

ANTI-AUTHORITY

DAILY REVOLT

RETURN FIRE

INDIVIDUAL WILL

DE-CIVILISATION

**The Burning of a Transmission Mast, Berlin,
and Policing Vehicles Up in Flames, Keynsham**
(communiqués: snaring the flows of the metropolis by disabling its
digital highways and surveillance architecture)

The “Wild” as Will & Representation
(citizenist amnesia vs. regaining the Earth)

'The Advance of Urbanisation'
& anti-development anger

Radical Scavengers Come Out of the Woodwork
(clashes on the streets, recuperative efforts of the latest opportunists)

The Intensification of Independence in Wallmapu
& fragments of a 500-year-old resistance to colonisation

...and more!

VOLUME 3, CHAPTER II

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We few began as wanderers in this wasteland, this wasted land, this land laid waste. Going through the motions every day, our hands passing over the assembly line, the steering wheel or the keyboard almost without our conscious awareness, as if ghost limbs. We tell - or are told - the same story again and again of how we come to be here, of how we have 'progressed' into this age that clings to us like cellophane. Yet what is it, this thought which flashes unbidden across our minds while we submit to the bosses orders, or when we pass the clearcut forest? Where does it lead, this chain of feelings we could allow ourselves to follow, hooked on the tailwings of the swooping swallow, or that draws us to a mountain or seashore? Why is it that our fingers twitch, curl into fists, *become ours once more*, when the newscasts and adverts blare, when the landlord knocks, when police approach? Who are they, those friends whose company seems incommensurable with the hollow commodities, the acquisition of which keeps us apart; those voices who dare to challenge these values and way of life; those who tear away at this suffocating skin which has been grafted onto ours, bringing their heretical dreams to life again and again as feral beauty, bombs and beating hearts? How could it be, that those moments could stretch on and on, while restrictions and categories peel away to fall as so much compost for the conspiracy of dandelions blooming atwixt the cracks, from an Earth we have learned to embrace once more? *Gather your strength*, the reply from our bones counsels. Your fight seems to have begun



for anarchy, for wildness.

THE BURNING OF A TRANSMISSION MAST, BERLIN, & POLICING VEHICLES UP IN FLAMES, KEYNSHAM

[ed. – 2013 was the year that the scandal broke over the scale of extensive and international digital surveillance, following revelations by renegade CIA employee-turned-whistleblower Edward Snowden. Despite the initial media scrum over the topic, it feels like popular dissent over the intrusions has melted into mute acceptance of the price for our electronic narcotics, and many lasting fears have been quelled under the rubric of an unending terrorist alert. **Meanwhile, as in other European nations, by now the drama has assumed an almost entirely cynical tone as the U.K. government currently moves to grant itself even more significant data gathering capacities (such as the long-awaited 'Snooper's Charter') as Britain becomes the most spied-upon population in the world, the vanguard of the surveillance State.** Here, we first present a communique from that time, for what is to our knowledge one of the only 'offline' actions to be claimed in the context of #Anonymous (the well-known informal anti-capitalist hacking network with some anarchic offshoots), in this case in Berlin.

