all the deep contradictions associated with personal monotheism (for instance the contradiction between divine omnipotence and the existence of evil). Mathematics, on the other hand, does not tolerate contradictions. It is indeed the very discipline of contradiction-free thinking. Yet a contradiction appeared very early in the mathematical concept of infinity, such as Galileo’s paradox which says that only every second number is even yet the infinity of the even and odd numbers together is not more infinite than that of just the evens. One plus one is one. This is nothing less then the return of the repressed.

In spite of that, Newton and Leibniz used the self-contradictory concept of infinity to develop infinitesimal calculus, a mathematical tool which has become crucial for technical applications – including capitalistic economy. This new discipline, the mathematics of infinity, had to be sharpened and the contradictions sharpened too. Near the end of the 19th century, the German mathematician Georg Cantor developed his transfinite set theory in an effort get rid of them, using a suggestion by the mathematician and theologian Bernard Bolzano. Once again, we will not go into that, only to remark

that “transfinite” means here that there are infinities beyond the infinity of the numbers (for instance there are more points on a line than there are numbers). After it was completed, new contradictions appeared in the theory whose purpose was to free mathematics from its contradictions. They come precisely from the fact that the infinities multiply. Because if there are many infinities, meaning here an infinity of infinities (each infinity generates the next), then there must exist a largest infinity, namely the infinity of all these infinities, which then after all cannot be infinite (if you understood the argument, dear reader, then you qualify for higher mathematics). Cantor admitted openly the contradiction and that it is nothing else than the return of the theological contradictions in a new shape (almighty God is not almighty after all). After a few attempts at its solution, it became clear that its solution is just as impossible as in the case of theology. Well, that’s where we are. That’s bad, but the spectacle knows how to make profit out of it. That is the origin of our digital technology, but we must skip the details. Let us only remark that Szabó and Tábor’s contemporary in Budapest, the great mathematician John von Neumann, had a leading role in the appropriation of the unsolvable contradictions for the digital world.

As for Lajos Szabó, he asked the question whether these contradictions had any importance outside mathematics. If so, what was it? Their importance is that they reveal the hidden contradictions of modernity, its helplessness, and the way to their treatment. Modernity negates its own contradictions and opposes its resistance to their solution, which should consist in admitting its continuity with tradition, their mutual dependence. It cultivates instead a radical atomism, as Attila Kotányi says, universal alienation as our era’s “monumental myth”, the blooming gardens of alienation of which mathematical set theory represents just an ultimate expression. The new digital technologies, all the “artificial intelligence” which should instead be called artificial stupidity, the misuse of the mathematical contradictions, are the best illustration.

The Living Word

Bur I do not advocate rejecting the digital universe, I too write this on my computer. Indeed I write it, and that is also an atomism, a verbal and literal atomism, that of words separated by spaces and made of individual typographic characters, whereas speech ignores the spaces between the words and the typographic letters. Speech flows like water and like music. I advocate what Heidegger called “detachment”. Ivan Illich, Attila’s contemporary, who understood very well what May 68 was about, recommended to use technique but without adhering too much to it, to remember that we can do very well without it, maybe even better⁶.

The essence of modern atomism is that it “declared war to all continuity” (Béla Tábor⁷). We might characterize it by saying that it confuses flowing water with falling grains. That is set theory. “The leaves on the trees are all the same and that is supposed to explain the whole world” (Lajos Szabó). One wants to deduct continuity from fragmentation⁸. That is the contradiction.

Attila Kotányi wrote little but he spoke a lot. His preferred medium was the winged word, the living, personal word, just like for his philosophical masters Lajos Szabó and Béla Tábor, who maintained that the personal conversation between “as few persons as possible, at best between two” was the origin of language, against anonymous writing. (Jacques Derrida may claim writing to be the origin of language, yet certainly not in the sense of a material fixation of the spoken word, but in the sense that the meaning of the words does not change from one minute to the next.) For him too speaking was thinking aloud”, in the sense of Heinrich von Kleist’s “thoughts which come while talking”⁹ and John Austin’s performative word¹⁰, of speaking as action and not “just words”, of the inseparability of speaking and action, of speaking and thinking, of thinking¹¹ and impulse, passion, emotion, at the limit of poetry and philosophy. To understand and misunderstand Attila, to know him, you must have met him in speech, and that always left traces in you. The same holds for Szabó and Tábor. As for Béla Hamvas, I don’t know, I never met him being a child or an adult, but certainly being a baby, since my mother says that he was my godfather, even though he came late for my baptism.

Hamvas wrote a great lot, and it is interesting to note that everything he wrote catches you even if you don’t agree with him. His secret is probably that he wrote also in a “performative” way, that writing for him was not “just writing” but most active activity. Attila used to quote Nietzsche: “I, a man of words!” You should not read Hamvas in silence, you must read him loud, lest he loses all aroma like cold soup (I am sure he would have liked this image). That is at least what I experienced at the director of the Hungarian Cultural Centre in Berlin Csan Togay’s happening during two years, when he read

one hour of Hamvas every Monday from six to seven.

Also the situationists knew the importance of the living word, since it is personal presence, immediate encounter eye to eye. The written word belongs already to the spectacle, including mediated speech: broadcast, records, television, cinema and even the telephone, whose real purpose is not to bring people closer to one another but to keep them as far apart as possible. That is just a matter of emphasis: the emphasis is not on “phone” but on “tele”. The same for car transportation and the modern city habitation, the “apartment” from French “à part”, separate. Remember that the situationist movement started from a criticism of urban life, from Ivan Chitchevlov’s little text where he protested in the Dada spirit against the compulsive, anti-poetical boredom in the modern city¹². That certainly agreed with Kotányi’s view, who claimed already in his first publication as a fresh architect from high school that the purpose of architecture is not to produce houses but to produce life¹³. His brilliant diploma was not recognized in the West and he had to repeat it. We might even thank to that his stumbling upon the freshly founded Internationale Situationniste, as a senior student at the Brussels School for Architecture.

I would bet that the situationists would be very hard today toward the digital industry as an intensification of the spectacle. The digital culture not only alienates, it makes you stupid¹⁴. We might say that it intensifies the alienation. What does stupidity alienate from? From good sense and sensibility, from healthy self-awareness. Self-awareness turns into the autistic unconsciousness of the object. The “I” shrinks to a set of objective data. Brr, just thinking of it frightens me. The masses turned dumb are easy to control, you do not even need coercion. The internet is narcotic, it turns you dumb. But the details would not fit in here.

The living word as an experience of encounter requires of course a good mastering of language. At his arrival in Brussels in the early summer of 1957, Attila did not speak French. The months spent in the refugee camps in Yugoslavia were not useful for learning languages, as the final destination was yet unknown. Attila’s wife, our mother Magda Huszár, knew fortunately French, that saved us. Attila learned on the spot some rudimentary French, Szabó never, so he moved to nearby Düsseldorf. His philosophical German was quite good, also Attila’s, but not quite so good at the colloquial level.

The language problem certainly contributed to the difficulties of understanding with the situationists. They appreciated Attila’s vast erudition and even say his somewhat unusual poetic-philosophical intensity. But we must suppose that they at times simply did not understand him. The performative improvisation is anyway a difficult genre, it can turn confused, messy, uneven, a sort of stuttering¹⁵, of which I kept some traces. In that France bent on a rational, emotionally rather undercooled discourse, this intensity may have been somewhat exotic. It was also characteristic for Szabó who called his own philosophy sometimes an “emotionalism”. In that sense we might say that Szabó was rather singular too, in that he reconciled scientific rigour with the impulsive and direct tone of the Hungarian language.

The impulse, what Attila called the “immediate experience”, is lost in writing. The spectacle does everything to suppress it, to suppress personal, communautarian subjectivity, against that individual, that of anonymous society. Objectivism, the rigid concept close to the Greek “hypostasis”, to reification, objective science, all belong to the spectacle. The situationists avoided that, like Szabó and Tábor. They never defined formally what they called a “situation”, and they never attempted a systematic formulation of situationist theory. They even protested vehemently against any attempts at that. That is why we know so little about them, as in the case of Szabó and Tábor. In both cases, that was their contradiction, since at the same time they sought to reach a wider public.

Lajos Szabó succeeded first of all with his drawings, even though his exhibitions rarely raised a noticeable echo, also due to the rather “esoteric” nature of the drawings, similar to that of his few writings. The situationists touched the wider public primarily through May 68, not least with their famous graffiti at the limit of philosophical aphorisms and poetry. “Take your dreams for reality”, “Never work”, “Under the paving stones lies the beach”. Highly mobilizing, performative formulas. After that, the last remnants of the group dissolved, leaving Debord alone, which may have contributed to his later alcoholism, to his depressions and finally to his suicide. Attila commented somewhat mischievously: “Here is for you the corpse of a media critic”¹⁶. Because one cannot expect even from the spectacle, from the gangland, that it support its own enemies.

Attila’s solution was different. Like Szabó, Tábor and the ancient peripatetic, Jewish and other communities, he relied

mostly on a circle of close friends, later on the little group of students in his seminars at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf. He hardly sought public recognition, for which he had to pay a price, but not that of the ambivalent kind of fame which was bestowed upon the situationist Debord and his companions.

Attila has noted a similarity between Szabó’s drawings and today’s very vital urban graffiti art. We might even see the situationist graffiti as the precursors of the latter. There are many common points. First of all, they have nothing in common with the traditional graffiti, which are mostly either vulgar obscenity or political agitation. Both are clandestine and claim illegality. Both have a subversive aim with an aesthetic claim. Both use typographic hypertrophy and the erotism of the written word. They are a subversive response to the aesthetic terror of commercial advertisement. And finally like Szabó’s drawings and poetry, they say nothing but themselves.

The common objective is nothing less than “reclaiming our alienated language”¹⁷. That holds for the situationists, the lettrists and Szabó’s philosophy which Attila joined. In that sense we might say that the situationist enterprise did not differ from Szabó’s and Tábor’s, and we might see here a continuity in Attila’s trajectory. But he was all the same in an eternal exile between the two, as between his father’s Jewish roots and his mother’s bigot catholicism, then at the military school from which he was eventually ejected due to these roots, a shameful exclusion but which probably saved his life by sparing him the Eastern front. Even in his profession he must have felt often exiled, due to a heavy attack of poliomyelitis right at the beginning of his career which robbed him of the muscles needed to work at the large drawing tables. Then came Belgium, Paris, Düsseldorf and back to Hungary.

In spite of all these ruptures, he managed somehow to convey to us and to me some of what really matters, in a very antique spirit of continuity and of solidarity, against the modern Hobbesian bellum omnium contra omnes. We may only hope to achieve this in turn.

The Situation

To take advantage of my privilege of the last word, I would still make an attempt at a definition of what we might understand under a “situation”. May 68 was a “situation” in that it opened a gap in grey urban life, in the “normality” of urban alienation. These were exceptional moments, a big feast. For Szabó, “normality is being together”¹⁸, in other words the feast, against the “pathology of separation”. A situation is a gap in pathological normality. Normal closes up again upon us but in the meanwhile we have seen the “new”, the path to liberation which until then was unconceivable. The people had removed the paving stones on the central Paris boulevard and discovered a well-being unknown in the city dominated by omnipotent and omnipresent car traffic and its atmosphere of a permanent civil war. They perceived the usual “order” as actually a huge disorder, normality as abnormal. The people went to the streets without a definite aim, without the tension of urgent business, and engaged into conversations about just anything, without the usual stiff conventions. What was new in the first place was the atmosphere, the very fact that there was an atmosphere, against the “normal” city with its fake, unreal atmospheres. A tangible result of these Parisian days was the later creation of pedestrian zones in the centres of the cities, which were however promptly recuperated by the spectacle for business.

I claim that the internet and the so-called social media were also born as a result, as informal meetings without a moderator. As we know, they were very quickly turned into the opposite, into highly efficient tools for advertisement, business and surveillance. The most tangible sign of this is their narcotic effect. Their function is to isolate the individual, to lock him up in his loneliness, and, as Szabó pointed out, “every solitary pleasure is narcotic”. These perversions of situationist “détournement” are also a détournement. The spectacle goes so far as to “détourner le détournement”.

To finish, I would like to mention an example which I owe my companion during many years Elisabeth Meyer-Renschhausen, who was busy with it during a long life as a sociologist and as an activist: the theme of the “commons”. The commons offered in the Middle Ages grazing grounds for the cattle of the landless peasants. Marx devoted a very important chapter in “Das Kapital” to the “Enclosure of the Commons” as an early phase of capitalism. The commons became private property and the poor peasants were forced into the cities where they supplied as proletarians the workforce for the new industry. Private, individual, anonymous property has since turned into normality (against personal, communautarian property, Lajos Szabó). Soon after 68, a small group of artists occupied a vacant lot in the middle of lower Manhattan and created a blooming garden after cleaning up the garbage. This garden,

named after Liz Christie, the young artist who launched the action, was the first “community garden”, an open challenge to capitalism in the middle of its territory, a spot of normality at the centre of capitalistic abnormality. The community gardens have since grown into a worldwide movement. I would call them “situations”, as the urban graffiti too.