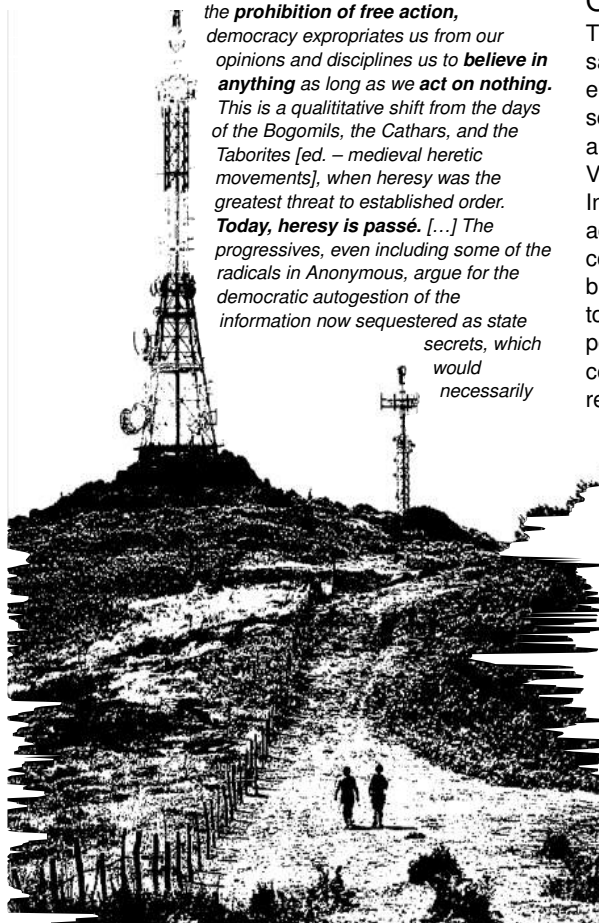
The action in question formed part of a wave of autonomous attacks in the German capital which aimed to block the flows and circuits of everyday life in the metropolis. While some of the discourse which accompanied these acts didn't inspire us so much, we see a great worth in such blockages themselves. Later, a post "on sabotage and accuracy" was sent to the U.K. Indymedia website: "In Germany, there have been some attacks on infrastructure: mobility, transport and distribution logistics and communication systems. We are fans of such acts of infrastructure sabotage ourselves and we would like to open a discussion, not least because there is some critique regarding accuracy of such actions and explaining them to the public. [...] In capitalist metropolis no inside or outside exists; we do not stand outside and declare who is the right enemy inside. **The enemy is everywhere and nowhere. Instead of searching for the headquarters, we have to start to stop playing the whole game of normality.** [...] We are happy that there have been similar actions, e.g. in Bristol [England], Belgium, France, and we would welcome a transnational discussion. The global chains of production and exploitation begin and end in our capitalist cities (from design, copyrights, patents etc. to consuming, profits, managing the cash flows etc.). We can attack the infrastructure which is necessary to connect the chain links. For example, the attack of the 'Magma Action Group' on the Hamburg Harbour hit the goods transport logistics. We are looking forward to continuing and expanding these actions. Broadly. On a massive scale. Uncontrolled. Well considered. Without borders."

Some months after that particular sabotage in Berlin, the terrorism circus was once again the full swing in the U.K., with the threat level raised from 'substantial' to 'severe' during the summer for the first time in years (it has remained at this level since). In addition to the abilities to prevent targeted individuals from travelling, other measures introduced included emergency legislation to make communications data available to police

and security services, and raising the numbers of armed police and visible patrols. It was in this atmosphere, and while the south-west was heavily securitised due to the NATO summit in Newport, that anarchists struck in Keynsham outside Bristol against the surveillance apparatus, detailed below.

We must say that we do not publish the following uncritically. While we are encouraged by the tentative – if incomplete – steps into a critique of digital technologies (not a common feature in publishing from Germany), we share neither the enthusiasm for whistleblowers contained in the first communique, nor their suggestions for "open" (i.e. "nicer") borders when we want them destroyed, or some naïve "decentralization" (or even "nationalization"!) of telecommunications... **The unquestionable fact that the digital networks, social media etc. furnish the State with unprecedented powers cannot be where our analysis ends of the cultural, cognitive and ecological impoverishment they entail.** Once again, the ghost of the Left seems to be strongly present in these illusions, like so often before in 'radical' discourses (not limited to Germany, naturally). Specifically on the topic of whistleblowers, it smacks of the liberal framing of 'revolution' as an act of revealing conspiracy, whereby once 'the people' realise the truth, the old structures will fall. Yet this is clearly not what we have seen happening. Alex Gorrión noted the same; that "the inability of knowledge of the government leads to provoke substantive resistance reveals a particular relationship to knowledge within democratic society. Through the device of free speech, democracy has already accomplished the alienation of beliefs from actions. By allowing