Beyond smuggling beauty into the city quasi overnight, clandestinely, the gardens have since turned also to self-providing subsistence farming, as a liberation from stifling market economy. I am sure that Ivan Chitchevlov and his successor Attila Kotányi would have approve of the new image of the city which they create, as Attila also very much appreciated the wild urban graffiti culture and Szabó’s not less wild calligraphic work. After many years of struggle, the New York gardens were integrated into the city administration. Paris followed some thirty years later. Elisabeth never tired insisting that every city must urgently follow their example.

Continuity

While Guy Debord was putting an end to his life, Attila had entered the most productive period of his life, after decades of roaming about. With his friend György Kunszt and their young colleagues László Surányi and Ádám Tábor, they published “Fact and Mystery”, a first collection of Szabó’s writings and the procedures of his Budapest conversations between 1946 and 1950 which the two young architects had produced back then. That was in a sense what he had been preparing through his life while reading, talking and investigating. He organised in 1997 a large retrospective of Szabó’s drawings in Budapest and Düsseldorf and produced “Eikon”, the catalogue of the exhibition, which we might quasi see as his opus magnum. Before that and just before the end of the Cold War, he wrote a long comment on Szabó’s art which was published in a double issue of the Hungarian review “Életünk” dedicated to Szabó and which the review had commissioned. In my view his best text. Many of his rare publications date from this last period, often talks he gave in front of young artist audiences. His published oeuvre, from the first two very short 1946 papers up to the last ones in Budapest, through the situationist documents between 1960 and 1963, span thus six decades. That is also continuity, a very special present from world history.

After the end of the situationist episode, Attila had joined Szabó in Düsseldorf at the latter’s invitation. (A little Taoist anecdote. Li had been studying music with his master. After many long years, he decided that he had learned enough and that the time had come for him to return to the city. Underways he stopped for a rest in a little grove. He took his lute and struck a chord. At this sound of a supreme beauty, the grove fell into ecstasy, the trees lost their leaves. Li jumped on his feet in horror and ran back to his master: “Master, master, I will never leave you again!”) After Szabó’s death in the autumn of 1967, he took interest in Buddhism and in Jewish mysticism, which he saw as related. He also discovered the New Age movement which the situationist had violently attacked in Paris as reactionary obscurantism. They were not quite wrong, be it in regard of their main rival, the very popular “Planète” magazine, a mixture of vulgar esoterism and soft pornography which had enriched its editors. Raoul Vaneigem, a Brussels friend whom Attila had introduced to the situationists, had even published a sharp polemic against all forms of tradition, for him “since long obsolete” (“Basic banalities”, 1963). We might even see it as aimed also at Attila, whose attention had been called early on by his masters Hamvas, Szabó and Tábor upon the continued importance of esoteric traditions for modernity, such as for instance Christian mysticism.

In his seminars at the Düsseldorf Academy of Arts between 1976 and 1988, he had taught architecture as an art and not just as an engineering science. “When architecture became a science, it turned into a “useful art”. The other arts are therefore useless... Even the architects ended up believing this error”¹⁹. He even invited me to give a talk on the big houses of the astronomers, the galaxies. That is also continuity.

notes

- 1) Hegel, “History of Philosophy”.
- 2) Andrey Amalrik, „Will the Sovietunion Survive until 1984?“, Moscow 1969.
- 3) And linking violence to religion as a “projection” (Szabó and Tábor speak of a “phobia”: we discard religion because of the violences committed in its name, violence is still there while religion is gone. See “Complaint against Spirit”, French in L. Szabó, “De l’esprit de la langue”, Paris 2024; Hungarian original 1936, second édition 1990.)
- 4) Béla Tábor, „Jewry at the Crossroads“, French in „Personnalité et individualité“, Paris 2024; Hungarian original Budapest 1939, second edition 1990. The individual is indivisible,

cannot be shared, cannot share.

5) Nietzsche: They say that the women and the artists tend to be superficial. But if you know what lurks there below, won't you prefer to stay at the surface?

6) We might even see the conviction that we could no longer do without technique as a kind of very modern "obsessive neurosis", due in the last analysis to the repression of sacrality. Ivan Illich's friend Jacques Ellul spoke of the "sacralisation" of modern technique, of the "instrument of a desacralisation". Also the spectacle: the neurotical return of spectacular religion after the iconoclastic traumatism at the dawn of modernity? Debord seems to have discarded Ellul for the same reason as he did Attila, because of their insistences on referring the whole issue to its religious sources. Attila even traced back abstraction in 20th century art – and we might add, also in the mathematical sciences of nature, founding their new power - to the Biblical prohibition of the image ("Lajos Szabó's Calligraphic Dialectic", French in "L'architecture du silence", Paris 2022; Hungarian original in "Életünk", Szombathely 1989). (Abstraction itself would not be a neurotic symptom but a "subversive" strategy seeking for the solution from this side of the Freudian aporia of the repressed and of the return of the repressed.) Deepening the situationist theory would therefore not have meant a return to a moribund religion but to its vital sources – which are in the last analysis also those of modernity. We could for instance contrast our rather morbid religious imagery with that very erotic in India. (Szabó: "Let us compare a preaching by the Buddha and a Buddhist catechism. Two mutually alien worlds, two mutually hostile worlds! The one is alive, the other is dead.", "Art and Religion", French in "De l'esprit de la langue"; Hungarian original 1942:. But he warns against comparing Christian dogmatism with its Biblical sources, that would stretch our critical capacities beyond their limits.)

We might relate this spectacular kind of religiosity, late Christianity, to the atomisation of language since medieval nominalism, leading to the spectacle as a "pornographical", truncated imagery. "Power to the imagination" against this alienating imagery, reclaiming aesthetical freedom, desalienating imagination, the living word of aesthetic, against the rule of the re-

pressive, "anonymous", unpersonal image. With nominalism, this religiosity turns into its own opposite, into the "Babylonian confusion of language" (Szabó and Tábor, "Complaint against Spirit"). Illich: Corruptio optimi quae est pessima (the corruption of the best into the worst).

7) Béla Tábor, 1990 postface to „Complaint against Spirit“, French in “De l'esprit de la langue”.

8) Aesthetical atomism: continuity as an optical cheat, from the “motion picture” to the digital image.

9) Heinrich von Kleist, Über die allmähliche Verfertigung der Gedanken beim Reden, (about the birth of thoughts while speaking), in Nord und Süd, Breslau 1878.

10) John Austin, „How to do Things with Words“, Oxford 1962.

11) Lajos Szabó, „Logic of Faith“, French in „De l'esprit de la langue“, Hungarian original Budapest 1937.

12) Gilles Ivain (Ivan Chtcheglov), „Formulaire pour un urbanisme nouveau“ in „Internationale Situationniste“ 1, Paris 1958.

13) Attila Kotányi, „L'architecture“, in „L'architecture du silence“, Paris 2022; according to some (perhaps Weöres himself?) Hungarian original Budapest 1946.

14) See Guillaume Paoli, „Massenverdummungswaffen“ (weapons of mass stupidification), in „Kapitalismus und Regression“, Berlin 2004.

15) Music as a stylised stuttering, dance as a stylised staggering. Dérive: drifting about. Drawing: “The line goes for a walk” (AK). With him, thinking “went for a walk”. RAP and Electric Boogie. Ecstasy. The situationist “dérive” has of course much to do with the blissful floating of dreams, contrary to narcosis, which is rather close to a nightmare, to an obsessive fixation without an issue. That will be the Freudian inheritance through the intermediary of the surrealist André Breton and the psychoanalyst Georges Soupault's “automatic poetry”. The freely floating dream is the exact opposite of narcosis. It sharpens preception instead of blunting it. The famous “higher consciousnesses” attributed to drugs are actually fake and as such unreal, useless for awakened consciousness, whereas dreams are crucial for it as its regeneration. Attila compared drugs to “breaking into the epoché”, the Greeks' suspension of critical

judgment, with a lockpick. Dreams are subversive, narcosis is illegal. Dreams regenerate, narcosis degenerates. No wonder therefore if the situationists were hostile to the New Age movement with its close links to the narcotic culture thus to digitalization.

We might even dwell upon this. The too easy appropriation of situationism, turning it into its opposite, could be related precisely to its Freudian inheritance, to the latter's limitations and one-sidednesses. Freudian “repression” occurs basically downwards, that is the “id”, the unconscious. But there is also a repression upwards, and that is not the superego, which basically is the organ executing the commands of the “id” (Freud, “Ego and Superego”, Vienna 1922). Dreams precisely raise “above” the conscious ego. That is spirit, which cannot be grasped by any science, any philosophy, any concept, which allows precisely science and philosophy to grasp anything. That is the Hindu “Brahman”, which is “neither this nor that” (Brihadaranyka Upanishad), the Judaic personality “without a name”, more precisely whose name cannot be pronounced, who “sees through my eyes but whom my eyes do not see”, who “grasps with my hand but whom my hand cannot grasp”, my authentic, true “I”, “closer to me than myself” (Hallaj, 9th century Persian mystic poet), without a graspable name, without graspable characteristics, or with “attributes” ungraspable by any means, such as the person's infinity against the finite individual. That escapes psychology but also philosophy and as we saw theology. It is “reality” altogether and any designation cannot but produce a distance. Attila proposed this kind of enrichment of situationist theory, since that was also Marx', Freud's and Einstein's secret, to draw from these sources, whether on purpose or not. His proposal was finally to draw from them on purpose, not on this side but beyond consciousness. And that beyond, that is art, poetry, language which “thinks” (Heidegger) and which “whispers our words into our ears” (Tábor).

16) Attila Kotányi , „Is there a Critic of the Medias which isn't Suicidary?“, MetaForum III, Budapest 1996.

17) Lajos Szabó, “Logic of Faith”.

18) Lajos Szabó, “Le signe universel”, Paris 2024, page 11.

19) Attila Kotányi, „L'architecture“.



THE WIND IS BLOWING THE NEW: EVERYDAY LIFE, ART AND THE NECESSITY OF JOYFUL MILITANCY AS A WAY OUT

Harout Simonian 2024

The principle of joyful militancy is that either our politics are liberating, either they change our life in a way that is positive, that make us grow, give us joy, or there's something wrong with them.

Silvia Federici

In my culture, by the unwritten rules of ethics, when someone offers a favor or a gift or food, we first of all politely decline, and then the person who offered must insist and persuade the guest to take it; accepting immediately is in bad taste. And also when you have a collective meal, which happens very often, the last leftovers in the common plate are always going to be shared, it is called the “last piece of shame”. It comes from the Soviet Socialist past and even before; this principle also exists in the Middle East; it is not only a question of class relation but also of cultural heritage. This principle can become a joyful militancy, of collective struggle against savagery. Because it is in danger of disappearing and being replaced by commercial attitudes more typical of American life where the principle in front of a “good piece of cake” is who is going to grasp it first?

End and Ends of history! The danger that history, as a guide to our life, will be destroyed is getting closer and closer. By erasing history, everyday life is being destroyed. It is like the ground escaping under our feet, an earthquake and an air attack. People saying, they don't understand what's happening, don't understand anything. In everyday life it looks like nothing is happening, a drama unfolding in the night, or in the morning as you drink a coffee. Nothing seems to happen in everyday life except everything changes. Anxiety in the public space creates a social phobia; it is anxiety of anxiety, as lack of insight, lack of feeling or emotion or thought, it is a disease of the collective mind, a sort of social Alzheimer's. Cleaning the house, cleaning dishes in everyday life is a thinking process, but Silvia Federici says it is reproductive labor and hard work, it is not like walking and thinking. Thus, everyday life is the starting point of our liberation struggle.

I was asked, forced by friends, to write to bring knowledge about what is happening. Being able to politicize, turn it into a source of knowledge. But how to write about a massacre? How to write about violence? Is it possible to write about it, when the media are daily bombarding us with images of violence? How to write when more than 100,000 people in Nagorno-Karabakh are forced to leave their houses, their land, in a couple of days? They left while they were preparing food, they left from work forgetting to take the jewelry, their sweaters, and a couple of socks for the kids and they left forever. They left after being kept in prison without food, electricity, gas and water, in their own land, for more than eight months. They left not to be exposed to repeated massacres. They left in order to prevent the authorities from carrying out brutal violence where the new enclosure was taking place.

To understand what is the meaning and significance of this rehearsal of ethnic cleansing, we must now turn to what they are doing in Gaza where a war, especially targeting children, is taking place to complete the old colonial project of erasing Palestine.

The next stage of this madness and chaos is near. The extra-territorial corridor in the southernmost Syunik region of Armenia, the so-called “Zangezur corridor” by definition, will be militarized and will become a haven for illegal activities and trades, and a new “artery” between Europe and Asia. This ‘corridor’ is part of a strategic transport route and geopolitical project connecting Europe with Central Asia and China. It passes from China, through Central Asia, the Caspian Sea, the South Caucasus, and Turkey to Europe, from East and West. It is the shortest route connecting China to Europe. The idea of a land route from Asia to Europe was one of the issues on the agenda after the fall of the Soviet Union. The corridor logic is in the interest of Russia. Russia would have the opportunity to control the border of Armenia. This is not something new, Armenian borders have been controlled by Russia for decades. This is because Russia needs the status quo, it needs an endless war between Armenia and Azerbaijan and the endless ‘peace process’ is not a solution. The “Zangezur corridor” aims to give Azerbaijan unrestricted access to its Nakhchivan exclave

without any Armenian checkpoints, while it passes through Armenian territory near the Tehran- Yerevan border.

A gentle reminder: the next United Nations COP28 climate summit will be in Baku, Azerbaijan in 2024.

I recently picked up a copy of “Communist Like Us” written in 1990 by Toni Negri and Felix Guattari because Toni Negri died a couple of days ago, 33 years after Guattari died, presumably from depression.

I am reading:

What took place in the East is the beginning of a revolt against a capitalism which had reached the apex of its tyranny. There are always those imbeciles who identify capitalist development with the number of computers sold: of course in that case one would have to believe that there was no capitalism in the East and that its revolution will quickly be calmed by selling computers. And there are those who will attempt this strategy. But that is not really how things stand: the level of capitalist development is defined by the degree of social cooperation in production. From this point of view, the Eastern bloc is in no way behind the West.

It is against this background that we read the revolution which has exploded; and we further suggest that, as with all revolutions that are truly such, this one will spread from the East to the West, a new '68, moving in the opposite direction. What else do the events in the East reveal? Another element, less visible to the majority of the public, but nonetheless extraordinarily important: the birth of a new model of democracy. In our civilization we are accustomed to thinking that there is only one model of democracy, the Western one, and that it need only be applied generally.

I am continuing to read:

Every form of democratic government must also be a form of liberation from the slavery of work, must yield a new, free organization of cooperation in production. It is not a question of putting factories and the organization of social work in the hands of new bosses, entrusting them to the hypocritical freedom of the marketplace, handing them back to the exploitative desires of capitalists and bureaucrats. Rather, it is a question of understanding what might be the rules for the democratic management of economic entrepreneurship.

Really? Democracy? When many “western” leftists in collaboration with eastern liberals who are scared of the words socialism and communism, when the revolutionary word “International” becomes cultural exchange. When after the collapse very quickly they learned how to expropriate the resources necessary to satisfy the basic needs and basic necessities in the name of democracy, implementing a ‘shock economy’? Dollarization and capitalization in all forms without any rights and any laws? And postmodern expansion in post-soviet territories became the model of contemporary capitalist society. And also, what about primitive accumulation, the first phase of capitalist development which according to Silvia Federici continues to return?

It is obvious, 33 years later, as we see in the “West” the effects of the neoliberal agenda, when a New, New World Order prevails all over the world to expand genocidal politics and to create a new world of slavery.

They are destroying a future, killing children and it is obvious what kind of shitty situation we are living in. And how did Negri mis-predict? He should have known! He made himself blind to the reality right in front of his eyes. To go beyond this capitalist affection on us, as a way out, it is necessary to have principle of joyful militancy and to not distinguish between struggle, philosophy and art.

Sabu Kohso writes: “One idea that I’ve been thinking through lately, about the struggles of planetary inhabitants, is that they must involve at least three territories of practice, which can be designated by three principles of action: the first is protection of life, the second is militancy for confrontation, and the third is autonomy to connect the two. If there is some hope for the grim futures of disaster and crisis to come, it’s that in confronting apocalyptic situations, these three initiatives can especially flourish and enhance each other.”

How important it is to build strong community, joyful militancy; on one hand, how important art can be or has been in the history of struggle, on the other hand, of course art is not all.

But here we should not forget we can all become artists and art can give us something which can help us to confront and to live autonomously together. We cannot escape the disaster of capitalist planning. Now the struggle is not to ‘win’ but to create another world, now is our turn and this is why art is important. Art, in the context of capitalism and beyond it - art makes it possible to create different material relations, create commons, or ideas of the common.

I don’t want to elaborate on “art is work” or art as a special activity, as in the bourgeois construction of art. Instead I would like to think about the desire to bring forward and provide for the necessities of everyday life through reproductive work, it is nutrition, impossible to exist without. We have to ask ourselves what critique and art are as necessities in everydayness. Art is connected to our body, to the territory which is constantly under attack; art is ability to connect with other people. Today we cannot speak of art, of art practice, without relation of our bodies to the territory and without a struggle to transform the world in which we live. Artists are understanding, seeing and feeling.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, when nationalism and competition became the first values, everything was built to make capital flow. In this sense when we speak about art, as a survival means, there are many things we refer to, and many needs. If you ask anybody what you would like to become, they will say that when they were a child they wanted to become an artist, a dancer, a filmmaker, so everyone is thirsty for some form of art. Even activists and curators want to become artists. So art is something important for us to be together, and why should we not if it gives us joy? This, in fact, is why we want to change the world. Art and being an artist is another way of being; it is another way of doing and another way of practicing everydayness.

Art is a good thing in itself. In situations of repression art can become a form of joyful resistance otherwise not possible. Beside the importance of art as a formal activity, art is also a good instrument, the fact that the activity itself gives us the possibility to come together in a collective way. In that sense there is a lot of work that people can do, discussing ideas, producing music, creating a space collectively. Another important thing is intergenerational(ity). There is so much that can be said through art. It is a way of discussing a lot of things, and it is a way of creating friendships. It helps prevent people from falling into despair, or becoming acquiescent - joining right-wing, fascist groups, because we join the “strong one” when we feel defeated. Everybody knows that they are wasting their life, and we are experiencing death in life.

While those that seek to control & exploit the Earth blindly ignore its impending destruction, can we do any less than to create, finally, a REAL alternative?

Ben Morea

ANTI-DENIALIST
COALITION

STOPPING
GENOCIDE
& ITS
PERPETRATORS
ENABLERS

DELINK FROM
DENIALISM

FREE: PALESTINE
FREE: ARTSAKH
FREE: ROJAVA
FREE: CHIAPAS
F!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

saturday
march 2 2024
6pm

earthchxrch

3rd st.
3rd ave.

LES

FREE

ALL PRISONERS

ABOLISH

the GLOBAL

penal PUBLIC PRISON COLONY COMPLEX

FREE TURTLE ISLAND



STEP’ANNOS ORBELEAN’S HISTORY OF THE STATE OF SISAKAN



DESCRIBING THE BORDERS OF TAT'EV

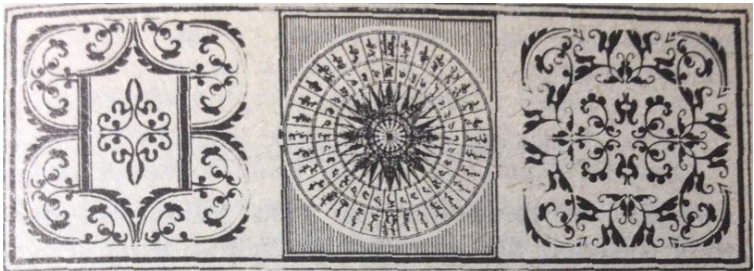


ehold, these are the boundaries which we walked with our own feet, saw with our own eyes and designated with our own hands to be the boundaries of the blessed monastery of Tat'ev, [lands] to be free from deprivation or alienation. We wrote this and sealed it with our own signet rings and even with the rings of our king and our kat'oghikos, [to be the borders] from now to eternity.

Let no one dare to challenge this, not the Baghats'is [people of Baghk'], or the Orotnets'is or the Vaghandats'is, or the Shne'rats'is or the Norets 'is. Should someone come forth to contest this—either one of our own people or a foreigner, a noble (azat) or a worker (dzer'naworats') from the xostaks or tanute'rs—let such a one be rejected by the Holy Trinity, and anathematized by the three holy councils. Let him be judged with Judas and the crucifiers and evil-doers. Should supremacy pass to the Tachiks and they dare try to ravish it, let them be rejected by their faith and religion, rejected by their prophet, by Allah, the angels, their spiritual fathers, and disrespected bytheir descendants. May they be halal haram and may this curse be on them for a thousand years. May their lands not have rain and not bear vegetation.

I, Yovhanne's, kat'oghikos of the Armenians by the grace of God, am a witness to this document which is unchangeable and not to be overturned, issued by the great princes of Siwnik'. I have stamped it with my customary signet ring.
I, Smbat Bagratuni, king of the Armenians, have confirmed this document and placed my royal seal at the bottom.
I, Gagik, lord of Vaspurakan and of the Artsrunik', son of Grigor-Derenik, certify these donations and boundaries [made to] the [ecclesiastical] throne of Siwnik'.
I, the lowly servant of God, Lord Sime'on, archbishop of the Aghuans, certify this deed and have stamped it with my ring.
I Grigor Sup'an, prince of Siwnik', am a witness to this deed which we have drawn up.
We, Grigor and Esayi and Atrnerseh, princes of the Aghuans, are witnesses to this deed.
We, Dzagik and Hrahat Siwnik', are witnesses to this deed.
We, Sahak, lord of Gardman, and Ashot and Vasak Gnt'uni, are witnesses to this.

I, Yovhanne's, bishop of Siwnik', have confirmed this document with my hand and stamped it with my ring. May God grace the Holy Cross and the Holy Church and divinely appointed patriarchs who occupy this throne. Done in the year 355 of the Armenian Era (A.D. 906).



AND HAPPIER STILL WERE THOSE STILLBORN IN THE WOMB

Without any spiritual calling, I, in my boldness, wanted to advance. I had prepared my ears to hear words to lead me to perdition, [such as] "you lack the [proper] dress," and, "you are an evil and bad servant," as well as the most dreadful command from Hell: "Quit. Give it up." Yet on top of all this I grew yet bolder, since I aspired to the degree of patriarch. And then all our bishops gathered near my father and they suggested that I should travel to the royal land of Cilicia, to the fortunate kat'oghikos and the God-crowned king of the Armenians to be ordained to the metropolitanate and to become the occupant of the see of Siwnik'. I had the folly to welcome this proposal, without realizing the terrible and superhuman burden [it entailed]. I was just enticed by worldly vanity. However, I felt that those not experiencing this [honor] were the happy ones, and happier still were those stillborn in the womb.



TRYING TO UNITE TAT'EV AND NORAVANK', THE DIVIDED DIOCESES OF THE SEE



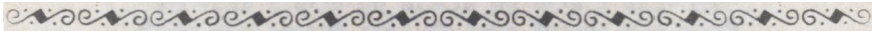
nd thus, in magnificent honor, we departed from them and reached our land. We experienced much grief from the bishops of Tat'ev, until they died. Afterwards, we remained beset by a bitter and sorrowful existence, trying to unite Tat'ev and Noravank', the divided dioceses of the see (A.D. 1286).

However, we did not disturb matters, due to the strong anathemas of previous kat'oghikoi—Lord Kostand and Lord Yakob—and the previous bishops—Lord Yovhanne's, Lord Step'annos, Lord Sargis, another Lord Step'annos, Lord Grigor and Lord Sargis—who had assured the church of Noravank' the entire legacy of all Vayots' dzor [g228]. Rather, as matters stood prior to us, such did we accept them. We decided that the other native see should be administered [separately], but that there should be one episcopate for the two of them, with one leader and ruler. Moreover, whoever would be bishop should not dare to view or treat them [separately], with two eyes and two minds and to show more concern for one of them. There should be no grudge or envy in this house. Their clerics should not say to one another: "You are [attached to] Tat'ev or to Noravank'." Rather, they should be as one person with one soul. Before us, in earlier times, it was so. If changes occur over time and Tat'ev becomes ruined, its legacy will go to the church of Noravank' and its inhabitants will reside there. On the other hand, should Noravank' become ruined, its legacy and belongings will be enjoyed by the church of Tat'ev, and its inhabitants will reside there. Now should it happen that after us someone thinks or schemes to destroy this verdict, one side or the other, may he be subjected to the most painful anathemas, from us and from all the patriarchs. May he be cursed by the Holy Trinity and share the fate of all evildoers. Subsequently, should opposition or disorder arise, such as we encountered, those opponents should also be within the scope of anathemas and the current administrators should see to what is proper.