freedom of expression in exchange for the **prohibition of free action**, democracy expropriates us from our opinions and disciplines us to **believe in anything** as long as we **act on nothing**. This is a qualitative shift from the days of the Bogomils, the Cathars, and the Taborites [ed. – medieval heretic movements], when heresy was the greatest threat to established order. **Today, heresy is passé.** [...] The progressives, even including some of the radicals in Anonymous, argue for the democratic autogestion of the information now sequestered as state secrets, which would necessarily



be accompanied by a further humanization of state methods. The psychological underpinnings of the new question reveal that, in a way, everyone already knew that the military was running death squads, that every government everywhere is conniving and petty, that Israel was up to no good, and so on and so forth. And they knew only so far as this knowledge already belonged to the hive mind of society. When Wikileaks released the cables [ed. – supplied by whistleblowing U.S. soldier Chelsea Manning], hardly anyone acted surprised. Rather, there was a spontaneous transition from the debate (which admittedly had faded into the background years ago) about whether the US military is torturing people to a debate about whether we should know[...] No double-take, no stuttering, no process of transition, but a smooth replacement of one argument with another, despite the contradictory bases of those arguments. [T]he conspiracy itself is not the framework for the evil authority, simply its alibi. Unmasking it can only be a beginning.]

A Pause in the Surveillance: Vodafone Radio Tower Sabotaged

Vodafone connecting people.
Linked to everyone – allied with no one.
300 friends and yet friendless.
Instead, a Big Brother.
He looks after you.
Except for when we disrupt his infrastructure...
It's time to band together!
Like or dislike?

On Wednesday night and into Thursday (September 27th–28th 2013) we sabotaged a node in the network of electronic communication. We set fires seven meters up two of the larger cables of a transmitting and receiving system of the Vodafone Company in Adlershof (Berlin). In addition, we deposited multiple delayed-action incendiary devices in two connecting shafts between associated buildings and the radio and mobile phone tower. We ruled out endangering any people. There was severe damage to the cellular tower. Supposedly the corporation reacted to our damage of their important infrastructure junction by rerouting data streams. However, two weeks ago the transection of the fibre-optic cable in Adlershof (Berlin) caused a network-wide loss of service for several hours that potentially affected 50,000 costumers.

Our sabotage was directed against the total surveillance by governments, secret services, and corporations as well as against the smooth functioning of the metropolis.

Since Edward Snowden made public to what extent the intelligence

apparatus spies on people – all people – we have understood that we are witnessing a sea change. It's about the comprehensive attempt to control every person, every society, to make them steerable; every day, every minute, every millisecond of all human expression is to be seized – every opinion, all feelings, every story, all experience, all mourning, and every joy. They can even check how full our refrigerators are. No dictatorship could so deeply and comprehensively intrude into the lives of everyone like it is possible today through the “democratic” control of digital communication channels. The openly emerging tendency toward total surveillance stems from the misanthropic fantasy of the total controllability of society.

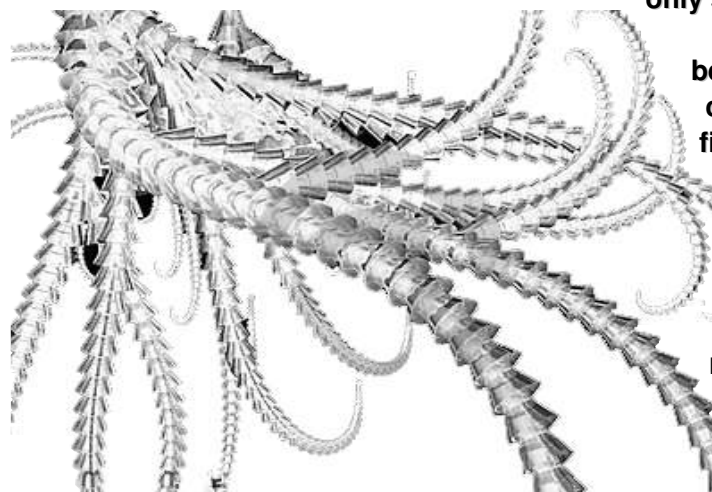
We see a new era in the intelligence apparatus' paranoid anticipation of the coming global uprisings, refugee flows, and food riots and their resulting desire for control over all associated communication and movement. They have already initiated the attack: the German foreign intelligence agency (BND) supplies data that helps the US to slaughter people with drones, and the American surveillance operations [at the army bases] in Wiesbaden and Bad Aibling continue to function smoothly despite the diplomatic crisis [ed. – after the extent of U.S. spying even on its European allies was revealed]. **From there and elsewhere they monitor the social consequences of their policies: poverty, war, and water and resource struggles on an unprecedented scale. By analysing all Internet traffic and telecommunication, they want to identify what they conceive of as a threat even before it arises.** Threatening for their rule, that is, because total surveillance will be of little help to deal with issues such as water shortages.