Some days after our return from Cilicia, we went before the world-ruling king, Arghun. Meeting him, he received us with great honor and friendship. We informed him about our sorrows and showed him our encyclical, which he had translated and read in his presence. We also showed him the patrimonial charter regarding our physical inheritance, which my father had given. For a portion of our inheritance had been removed [which embraced] the monasteries under his principality, [namely] Tat'ev, Noravank', Ts'aghats' k'ar, Aratis, and all the others. When [Arghun] saw this, he ordered that an edict of authority be written which again confirmed all of it as ours in a double principality, spiritual and material



efore this, a fragment of the miracle-working divine Cross had been brought from the district of Artsakh. Its renown for effecting very great miracles and astounding marvels had spread throughout the entire land. It was a fragment of the envivifying Cross which was dyed with a mark of the divine blood which flowed from [Christ's] rib. [The fragment] was enclosed in a small reliquary fashioned of gold. It was the hereditary property of the grandchildren of Prince Dlen, who had a church and many brethren at Tat'ev. How it happened that this holy Cross which had borne God came to the district of Xach'en we learned from reliable men. [The told us that] a solitary hermit from an unknown land was travelling about, praying. It happened that he arrived in wintertime in the village of Dlen, having that divine and priceless treasure in a bag. Lodging in the home of a priest, he gave the bag to the housekeeper, and said: "Put this in a holy place until I depart." This took place on the night before Easter. Now it came about that a young son of the priest died during the night. However, because of the feast-day, they did not remove him then. The woman took the hermit's bag and put it by the pillow of the deceased. After the evening service, when they were sleeping a bit, that life-giving wood brought the child back to life. He began to cry out for his mother. Awakening from sleep, the mother was frightened and roused the priest. They entered the room where they saw the resurrected boy, sitting up and playing with the bag. For many hours they were astounded, not knowing the cause.



All this is halal, inviolable patrimony and inheritance for the holy church at Noravank', which may not be confiscated or ravished. Whether [donated as] spiritual gifts or purchased by bishops and princes, no one has any right to oppose [the begests], neither nobles (awagats') nor tax officials (dzer'naworats'), neither the prince over this village of Ar'p'ay, neither azats nor local tanute'rs. No one may oppose these legacies or in any way try to betray or deprive [the Church] either from greed, envy, or any other reason. Should anyone be so bold or insolent as to attempt it, may God the Father curse that person's father, may God the Son curse his son. May the united Holy Trinity curse his body. May all the curses of the prophets, Apostles, and patriarchs be upon his head and upon his House. May his memory be blotted out of this world and [after death] may he be food for the unsleeping worms and fuel for the unquenchable fire. As for those who obey, assist, and preserve [these provisions], may they be blessed by God and by all the saints. Should rule pass to a Tachik and should he think to betray or ravish [these legacies], may he be rejected by God and by his Muhammad. May his halal become haram. May 10,000 curses be upon him, his line, and his sons, for 1,000 years (A.D. 1295).



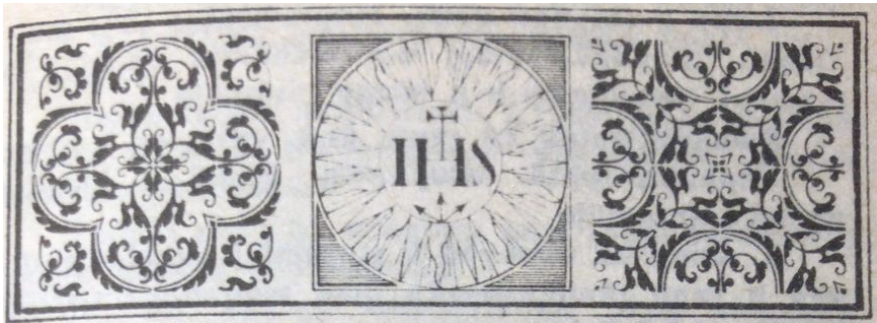
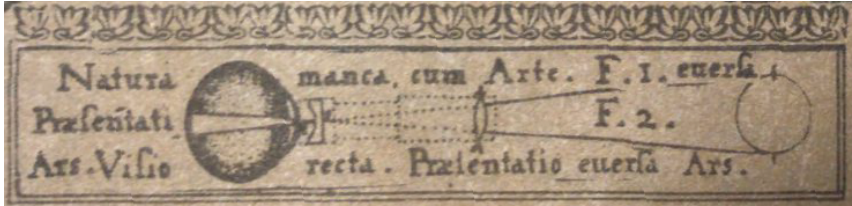
gain, for my weak and miserable self, I have set up this imperishable monument for my soul. Therefore, with the greatest hope I beseech God Who is the hope of all and the Lord of souls, to accept this as though it were a widow's small gift and not to withhold the little crumbs [I ask for] as though from begging dogs. For my memory I received [and gave] the church of Noravank' and took as an intercessor and mediator with Christ, the holy relic which had held God upon it. With my own hands I had fashioned the senior cross [which held the relic]. I gave as a gift [to Noravank' monastery] my legitimate inheritance as well as the village of Ch'ua with all of its borders, lands, and water, vineyards and residents, which I purchased from my brother, Jalal, free from all taxes and litigation from the divan, without claims on it from all sides, from the brethren and nobles. I bought this for 21,000 drams and also gave the village of Abasashe'n and Surb Sahak which were part of my legacy and legitimate property.

Let no one dare to exercise authority over these villages or to put them under taxation, either [to collect] for the divan or [to collect] the mal [tax on animals], or any other [obligations]. Only the heads of the holy congregation of Noravank' may exercise authority here. The heirs of this House and the servitors of the blessed Cross shall be the ones who enjoy it and [thus] we shall forever participate in the prayers and masses in this holy church (A.D. 1298).



Should someone from among the local leaders or bishops or one of the sextons or heirs of the House lazily neglect to fulfill our memorial, either through envy or for any other reason as long as these churches survive and thrive, may they share Judas' fate and be ranked with the priests who killed God. May they be rejected by the Holy Trinity and be responsible for our sins, which are as limitless as the ocean. May those who implement [the provisions] be blessed and ranked with all the saints and be rewarded. Amen.

In addition, because the extreme heat of the place in summertime made it impossible for bishops and servitors to reside there, we designated [as a summer residence] Arate's monastery, located above Eghegis. In all security we gave to the blessed Church for its enjoyment the monastery and the village with all its surrounding borders and spiritual and hereditary legacies. They should provide for the prosperity of the village and the lighting of the church with as much care as the current House does. Again, I give K'arkop' with all its borders for the enjoyment as inheritance for the leaders of the House and the other brethren.



From now to eternity let this be the firm patrimony of the blessed church of Noravank'. Although heirs, they should be zealous about the upkeep of the monastery and the lighting of the church. Indeed, they should devote all efforts to it, as though it was their own House. Let no one dare to oppose this [bequest] or for any reason whatever think to confound it and pull apart the spiritual gift I have presented to the blessed church at Noravank'. For the village of Ch'ua I purchased, while Arate's and K'arkop' are [donations] from my own legitimate inheritance, and no senior nor ruler; nor anyone else has any claims on them. Should anyone be so bold [as to challenge the bequest] may he be cursed by the Holy Trinity in life and death. May there be upon him all curses from the [curse put on the] snake to the [curse put on the] antichrist, [curses] which have been put on all evildoers. May he share [the fate of] Judas and perish like the apostate Vasak, devoured by worms. May he be responsible for all our sins and shortcomings, and be subject to the eternal flames. But as for those who accept and obey [the provisions of the bequest], may they be blessed by God and all His saints.

Now should rule pass to a Tachik and should he try to ravish it, may he be abandoned by God and by his prophet and may he and his House and descendants be ruined in the pit of perdition. May 100,000 curses be upon him.

While I was drawing up this memorial and establishing these spiritual donations, the heirs of this blessed House of spiritual brethren, with unanimous affection, established in my remembrance in this holy church forty masses for the period of the fifty days from the first Sunday after Easter to Pentecost, every morning to recite the prayer Ambits'k' [The Pure], and to offer requiem services over my grave. [Furthermore], on the feast-day of the blessed Pentecost in my memory let them offer a requiem by sacrificing oxen and sheep and widely distributing food and drink to the poor and needy. On that day, when all the churches are offering requiems, let them also beseech God through these spiritual offerings for the forgiveness of our sins and for the crumbs of mercy. Perhaps I will be protected against the awful shame before the terrible tribunal, where words cease and only deeds reign.





THE CONCERN FOR THE BYZANTINE AND ARMENIAN UPPER CLASSES
WAS THAT THE TONDRACIAN MOVEMENT WAS THE CONTINUATION OF
THE EARLIER PAULICAN HERETICISM.

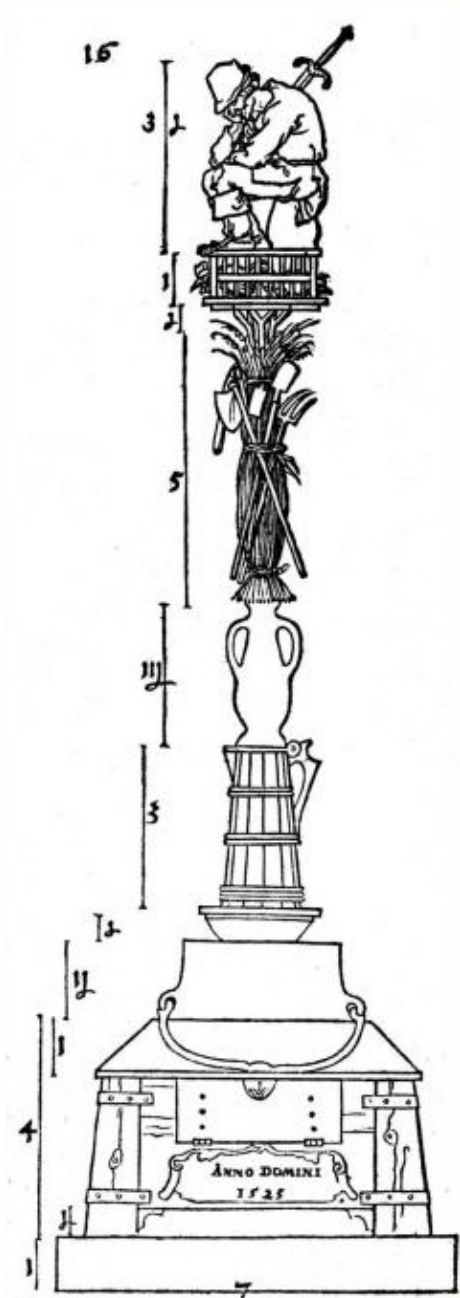


The Tondracians organized their communities in much the same way as the early Christians under the Roman Empire during the first three centuries. In the 10th century, their movement was joined by the rebellious people of different inhabited places, particularly in Airarat and Syunik.

As it was mentioned above, in the year 355 (906 AD) of the Armenian princes, kings and Catholicos, a number of villages and inhabited places of Syunik were given to the Tatev Monastery. Resolutely refusing to obey this order, the villagers of Tsuraberd, Tamalek, Aveladasht and other villages waged a long struggle against the churches. Several times this rebellion turned into open rebellion. With the help of Prince Smbat of Syunik, the monastery was able to take control of Aveladasht and Tamalek after some time. The struggle to take control of Tsuraberd was more bloody. Here the villagers attacked the monastery and looted it. Smbat eventually suppressed the rebellion. However, after a short time, the people of Tsuraberd revolted again. Peasant revolts continued intermittently throughout the 10th century. In 990, King Vasak of Syunik burned Tsuraberd and pacified its inhabitants. This led to the widespread acceptance of the Tondrakian movement among the lower classes by the end of the 10th century.



Some information about the doctrine of the Tondrakian movement has reached us from the book "History" of the 9th century historian Aristakes Lastiverts. The author lists some details of the theological doctrine of the Tondrakets



The Tondrakian movement particularly horrified all existing authorities, as it emerged during the exploitation of the majority of the Armenian population by the feudal Armenian, Byzantine and Muslim elites. Interestingly, several authors of the Armenian Church have acknowledged the growth of this new religious movement as a resistance to the oppression of the Armenian rulers.

"However, due to the fact that their work was too dark, we considered it inappropriate to write it down, because not everyone is strong enough to listen: the reminder of many sins can excite the listeners and even make them act: that's why I avoided it. What is known and what can be said by us are these:

they did not accept the church and its rules at all
no baptism
not the great and mighty council of the liturgy
not the cross
nor the fasting order

But let us, the true believers of the holy trinity, hold firmly to the creed of constant light, which we learned from the holy fathers, and turn away from their apostate congregation, pouring curses on them."

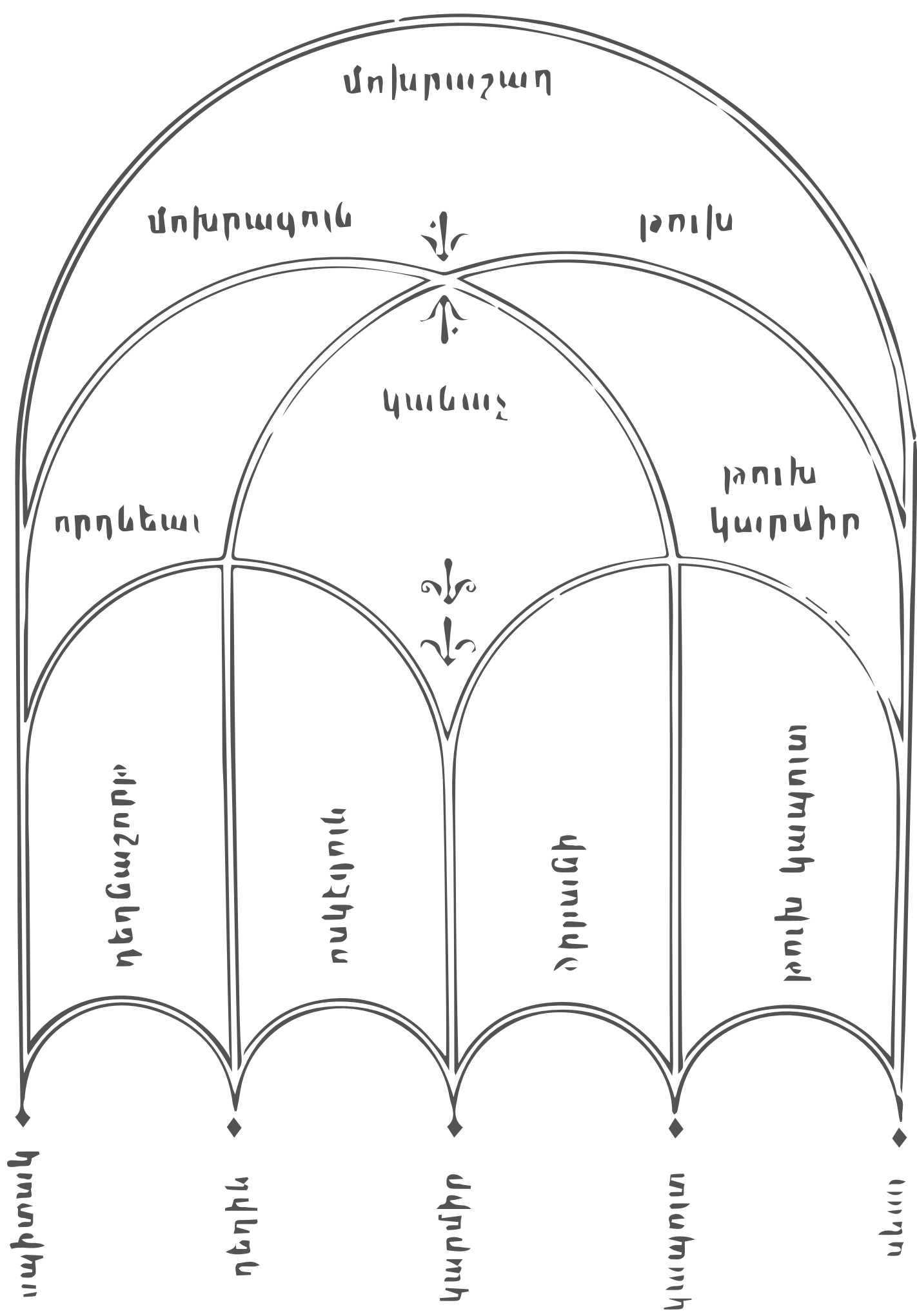


Not looking at the Magister's puffy words and the persecutions of the fool, we think that it is not the persecutions that will put an end to that sect in Armenia. - as is known, that sect continued to exist until our days in Khnus and in the province of Alexandropol - other Turko-Tatar campaigns covered under their flood, like everything else, that sect, the majority of whose followers, along with their patron princes, moved westward to Assyria, Asia Minor and especially Bulgaria, Bulgaria became the second Motherland of that sect, where the sect was called the Bogomil sect after the Bogomil priest.

In Central Europe, the Cathars continued the same sect, and in Southern France, the Albigensians (Albigeoisians). The history of these last ones is well known and the best studied of all.

Thus, the very forefathers and founders of the Reformation and all Protestant-evangelical churches came out of Armenia.

Galut Ter-Mkrtchyan "Ararat" magazine, 1892.





This is an impression of an almost model-conform glomo4-territory in a temperate climate zone. As a module, we assume a territory of a side length of 225 km, 50'000 km² (100 km by train take one to two hours), and 10 million inhabitants in 9 regions. In reality this can mean a range of 20'000 – 100'000 km² or 4 to 20 million inhabitants.

There are 9 big cities (500'000 inhabitants each) surrounded by their agricultural zones and their region 1.1 million inhabitants). The city at the lake in the middle region is the adminis-

trative center. For 1000 glomo1s in a city, you need 620 km² of agricultural land, this is a radius of 14 km (as seen on the image). As meat and dairy production is mostly situated in hilly areas, this is largely sufficient. Miscellaneous food production (fish, poultry, wine etc.) and individual farms and gardens are not shown. The distances between urban settlements and their agricultural bases are optimized. There are two main railroad lines. Industries are incorporated in the cities (cf. fabcity). The spatial condensation of built-over areas allows for a lot of natural spaces – moors, wetlands, forests, heaths, lakes, ponds,

trees, rivers, spinneys, bushland. Streets are not indicated. The result is a harmonious and sustainable patchwork of natural and cultural land-uses. Not all smaller settlements (small towns, villages, hamlets) are indicated. Energy production is based on solar panels, geothermic energy and hydroelectricity – all not shown on the picture. From the perspective of Well-water Economy (see below) the territory is a sponge-like carpet with forests, moors, wetlands, ponds and lakes to prevent droughts and floods and to preserve the ground-water table.

SCENARIO FOR A TRANS-ECONOMIC GLOBAL SOCIETY

From: Cities For A Single Planet (Autonopedia 2024) P.M.

Rationing and state planning: the English war economy as a model

As interesting as the diverse forms of movements on a city or big city/region level – glomo3 – may be, they will not be sufficient to overcome the logic of the CES (Current Economic System). Big city/regions are dependent on and embedded in the economic framework of larger entities or nation states. Their range of impact is limited, and there is a risk of contradictions and disappointments. But they remain important areas of action, especially if the broader circumstances change. Larger commons like glomo4 or 5 cannot function without re-localization and self-government on lower levels. To make all glomo-levels more self-sustaining will be the core of any political action on glomo4 and 5 levels.

Whereas the necessity for degrowth, a non-imperial way of life (Brand, 2017) and an ecological turn-around of the industrial infrastructure (“circular economy”) is acknowledged widely, the path to such a transformed society is still unclear. There are two basic approaches:

- state intervention
- growth of transitional movements from below

One of the more prominent proposals for state intervention is the one put forward by the German economist Ulrike Herrmann (Das Ende des Kapitalismus, 2022). Her blueprint is inspired by the war economy in Great Britain during the Second World War. The fast change from peace to war economy was achieved by rationing and state planning. The industry remained in private hands, but quality and quantity of the products were prescribed by a planning board. Rationing guaranteed sufficient food supply for all citizens. After the war, planning and rationing were abandoned, and the economy returned back to normal.

Degrowth versus collapse

The main dilemma Ulrike Herrmann tries to deal with, is, that degrowth cannot happen gradually – as soon as the perspective of paying back the debts (derivates alone being at 600 trillion\$) vanishes, general trust will collapse, and the CES will end in ungovernable and destructive chaos. The CES cannot survive without present or promised future growth. The promise of 1760 (when capitalism was invented by accident) must be kept. As David Harvey points out, the CES needs 3 % of growth per year. The system can dive below this level – as it is the case at

the moment – and be tidied over by state intervention (quantitative easing and the likes), but the basic mechanisms and expectations of growth must remain intact. During the pandemic we saw state intervention on an incredible scale – trillions were suddenly available to rescue the CES. (Even neoliberals understood that dead consumers are bad consumers.) In Switzerland, 40 billion francs were mobilized within weeks, whereas usually the parliament squabbles about expenses of a billion here or there (for the pensions, health care, public transport subsidies). And the minister presenting the plan was not from the left, but from a nationalist, neo-liberal party of the right (SVP). Whatever we think about nation states, some of them proved to be capable of acting on a sufficiently grand scale to achieve an ecological transformation, if they wanted.

At the moment the global economic system is in crisis because growth has virtually come to a halt, and a way out seems almost impossible. China’s “maturing” economic system, that used to heave global growth over the 3 % limit, is now hitting its limits (higher wages, aging population, “last generation” movement, Great Resignation, only 5% growth etc.). This fact of a general loss of perspective is the deep cause of the authoritarian rollbacks and the pulling of the emergency brake called war (against the Ukraine). The Russian philosopher Vladimir Putin, who was

installed with the promise “to be for Russia what Pinochet was for Chile”, i.e. to lead Russia into the folds of the regular global capitalist system, has realized that his job is becoming more and more difficult, because the compliance of the population in his department of global capital is getting brittle. The promise of the imperial way of life for all has not come true – his people are deserting, either physically or “quietly quitting”; general apathy rules (even of civic, liberal movements against him). War is the ultimate whip to keep people in line.

The state of the current global economic system and the ecological crisis make Herrmann’s strategy somehow plausible as a way out.

The two conditions that made the surprising (antiliberal, non-dogmatic) intervention of the nation states during the pandemic politically possible were: an indisputable emergency, and: the perspective of the return to the normal. These two conditions are the basis of Herrmann’s proposal. The climate crisis is such an emergency, and it will be felt more drastically in the future years. At the same time “business as usual” is in crisis. A scenario could then be defined in this way: the nation state intervenes with a system of ecological-economic planning to engineer degrowth without loss of profits for the existing companies. These profits, however, are not paid out (this would lead to instant growth), but be frozen for the moment of return to the normal (a bit like the frozen assets of the Russian oligarchs). At the same time ecologically based rationing (derived from Rockström’s/ Doka’s boundaries, the ecological footprint, or maximally 1 ton of CO2-emissions per person - the message is the same) is introduced. The English example of a war-economy and the restrictions during the pandemic (lockdowns, partial rationings) show, that rationing is accepted, when it is universal, ad personam and justified by an obvious emergency. The English population was actually in better health during rationing than ever before or after.

A “temporary” rescue of the CES

The ”temporary” intervention of nation-states (some of them glomo4-size, others larger) could in turn permit the necessary changes on the lower levels. Fewer resources necessitate a different use of them, subsidiarity, new social structures, new forms of reproduction – the commons. The commons imposes itself as a way of managing the temporary emergency regime of the states. State intervention need not be disempowering, but could consist in the general support and financing (if this is the obstacle) of glomo1-projects. Mass empowering would be more sustainable, more just and more democratic. A country like Switzerland could decide to establish an eco-fund for this purpose and create/facilitate thousands of one-planet-neighborhoods within a few years. If we calculate 5 million francs (or \$) per potential glomo1, this would amount to 80 billion francs, distributed over five years, 16 billion per year. In reality the scheme would need much less, as most neighborhoods have enough financial means to cover the cost. On a global scale we would need a program of the magnitude of 70 trillion \$. (see: newalliance.earth)

The ecological emergency intervention of the state couldn’t just be a blanket rationing of a few materials, but it would have to be one of social reorganization on a large scale. For example, it you ration gasoline without changing the whole territorial/economic lay-out, it just leads to general chaos and frustration. (see: the gilets jaunes in France) The point is not to forbid cars, but to make them superfluous. For this, you need different cities, different forms of industrial and other activities (less, closer). The same is true for housing space and heating fuels: without the context of a supporting and complementing neighborhood, rationing would only generate lonely misery. Reducing private housing space without expanding communal space and luxury (comlux) causes claustrophobia und isolation. Rationing would have to be the result of changes in territorial, social and working conditions. Think of care, agriculture and other forms of activity. A patriarchal society is not compatible with an ecological way of life.

All these considerations are not part of Ulrike Herrmann’s proposal. That only a society of the commons, based on territorial units, can operate ecologically in the long run, is not her concern, only the path from now to beyond what she calls capitalism. But her scenario, and the perspective of the commons are not in contradiction: under the (provisional) umbrella of emergency state intervention, the commons “as a mode of production” and a way of life can emerge. If there’s somebody around to be active for it.

A soft take-over?

This “English” scenario would not appear as a form of transition or even “revolution”, but as a simple pragmatic adaptation to changing conditions, a return to realism. It would be a low-key-approach seemingly avoiding systemic disruptions (which would also be ecologically very costly). It could be put in action by the existing political systems as a meta-partisan bundle of necessary measures to “rescue” the CES (as it happened during the pandemic). And they would go far beyond of what is now sold as a Green New Deal. The traditional paraphernalia and dramatizing language of the left would not only be superfluous,

but rather counterproductive: no populism, please! The over-all effect of these measures would – accidentally – coincide with the (provisional) suspension of the basic mechanisms of the CES: growth, integral private property, “freedom” of consumption etc. In the end (but don’t tell anybody), the return to the normal would be put off eternally, resembling a religious promise of heaven for the righteous.

The implementation of a shrinking economy would also entail the qualitative change of production processes themselves. They would require more participation by the workers, democratic forms of management, of waged and unwaged activities (as described above). The whole fabric of the CES would have to be re-engineered.