The intelligence agencies calculate normal action patterns and compare them to people's real actions in order to see if you could have plans to do something deviant, even before you know it yourself. They aim to preemptively recognize the threats to their rule and exploitation so that they can meet political movements and acts of resistance early on and with any necessary means. There are hundreds of varieties of securing power between integration and military destruction; as for what is the most promising, that is to be derived from the relevant data.

But it is not that total surveillance is forced upon us. [It comes into our lives] on the grounds of subjectively experienced everyday necessity or convenience, boredom or fun as the case may be. All calls, use of the Internet, emailing, posting, chatting, like-ing, tweeting, letter writing, paying by credit card, strolling through the forest of cameras... and, of course, the

smartphone is always there. **It is the ubiquitous bug, the self-imposed tracking device, the surveillance camera from below.** Every expression of life flows digitally into the hands of the secret power. We trade our social structures for membership in networks that have the “social” element: where you can click to make “friends” and then click them away again.

Can anyone today resist being ensnared and engulfed in this perverse Big Brother reality? Communicating is only human, but we must not join in every fucking thing that makes us even more controllable, predictable, and tame in which self-censorship is a requirement if you do not want someone to find you suspicious or for the automatic pattern matching to make a note. We don't need the state or telecommunication and internet companies to communicate with each other; they only organise our communication in order to evaluate and resell the arising information patterns and profiles. They want to be more attractive to their advertising clients that in turn can try to palm off more crap on us that we already do not need. The comprehensive control works so smoothly only because companies like Vodafone participate.



We chose Vodafone because this group works especially willingly with the British intelligence agency GCHQ, the NSA, and the BND. The cooperation of companies with governments and intelligence agencies is inevitable because of their common interests: intelligence corporations and consolidated intelligence

agencies secure each other's profit maximization strategies and conditions for control. Everyone is involved. Snowden's first revelations showed what happens when corporations are not in accordance with the specifications of the secret service: two smaller Internet service providers were forced to close because they didn't want to make all of their data available to the NSA.



The destruction of an infrastructure node was not enough: a technology that is to produce omniscience under the conditions of secrecy and uncontrollability of that capacity for omniscience is a fundamental problem. For that reason, this technology must be fundamentally criticized. Under prevailing conditions, electronic media can only offer a very limited emancipatory potential. Control of media and communications prevents the use of electronic media for any effective resistance of the status quo. The fact that we send this text electronically is only superficially a contradiction because we are constrained to finding gaps in the surveillance system.

The contradiction between spatially and temporally unbounded communication on the one hand and the

constraints placed by the surveillance system on genuinely open communication on the other cannot be solved within this system. The copious use of the Internet, the billion smart phones, and the endless computerizing are only currently possible through exploitative and predatory

relationships. We do not know whether or not social conditions can be freed from systems of domination and profit maximization and if electronic communications networks can be supplied and used outside of this paradigm. Currently this can at best be the subject of debates about utopia.