The inherent risk of this proposal is an authoritarian lapse of the state apparatus, that would also become a powerful economic planning apparatus. There’s the risk that individuals (“the people”) lose even more power over their lives and become the mere objects of such a crisis management from above. Low compliance, avoidance, even sabotage or diffuse protests could be the unproductive consequences. The measures taken by the state would have to consist in giving more competences to the levels glomo1-3 and so entail its own shrinking. In the end, the way of life, that was first imposed by rationing, would become self-evident as a new global way of life for all, and controls could gradually be phased out. The initial form of eco-Leninism could melt into the governing of the commons.

A global plan

Herrmann’s system worked very well on a relatively small island like England with a homogenous population and functioning democratic institutions; but if we take global climate justice seriously, it should work now on a global scale. The institutional preconditions are mostly lacking in a lot of countries and on the global level: the UN is dysfunctional, the situation is extremely heterogenous, so-called “multipolar” superpowers play futile games of domination. Furthermore, as a lot of poorer countries are below the one-planet limit, they do not need rationing but a massive infrastructure investment program. The principle that such a transfer from the north, which has been responsible for most of the CO2 emissions, must happen, has been agreed upon at a series of international conferences, but never been defined clearly and put into action. As of now, net money flow from south to north is still bigger than the other way around. Such a transfer could only achieve its goal accompanied by an equally massive empowerment of the populations of the planetary south.

That a global way of life must be established on a world scale and that this goal cannot realistically be achieved by grassroot action alone, seems obvious. It is also evident, that the resources-transfer to the south cannot be used to “catch up” on the past catastrophic development of the north, but must be used for a completely different path. The imperial way of life is not compatible with ecological boundaries, be it in the north or in the south.

A plausible political scenario to achieve global climate justice could be an alliance of the most important industrial countries (G7? G20?), which also control the UN, to implement such a plan of a global commons and to coordinate the national programs. This presupposes that the political forces within these countries (parties, unions) adopt such a program as their goal and commit their governments to act accordingly on the global level. The fact, that most political parties on the left and even the green parties still believe in forms of “green growth”, is not really encouraging. The left is still fighting losing battles to defend the imperial way of life (the American way of life, consumer society). But the discussions have begun, also thanks to the contributions of Ulrike Herrmann, Friederike Habermann, Ulrich Brand and the likes. (see: the short bibliography below)

A global terrestrial adaptation and clarification

A strategy from “above” must necessarily be complemented with a wave of commons-projects on glomo1-level, a strong “municipalist” movement in the (7000) big cities/regions (glomo3), to minimize the risk of an eco-dictatorship. (Or a dictatorship using ecological pretexts.) A people without its own power base will be helpless against authoritarian relapses. Cities are the logical option to become those bases, because most of us live in them.

So, we imagine a three-pronged movement of

- globally coordinated state intervention of the “English” type (eco-emergency-plan)
- new municipalist and territorial movements especially in the (7000) big cities
- a global network of emerging forms of the reproductive commons (glomo1)

All three forms of action exist already (see above) and have current institutional bases (states, city-governments, cooperatives) that can serve as a scaffolding for new ones. Without these movements, the political parties and institutions cannot be forced to become active on national or global levels. They must understand, that “the carpet” is being pulled away from underneath of them, if they do not do their job. What we need is

a “terrestrial movement” (Bruno Latour) on all levels. It is clear, that the scenario sketched above is a blatant best-case scenario. But what would be the use to speculate about a worst-case scenario? We are already depressed enough. The virtue of educated speculating and scheming for a good outcome consists in inspiring people to become active, because it seems possible or plausible. Speculation is a form of hope. We all need a measure of hope to overcome the threat of paralyzing resignation. Forward together!

P.M. July 2024

1. The following text is a version of the final chapter of the up-coming book Cities For A Single Planet, Autonomedia 2024
2. For the terms glomo1-5 consult: newalliance.earth A Proposal
3. It is remarkable that real alternatives to the CES are rarely discussed within the climate justice movement, and that “urgent state intervention” seems to be the preferred road. This is also the prevalent discourse in Greta Thunberg’s Climate Book, 2022. Politicians: do something! She has no idea what a post-CES society would look like.
4. The Russian dissidents like Navalny, Khodorkowski or Ponomarev are not really representing a radical alternative to Putin’s neo-liberal authoritarianism. Their intention is a civic uprising, aiming at regime change, not a social revolution. As in the Arab countries, merely civic revolts tend to end in another version of authoritarian regimes. Let’s speculate that, this time, a mere civic uprising in Russia gets out of hand and transforms itself into a social revolution. We can do better than in 1918.
5. See again in: newalliance.earth A Proposal
6. Most of the CES is already being planned, not by states, but by global companies. “Of the 100 largest economic organizations roughly 52 are corporations and 48 are nations. Approximately one-third of the commerce that crosses national boundaries does not cross a corporate boundary, i.e. is an intra-firm, non-market transfer. The distribution of income within these centrally planned corporations has become much more concentrated. The ratio of salary of the Chief Executive Officer to low-level employees has passed 500 on its way to infinity--what else can we expect when central planners set their own salaries!” (Daly, 2019)
7. In reality there are only two “poles”: the proletariat and capital.

A short bibliography

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George Caffentzis

NOTES ON INTERNATIONAL CRISIS, IMPERIALISM AND FASCISM PAST AND FUTURE

*Presented at the 9th Meeting Internationale per la Pace e la Solidariteta tra 1 Popoli at the ex-Mattatoio
in Rome, Italy, July 3, 1993 on "Crisi Internationale, Imperialismo e Fascismo negli anni '90"*

The unprecedented events of the past few years (Including the second use of Italian troops in combat since World War II which led to the deaths of three Italian soldiers in Somalia two days ago) indicate the depth of the present historic transformation that has been given many names but no precise definition yet. This "X" has transformed the political geography of the globe as well as the organizational ecology of the Italian left, but there appears no certainty about it beyond the specification of these changes Only one thing is for sure. this X requires of us and causes in us some real thought. But this thought must resist the temptation to completely revert to paleo-marxist and leninist categories that have an undeniable attraction (and much validity still).

This temptation is strong, for it appears that with the end of "the socialist bloc" of nations the playing field of class struggle is strikingly similar to the pre-World War I environment, with imperialistic national capitals decorously carving up continents and a planetary working class devoid of any states (except perhaps Cuba) claiming to even ritualistically represent its interests or even recognize its existence. This appearance has not been lost on the commentators of the Left or the Right (cf. Fukiyama's capitalist utopianism or Lyotard's postmodernism). Indeed, some of them would have us believe that the last seventy years of class struggle were a curious historical detour.

But this conclusion is absurd, not only because of the changes in the forces of production (e.g., the shift from the centrality of heat engines to the computing machines) generated by these struggles. There has been an even more Important irreversible political transformation within the planetary proletariat due to the knowledge gained from the great anti-fascist war, the decolonization process, the feminist movement, etc.

Consequently, when terms like "International crisis," "Imperialism," and "Fascism" are used today (as in the self-description of this meeting), they must be understood in both their past and future meanings for us to truly meet. In the next few minutes I hope to sketch for you the tension between the pre-World War I and post-crash of the Berlin Wall meaning of these terms, so that we can better know the X that marks our spot in time.

A. International Crisis

The classic form of international crisis of the past was either a political or economic catastrophe of capital. Economically, it appeared as a break in the cycle of money-commodity circulation ending in massive transnational bankruptcies, depression of prices, long-term unemployment, etc. The Great Depressions of the late nineteenth century and the 1930s are paradigm cases. Politically, it appeared as an unreconcilable conflict of interest between major national capitals in the world market that expressed itself in (military or mercantile) war. World War I is a paradigm case of this kind of crisis. These crises are inevitable consequences and often mark the **end** of a period of capitalist accumulation.

Surely there are elements of such kinds of crises available for all to see today. Yet developments in the last few years have forced us in the Midnight Notes Collective to note new aspects of the international conjuncture and to call the international crisis by an unusual name: "The New Enclosures." We do this to pose a parallel with the "old Enclosures" of the sixteenth century whereby, after a century of high wages and the breakdown of feudal authority, farmers in England were expropriated from the land and from the Commons by state officials and landlords. They were turned into paupers, vagabonds and beggars, and later into waged workers, while the land was put to work to feed the international market for agricultural commodities

In the Marxist tradition, the Enclosures were the **starting point** for the reproduction of capitalist society. They were the basic device of "original accumulation" which created a population "free" from any means of subsistence and thus compelled (in time) to work for a wage. But the Enclosures are not a one-time affair exhausted at the dawn of capital which simply involved access to land. They are a regular return on the path of accumulation and a structural component of class struggle. For once the working class does manage to guarantee for itself an ever growing set of rights to subsistence (what are often called "entitlements"), capital faces an accumulation

crisis. In order to overcome this type of crisis, capital must violently nullify these subsistence rights whatever form they take.

In this period of international crisis, the crucial subsistence rights to be nullified were identified by the three great "deals" that have characterized international class relations in the post-World War II period. These were:

***the Keynesian Deal:** waged workers were guaranteed increasing real wages in return for a higher intensity and productivity of labor;

****the Socialist Deal:** waged workers exchanged lower wages for a reduced intensity of labor and greater job security;

*****the Development Deal:** workers were promised a wage just as long as it was supplemented by labor on the newly "decolonized" lands.

The New Enclosures is capital's attempt to take away any guarantees It had made to proletarians' rights to subsistence in the face of rebellions against these very deals. Thus the international crisis is not a struggle among capitals in an ongoing process of accumulation. Rather, it is a direct Interclass confrontation that is attempting to originate a new form of accumulation. That is what makes for the international crisis' ineffability and diffuse (often stateless) violence.

B. Imperialism

"Imperialism" is a term that has been central to the Leninist analysis of capitalism and Lenin provided a classical definition for the term: a form of capitalism characterized by the emergence of monopolies from a period of free market exchange, which merges bank and industrial capitals, and emphasizes the export of capital instead of consumer commodities, ending In the formation of International trusts and the territorial division of the whole world.

Is this the imperialism of today? Not exactly, for the differences are striking. First, consider not only the emergence of international commodity "trusts" (which appeared before World War I), but of organizations of collective global capitalism like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (which were founded at the end of World War II). These supernational planning organs have been central to the New Enclosures and have put into place a radical homogenization of "economic policy" across the globe that was unimaginable in the previous periods of capitalist "competition." Thus, the IMF planned and organized the structural adjustment program for both Italy and Somalia: demanding privatization, reduction of budget deficits, elimination of subsidies and pensions in both countries. Indeed, one of the many reasons Italian soldiers are in Somalia nunting down and trying to jail General Aldeed is that he undermined an IMF/World Bank-Inspired currency replacement last spring while other Italian soldiers are jailing many of Aided's fellow "corrupt" politicians in the Italian Socialist Party because they were unable to impose the sort of structurally adjusted regime demanded by the IMF throughout the 1980s.

Second, another major difference is the interest of contemporary imperialist capitalism not only in the export of finished capital goods and the secured import of essential raw materials for production (i.e., **constant capital**). It is even more interested in the flows of **variable capital**. For imperialist capitalism is increasingly determined to control the flows of labor power, its political composition and its wage level on an international scale. Not accidentally, the movement of worker remittances is now the second largest international flow of money, just below the flow of oil money And of all workers, Imperialist capital is presently most interested in women's work whether it be in the world's "free enterprise zones" or in the use of women's reproductive labor in agriculture, prostitution and most crucially as producers of labor power themselves.

Third, it was not enough to territorially divide up the planet, the question of controlling access to the land was (and still is) the major issue for imperialists. For even at the height of the paleo-imperialist period much of African land, for example, was under nominal foreign control. Nigeria was a British colony between 1900 and 1960, but communal forms of

land tenure still resisted British attempts to privatize the land. This was true of many other parts of the planet. Thus, though the map showed the totalization of control by capitalist states across the world's geography, the reality was (and is) quite different.

To impose effective control over the land, and to impose New Enclosures, the Debt Crisis (managed in such a draconian fashion by the IMF and World Bank) has become a major method for seizing land (under a variety of rubrics). Just as the Tudor court sold off large tracts of monastery and communal land to their creditors, so too modern African and Asian governments agree to to capitalized and "rationalize" agricultural land in order to satisfy IMF auditors who will only forgive foreign loans under those conditions. Just as the clan heads in the eighteenth century Scottish Highlands connived with local merchants and bankers to whom they indebted In order to "clear the land" of their own clansmen and women, so too local chiefs in Africa and Asia exchange communal land rights of unredeemed loans.

C. Fascism

The classic form of fascism as a capitalist politics is the destruction of autonomous working class organizations (unions and parties) to be replaced by a "new deal" whereby certain elements (either racially or ethnically defined) of the working class are guaranteed ascendancy in the division of labor and the hierarchy of wages. Certainly, there seems to be a resurgence of this phenomenon under the rubric of nationalism or "ethnicity" in Europe (from the Nazi skins in Germany to the "ethnic cleansing" in Yugoslavia). However, we must also see that the capitalist state is no longer in the position of guaranteeing places in the international division of labor and the hierarchy of wages. Indeed, the great special cases of "settler proletariats" which include the "whites" of the United States of America and the Republic of South Africa and the European Jews of Israel are in political crisis (although this crisis does not necessarily exist for the capital associated with these nations). Thus we are in a paradoxical period when capital is most interested in emphasizing differences (either racially or ethnically defined) within the working class to recreate new kinds of decomposition, but it is unwilling to essentialize (and guarantee) these differences. Hence capital's postmodern face.

Let me end by recaptulating the gap between past and future dimensions of this meeting's categories, and also to indicate the vulnerability of capitalism at this moment when a classical revolutionary break in the accumulation process beckons.

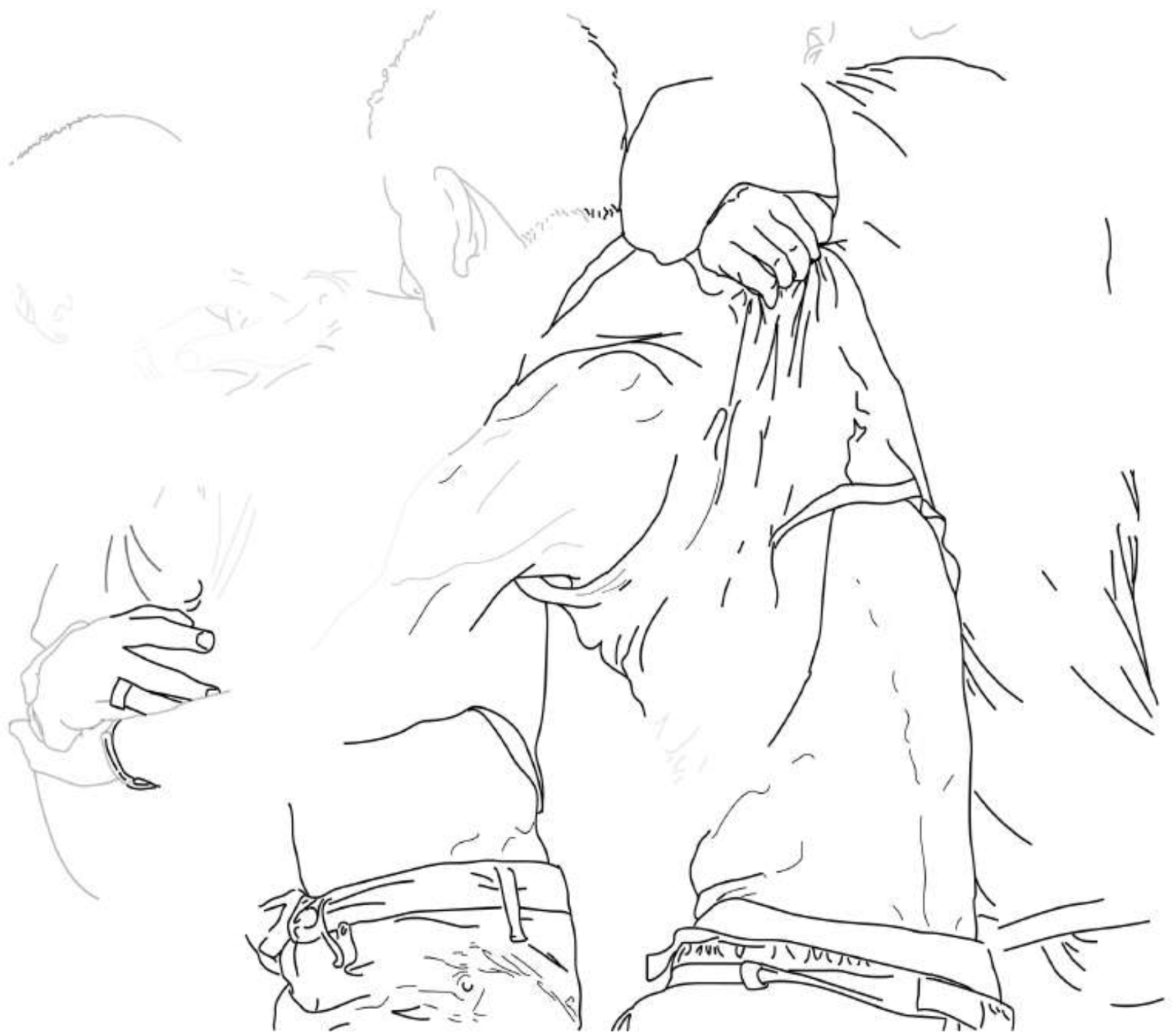
--**the international crisis** cannot be defined simply in terms of the irrationality of capitalist mechanics of the world market or in terms of potential wars among imperialist nation states,, rather this is a period of New Enclosures that requires the mutual contraction of the right to subsist in the proletariats of the three global "Deals." The emphasis is on mutual, for if any one element of the previous triad resists, then the pace of the whole process is put into peril.

--**imperialism** still names capitalist interest in controlling international capital flows and the securing of raw materials for production, but this interest is increasingly losing its "national" character (cf. the role of the IMF, World Bank and the UN "Security Council") and is focusing its attention increasingly on controlling the flow of labor power, Its producers and reproducers, as well as its wages. Hence, the land question and the struggle for women's sexual and wage autonomy is crucial for the subverting Imperialism in the 1990s.

--**fascism** is a form of the capitalist state politics that appears to be on the ascendancy, but it is caught in a fundamental contradiction with other elements of capitalist global planning. For no capitalist state can guarantee to any element of its working class a fixed status in the world labor market, hence any fascist "deal" is bound to breakdown in the freer tides of capital flows.

This is our X as best as I can mark it.

George Caffentzis
Midnight Notes Collective
POB 204
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
USA



narek hakobyan

"Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism"

orientation training course for beginners
Trainer K. Hakobyan

"This great humanity has said "ENOUGH"
international week of tricontinental solidarity January 3-10 1968, OSPAL



"Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism"

V. I. Lenin



WHAT IS IMPERIALSIM

Imperialism is the final stage of capitalism, characterized by the following key features:

- the rise of monopolies, production and capital become concentrated in fewer hands, leading to the domination of the economy by large corporations.
- merging of bank capital with industrial capital, creating a financial oligarchy that wields enormous economic power.
- export of capital. Wealthy nations invest heavily in foreign countries to exploit their resources and labor.
- dividing the world market among large multinational corporations and cartels, reducing competition.
- the world is divided into colonies and spheres of influence among the major capitalist powers and trusts.
- "Division of the World among capitalist powers is completed" leading to imperialist rivalries and conflicts.
- Inherently exploitative and leads to global inequalities and conflicts.



WHAT IS IT: let's understand

- 1. TRUSTs : "You trust your capital to me"
KONZERNs & SYNDICATES
USA: Rockefeller's STANDART OIL controls 90% of oil market.
CHASE NATIOANL BANK, JP.Morgan

Nowadays CHEVRON, BRITISH PETROLIUM, MARATHON OIL/PETROLEUM, CONOCO PHILIPS etc
- 1. Monopoly of FINANCIAL CAPITAL'
Merging of banks with industries.
CONTROL of capital and investments
J.P Morgan- General Electric, U.S STEEL, The Vanderbilts – New York Central Railroad
Andrew Mellon- USA TREASURER, ALCOA, GULF OIL, UNION STEEL
ASTORS- REAL ESTATE



6 BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF IMPERIALISM

- 1. Concentration of Production and Capital: the rise of monopolies, leading to the domination of the economy by large corporations.
- 2. Bank Capital and Financial Oligarchy : merging of bank capital with industrial capital, creating a financial oligarchy.
- 3. Export of Financial Capital unlike the export of goods becomes crucially important.
- 4. Formation of International Monopolies: Large multinational corporations and cartels form, dividing the world market among themselves, and
- 5. "The territorial division of land by the World's major capitalist powers is completed"
- 6. the stage is set for socialist revolution by exacerbating the contradictions within capitalism and creating conditions ripe for proletarian uprising



Key Points on Imperialism by Lenin

- Imperialism as the final stage of capitalism.
- Economic concentration and monopoly.
- Export of capital and the formation of financial oligarchies.
- Division of the world among capitalist powers.



Historical Context of Lenin's Work

- Early 20th-century capitalism and its global expansion.
 - USA
 - GREAT BRITAIN
 - FRANCE
 - GERMANY
 - RUSSIA
 - JAPAN
 - The rise of monopolies and trusts.
 - Colonialism and global geopolitical tensions.
 - Influence of Marxist thought and predecessors.
- For example: By 1900, Standard Oil controlled 90% of the U.S. oil market.



HOW TO ANALYSE IMPERIALISM

- Concentration of Production and Monopolies
- The Banks and Their New Role
- Finance Capital and the Financial Oligarchy
- The Export of Capital
- The Division of the World Among Capitalist Associations
- The Division of the World Among the Great Powers
- Imperialism as a Special Stage of Capitalism
- The Parasitism and Decay of Capitalism
- The Critique of Imperialism
- The Place of Imperialism in History



1. Concentration of Production and Monopolies

- Lenin "Concentration of production and capital developed so far that it led to monopolies."
 - The rise of large-scale enterprises.
 - Formation of monopolies and trusts.
- Examples from Lenin's Time:
Standard Oil-controlled 90% of U.S. oil refining.
Krupp- Major German steel producer.
- Nowadays:
Amazon- Dominates e-commerce and cloud computing.
Google (Alphabet Inc.)- Controls over 90% of search engine market share.



2. The Banks and Their New Role

- Lenin "The banks...have developed into institutions of enormous power."
 - Transformation of banking in the capitalist economy.
 - Integration of industrial and banking capital.
- Examples from Lenin's Time till now
Deutsche Bank- Leading German bank, significant international presence.
National City Bank of New York- Major U.S. bank.
JPMorgan Chase-One of the largest global financial services firms.
Citibank- International financial services corporation.



3. Finance Capital and the Financial Oligarchy

- Definition of finance capital.
- Role of financial oligarchies.

Lenin"Finance capital...creating a close network of relationships between the banks and the large industrial enterprises."

Examples from Lenin's Time:

Rothschilds banking family- 5 brothers, 5 arrows, prominent banking family. "As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, so are young sons" - "Concordia, Integritas, Industria" (agreement, honesty, diligence)

J.P. Morgan- Influential American banker.

Nowadays:

Goldman Sachs- Leading global investment banking firm.

BlackRock- World's largest asset manager with \$8.68 trillion in assets under management (AUM) as of 2020.



4.The Export of Capital

Lenin"The export of capital...is characteristic of the period of financial capital."

- Shift from export of goods to export of capital.
- Investment in foreign enterprises and infrastructure.

Examples from Lenin's Time:

- By 1914, British foreign investments were approximately £4 billion.

Nowadays

- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI): In 2020, global FDI flows were \$1.5 trillion, with the U.S. being a major source and destination.



5. Division of the World Among Capitalist Associations

Lenin"Capitalism has grown into a world system of colonial oppression."- Formation of international cartels."

- Economic agreements and spheres of influence.
- Berlin Conference (1884-85): Division of Africa among European powers.

World Trade Organization (WTO)- Regulates international trade.

Transnational Corporations- E.g., Unilever, Nestle.



6. Division of the World Among the Great Powers

Lenin"The territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed."

- Geopolitical strategies of imperial powers.
- Colonial territories and influence zones.

Historical Context:

- British Empire: Controlled 25% of the world's land area by 1920.
- French Empire: Significant colonies in Africa and Asia.

Modern Parallels

- U.S. Hegemony**: Military bases worldwide, economic influence.
- China's Belt and Road Initiative: Expanding global influence through infrastructure projects.



7.Imperialism as a Special Stage of Capitalism

Lenin "Imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism."

- Characteristics that define imperialism.
- Differences from earlier capitalist stages.
- Economic and political implications.



8. The Parasitism and Decay of Capitalism

Lenin "Imperialism is...decaying, parasitic capitalism." Decline of productive activities."

- Rise of rentier states and financial speculation.
- Impact on global economic stability.

Examples of rentier countries:

- Great Britain-profits from colonies, heavy foreign investment
- France-significant foreign investment, preference for foreign profits over domestic industry
- Africa and Asia- European powers extract resources and exploit local populations.

Increasing share of GDP from finance sector in advanced economies (e.g., finance contributes over 20% to U.S. GDP).

Political implications.

- Rooted financial oligarchies, growing social inequalities, stifled democratic processes.

The decay of capitalism

- Economic inefficiency capital is not used efficiently.
- Social unrest. inequality and exploitation lead to potentially revolutionary movements.

Competition for resources and territories among imperialist powers leads to conflicts and wars.