But we are aware of current contentions: could the nationalization of the telecommunications and Internet companies, the radical decentralization of network infrastructure, and the use of open source technologies lead to communication conditions that are non-hierarchical and more difficult to monitor – even within existing society? Could it be possible to turn that into a global network of networks in which the nodes are not operated and monitored by capitalist corporations nor institutions of bourgeois states, but rather all those who just want to communicate with nonhierarchical terms and aims? Relics of such structures from the less commercialized age of the Internet still exist. We are thus left unsure.

Basic critiques of technology and those of social relations are inseparable. Technology shapes reality and is in turn shaped by it. Society's artificial, inhumane ends ingrain themselves in technological advances. There is no technology that has developed free from the influence of its surrounding society and that persists without these social implications. **In short: there is no neutral technology.** We do not know what advances in communication technology would look like in an emancipated context, but we are convinced that somehow this freed form of communication would be very different.

Thus we are looking for new ways to see, to talk with, and to meet each other – without the NSA, the Federal Intelligence Service, the protections offered by the constitution, GCHQ, Vodafone, Telekom, Microsoft, Apple, Google... and we are sure that we are not alone. Our strength is not enough to abolish domestic surveillance that watched a racist killing spree take place^[1] and that finances Nazis, to crush the foreign intelligence services and the military, to sink Frontex at the sea off Lampedusa [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.2 pg87**], or to deal with the communication companies... But we can begin to sabotage vulnerable points on the grid! Ultimately, it is through that grid that they manage to have complete access to our lives.

Some people are in the position to temporarily cripple infrastructure and technical facilities. Others are in the position to hack and thus attack surveillance personnel's technical equipment from within. Still others leave

their positions and as whistle-blowers and can drive these omniscient secret actors into a corner. Still others can offer diverse support to whistleblowers and other deserters. And still other people can undermine current surveillance and self-exploitative technologies by refusing or hindering them in their everyday life. There are lots of opportunities to throw sand in the gears of the rising global dictatorship. In doing so, the grinding will be all the more violent and skillfully-executed the more we bring together our various interventions and build relationships in solidarity.

We encourage using sabotage to block and ultimately paralyze infrastructure – an act against the everyday stream of monitoring and exploitation. Our action could only burn a hole in the net, but many actions can tear apart whole networks. In the end, it is all about the resistance against the "business as usual" of a society based on a form of life characterized by destruction and exploitation. Purposfully, constantly, in many places, with different means and forms we have acted in accordance with previous actions and their objectives: the groups 'The Rumble of Eyjafjallajökull'^[2], 'Hekla Reception Committee'^[3], and 'Grims Vötn' made Berlin's infrastructure their goal, with an emphasis on transportation. The group "Eyjafjallajökull" succeeded even beyond bringing about a temporary loss of network connection for Vodafone. We see both communication and transportation infrastructure as crucial elements for continued exploitation and domination throughout the metropolis.

Onward for the sabotage of surveillance, extraction, and exploitation infrastructure!

Blind the intelligence apparatus!

Freedom of movement and asylum for Edward Snowden and all people worldwide – open the borders for everyone!

Many Volcanoes!



– Anonymous / Volcano Group Kalta^[4]

“You ask me: “What should we do? How can we stand against all this heteronomy, control, repression, violence, which is called normality? What can we raise against all the bureaucracy, the uniforms and weapons, the monsters of technology, their laws and their morality based on compulsions, guilt and fear?” I answer you: “I don't know the solution, the right way or the perfect strategy and I don't think it exists. But I do know that it's mutual aid, respect, love and solidarity which will make our relations dangerous, rebellious once more. I know that the only thing stronger than our urge for freedom is the hate for those who take it from us! I know that it doesn't need any justification for the insurrection and there is not a minute to wait! I know that back then and now there are thousands of reasons for the revolt!” ”

– Solidarity is the Tenderness of Revolutionary Subversion!

Police Wagons Burn In Keynsham



From the midst of the terror-fervor, the advance of the surveillance state, and display of force by the law.

This is to report incendiary action bringing life to our hatred for the police, inkeeping with our wider effort for the eradication of authority and it's civilisation and with not a step back before repression which fails to inhibit us...