9.The Critique of Imperialism

Lenin "The more capitalism is developed, the more strongly the shortage of raw materials is felt."

- Criticism from Marxist and non-Marxist perspectives.
- Implications for working-class movements.
- Lenin's call for proletarian internationalism.



10.The Place of Imperialism in History

Lenin "Imperialism is the eve of the social revolution of the proletariat."

- Historical materialism and stages of economic development.
- Imperialism as a prelude to socialism.
- Historical examples of revolutions influenced by imperialism.



SLIDE 20: MANIFESTATION OF IMPERIALISM IN OUR TIMES

Modern examples of economic imperialism.

- Influence of multinational corporations.
- Role of international financial institutions (IMF, World Bank).

Apple, Amazon, ExxonMobil, IMF, World Bank.

The WARS of Modern Imperialism

- U.S. interventions in the Middle East.

Israels war in Gaza and against Paletstine

Russia's invasions to take over the territories of the Russian Empire

China's economic influence in Africa.

Corporate exploitation in Latin America.

BRING other EXAMPLES



IMPERIALISM TODAY

Discussion and Debate

- Is Lenin's theory still applicable today?
- Can imperialism exist without formal colonies?
- The role of technology and digital economy in modern imperialism.



PANNS

WKEO

(LOVE IS BLIND: THE PROVERB IS FALSE.
LOVE OPENS HIS EYES WIDE,
LOVE PRODUCES CLEAR-SIGHTEDNESS:
"I HAVE, ABOUT YOU, OF YOU, ABSOLUTE KNOWLEDGE."
REPORT OF THE CLERK
TO THE MASTER: YOU HAVE EVERY MASTERY OF ME,
BUT I HAVE EVERY KNOWLEDGE OF YOU.)

Everyone knows that they are wasting their lives within usurped everydayness.

There is an impression that it is impossible to avoid the catastrophe of capitalistic planning.

Art provides the possibility to prevent people from falling into despair or becoming acquiescent - joining right-wing, fascist groups because we join the “strong one” when we feel defeated. We can all become artists and art can give us the possibility to resist and live together autonomously.

This exhibition is the continuation of the long lasting history of events self organized by artists in and outside of Armenia. \

The exhibition is being realized by artists themselves.

milena adamyany

gaya danielyan

lusine talalyan

grigor simonyan

narek arushanyan

mihran martirosyan

tigran khachatryan

narek hakobyan

levon sargsyan

anna evoyan

sona baghdasaryan

jan mirzoyan

merouj khalatyan

arthur sharoyan

gevorg mnatsakanyan

marusya sepkhanyan

milena abrahamyan

karen hakobian

harout simonian

karen andreassian

vigen tadevosyan

begonia santa-cecilia

silvia federichi

george caffentzis

josh mac-phee

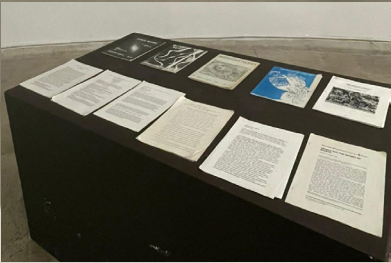
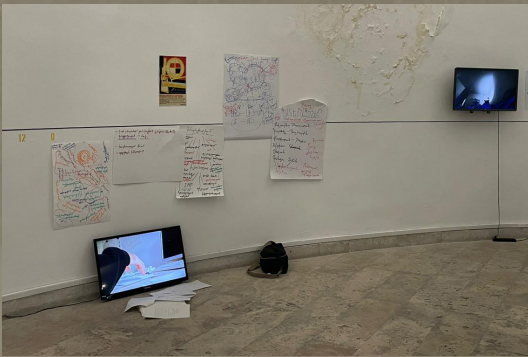
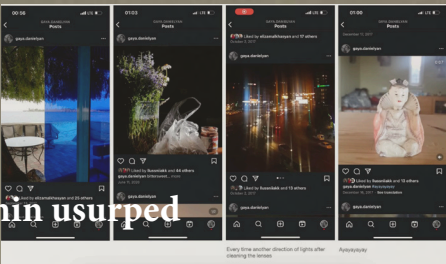
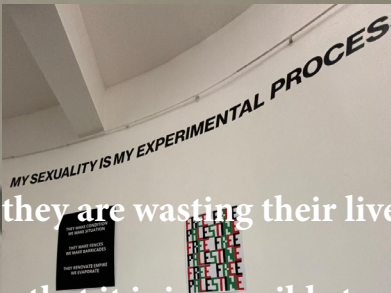
georgia sagri

ayreen anastas

rene gabri

ella klaschka

olivier foulon



For Exploring Resistance and Autonomy through Art “Panicked” continues its series of public events:

Event 1: Date: Sunday June 9, 2024

As part of the group exhibition PANICKED, which opened on May 31st at the HayArt Cultural Center a book launch, reading, and a conversation will occur between the artists Georgia Sagri and Lala Aslikyan and contributors to the book Bodies in (R)elation with the author Milena Abrahamyan. Bodies in (R)elation, is a co-creation of knowledge with people dear to the author, coming from different parts of the world connected through geographies of thought, ideas, senses, being, and love. It is a testament of bodies in (r)elation between Dafne Erdur, Georgia Sagri, Heghine Babayahn, Nino Kharchilava, Rae Leiner and Lala Aslikyan. A sharing of thoughts on the body, justice, and injustice, and reflections on topics that have been and still are prominent to the author and are significantly present in the group exhibition PANICKED.

The artists and co-organizers of the exhibition cordially invite you to exchange, discuss, and be together in this special event.

Event 2: Open Training on Lenin’s “Imperialism as the Final Stage of Capitalism”

Date: Saturday June 8, 2024

Time: 16:00

Join us for an insightful open training session led by Karen Hakobian, delving into Lenin’s pivotal work, “Imperialism as the Final Stage of Capitalism.” This event will provide a simplified way for how to read Lenin’s comprehensive analysis of Imperialism and its relevance in today’s socio-economic context. We will engage in discussions on how these ideas can inspire resistance and autonomous living.

Event 3: Dance performance - Improvisational sketch

Date: Sunday June 9, 2024

Time: 16:00

Experience a unique dance performance by contemporary & experimental dancer Toma Aydinyan inspired by the artworks and the exhibition space itself. This dance sketch will reflect on the themes of the exhibition, particularly inspired by Lusine Talalyan’s “Yaghk”, emphasizing the connection between art, space, and socio-political context. Don’t miss this dynamic interpretation of “Panicked” through the expressive medium of dance.

Event 3: Capitalism as an Anti-Life Project - discussion between Tamar Shirinian & Harout Simonian

Date: Sunday June 9, 2024

Time: 17:00

This discussion will be about capitalism and genocide. In what ways is capitalism inherently an anti-life project? How are the various genocidal projects in the world today connected by capital’s vampiric nature and its endless desire for destruction? As a genocide is being broadcast globally for all citizens of the world to watch, this discussion will not avoid taking seriously the contemporary moment and the conceptual leaps incumbent upon all of us.

Event 5: Reading Performance – “Debt” by David Graeber

Date: Monday June 10, 2024

Time: 16:00

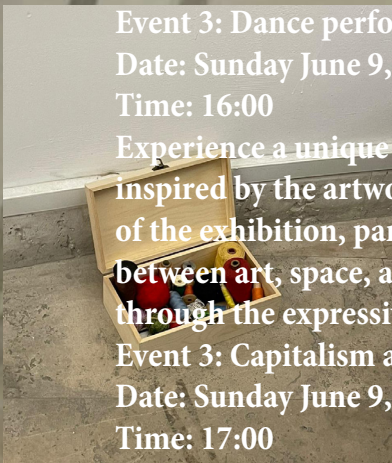
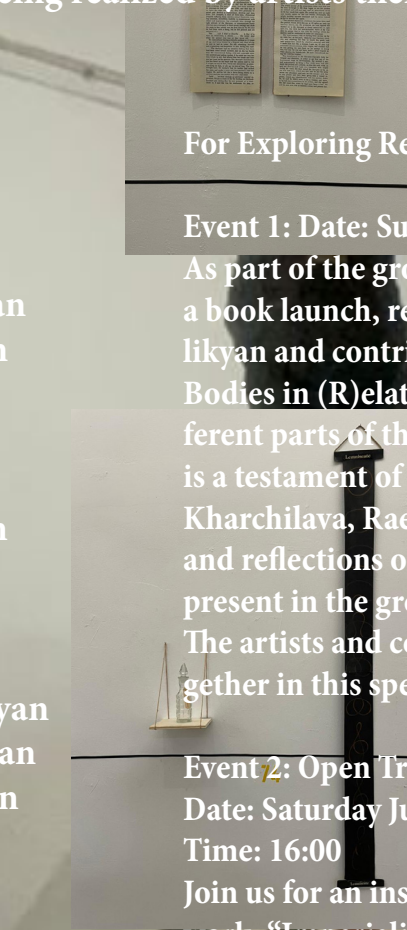
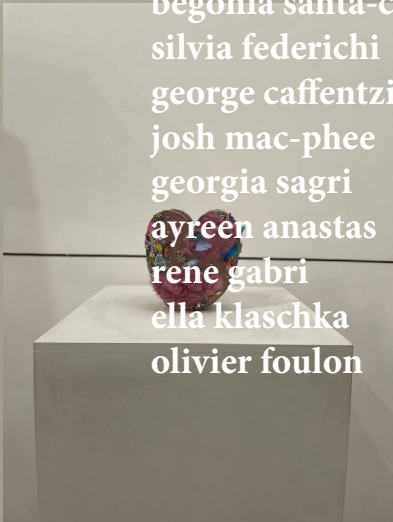
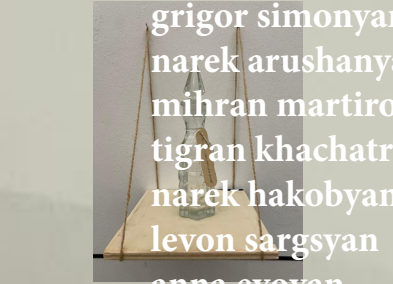
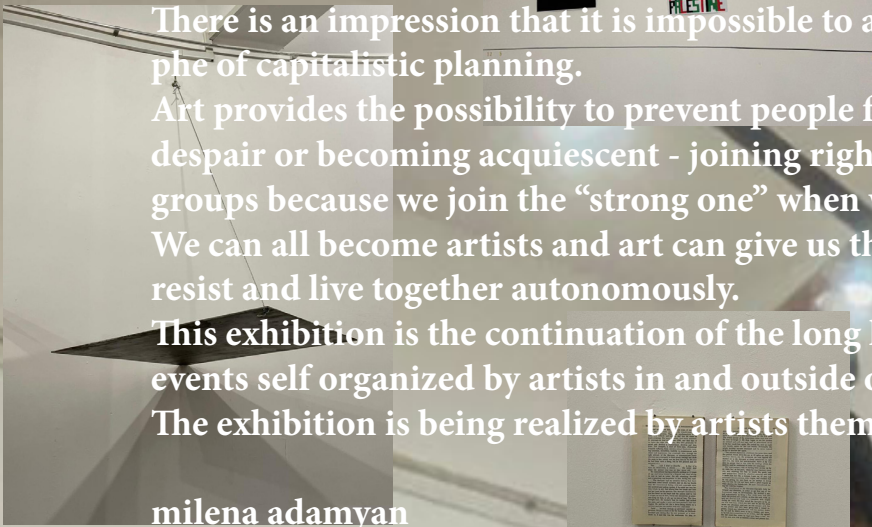
A reading performance of David Graeber’s provoking book “Debt.” This event will explore the critical themes of Graeber’s work, discussing the historical and social implications of debt and how it shapes our lives. This performance aims to provoke thought and inspire conversations around economic justice and personal autonomy.

Event 6: Artist Talk – Reflection on “Panicked” Exhibition

Date: Monday June 10, 2024

Time: 17:00

As the “Panicked” exhibition draws to a close, join us for a reflective artist talk. Artists and participants will discuss their experiences, the impact of the exhibition, and implications for further action. This event will provide a platform for sharing insights and reflections on what we can take away from this exhibition.



18th ~~NYC~~ Lenape Anarchist Bookfair 2024



La Plaza **9/21** Community Garden

Anarchist Bookfair: 11am-7pm
AnarkoArtLab Art Festival: 4-7pm
In-person Workshops: 11am-7pm
Childcare + vegan food

Tompkins Square Park

9/21
Emma Goldman
Film Festival: 8-11pm

P.I.T. (Property is Theft)

9/20
Music Festival: 7pm
9/22
In person + virtual
workshops: 11am-7pm

ՀԱՄԱՓՈԽԱԿԱՆ ԱՌՈՋՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ

և սոցիալական շահութաբաժնի չափ

ՀԱՄԱՓՈԽԱԿԱՆ ԱՌՈՋՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ

և սոցիալական շահութաբաժնի չափ

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