It took place in Keynsham (on 3rd September) at the police-station where a fleet of support group vans and other marked force vehicles are kept close to the ring-road which skirts Bristol. **We rigged all three mobile-CCTV vans at their charging station inside the perimeter to the side of the cop-den with short fuses, then more fuel in containers was primed to incinerate an extra riot squad minibus parked to the front after we'd left the area.** When the fires were detected, the riot bus and at least one of the camera vans were already burnt. According to the media an individual was arrested shortly after, who they are probably even now dimly realising they have no evidence to charge because we

alone are responsible for the blaze under their snouts.

The police-station is situated close to the massive Keynsham Police Centre due to now open which is also to assimilate the functions of the old Bath and Radstock stations as part of a newly-constructed series of the force's multi-purpose detention suites, crime investigation centres, an operations base and the tri-force firearms facility which was burned down by the hands of anarchists one year ago [ed. – see *Return Fire vol.2 pg58*]. Remember, the police state has still been found vulnerable.

Now is the time the government choose to escalate electronic monitoring and travel restrictions, and to roll out more obvious than ever occupation of several cities by the security forces, some against the backdrop of citizens herded through metal detectors and surrounded by fencing in open public places. Though enraged we're neither shocked or indignant. The supposed 'state of exception' is the eternal trump card of democracy's totalitarianism - this is a war, and why leave escalation in the opponents' hands alone?

When police tell us increased presence in the latest terror-scare and heightened powers thereafter is for our own safety, we know they mean increased control and forcing obedience through fear, with renewed social license to kill (often young non-white men with the media's blessing), so we attack them regardless.

Confronting our fears was easier than we once imagined. They too can feel some insecurity and risk, just like the precarious masses they subject to the orders of the state and the whims of the economy and social norms as our lives are taken out of our hands piece by piece. Tension against payed-up bullies of the law constantly boils to the surface in class society - they're an obstacle to any kind of freedom and self-determination, out to pacify and neutralize those who in whatever way won't fit the social cage.

This choice of target brings us to the sentences read out against Juan Aliste, Marcelo Villarroel and Freddy Fuentevilla in Santiago for numerous actions against wage-slavery and a parting confrontation with the security forces which left a corporal dead and another officer wounded^[5]. Also, Carlos Gutierrez Quiduleo of the Temucucui community is finally once again in the grasp of the same colonial state too over related charges^[6], and we support the Mapuche people's fight for land, the ones of them who've clearly refused capitalist life as spiritual death and

maintain their claim as ancestral defenders of their home, that is, the Earth. We won't stay spectators while our companions in Chilean prisons and beyond are facing long jail-terms without wavering, tarnishing the wretched social tranquility of the bankers and cops. While our hands still fashion the materials for destruction, aggressions of the type raised by the British state against unnamed individuals they suspect/ed of incendiary actions in Bath and Bristol by anarchists^[7] (take heart...) won't pass without repercussions either as we forge ahead to recover our denied autonomy.



Before the terrorism of the law these are no days for silence. Anybody can join the fray in their own manner by wielding the idea of unconditional freedom for each and all of us to claim. A long time ago, we learned to dispel the myth – peddled by the Hollywood movies – of the rebels throwing themselves against the most unbelievable strongholds of their overlords, in a full-frontal military battle with no thought of living to fight another day. History is portrayed as a straight line with no corners or bends to deviate from this tale, so as to hold the spectator in a simple and romantic fantasy world, where the attainable skills for successful acts of vengeance remain a mystery behind the special effects and silver-screen stunts. **When the credits roll the viewer is left doubting their own chances against the agents of power and their increasing technological capabilities, and the context is lost of an insurgent war of attrition reaching far back through the ages, chipping away at the establishment's morale, image of invincibility, and resources.**

We learned not to see just what was conveniently put before us, but to study possible chinks in the armour of normality and to think the unthinkable. As some Czech anarchists in struggle pointed out not long ago (and burned out a CCTV station to make themselves clear), the vast array of surveillance apparatus works primarily by lodging defeatism in the minds of otherwise-aspiring conspirators. Yet as has been revealed by many before us, individual and collective insurrection is not

only possible but visible, enlivening and essential to break away from a life-long civil lobotomy, **as a way (amongst others) to live wholeheartedly and unapologetically.** It could be an assault which lays waste to state property before their very station, or an officer stabbed or battered carrying out their wretched duties, cutting the wires of a surveillance camera or smashing a patrol-car windscreen in the area under cover of darkness. It could be us, it could be you, it could be the person next to you. The first cop to kill is the one in your head. But only the first...

We learned that authority has done it's best to quell the anarchist rebellion over the centuries but to this day we stand uncaptured and undefeated, side by side with our comrades here and across the globe. Side by side doesn't always need to mean physically close enough to link arms, solidarity has no fixed shape or set line, but looks to open reciprocal dialogue on a common direction through the avenues of mutual aid

and direct action. For one day somebody might choose a letter exchange with a prisoner or spreading subversive street art with the other disquieted, sometimes a critical encounter and heated exchanges or the tenderness of a loving caress, and at others materialise in the embers of the oppressor.

By this communique we reignite the memory of the Santiago anarchist poet, dancer and fighter Claudia Lopez who fell to police bullets while on the barricades 16 years ago this September. Her unquenchable determination has not stopped accompanying the comrades who take to the street with their weapons.

Our regards to everybody out there who is joyously causing their own ruptures with normality in the daily contest against control and exploitation. Keep reclaiming your life in the many vital ways...

*INSURRECTION, SUBVERSION,
ANARCHY*

**– Uncivil Disobedients / Informal
Anarchist Federation**



Clashes outside the Ministry of Justice, London, during the Million Mask March called globally by #Anonymous, 05.11.15

THE "WILD" AS WILL & REPRESENTATION

1. ed. – Apparently a reference to the xenophobic murders between 2000-2007 throughout Germany by the Nationalist Socialist Underground, primarily of Turkish shopkeepers.

2. ed. – Responsible for burning a cable intersection which joined the Berlin city railway system, electric circuits and telecommunication network, causing problems for a few days and bringing part of the city to a halt, in May 2011. Eyjafjallajökull is an Icelandic volcano, whose last eruption grounded air traffic in 20 countries, as ash covered north Europe for weeks of 2010.

3. ed. – In October 2011, the group 'Hekla Reception Committee – Initiative for More Eruptions in Society' claimed the placement of an incendiary device (which was discovered and defused) in a service tunnel in the vicinity of Berlin's central train station. This followed an arson attack on signalling equipment along a line heading towards Hamburg which caused severe delays to the mainline service between the two cities. The international media decried the attempt, and spoke of a resurgence of the 'left-wing terrorism' of West Germany in the 70's, as well as the fact that so far that year alone "600 expensive cars have been torched in the city by anarchists". Hekla is the neighbouring volcano to Eyjafjallajökull, who previously visited the aforementioned havoc on the world economy.

4. ed. – Katla, east of Eyjafjallajökull, is one of the largest Icelandic volcanoes, and very active.

5. ed. – The sentences (delivered 'in absence' to a heavily-militarised court as they refused to assist the judicial show, after an alleged escape plot was foiled by guards): 42 years for Juan, 15 years for Freddy, 14 years for Marcelo. See **Return Fire vol.1 pg72** for details on their case.

6. ed. – Carlos, the final fugitive from the above case, was trapped by the cops in the city of Angol after six years on the run. When paraded before the assembled press, his only words were "Long live the Mapuche resistance, long live the anarchist resistance!". Reflecting on his time in clandestinity: "To me, they were six years of secrecy, of insubordination, active and vital; in which Alen my son (now 4 years), faithful witness of the tenderness and strength of resistance, was born. [...] And with that strength I will continue to resist, since I come from the ancient forests, I come from the beautiful smile of my daughter Ayelen; I come too from cold and inequality, I come from suffering and hunger under dictatorship [ed. – under which he had been imprisoned for many years for guerrilla struggle], I come from where children cry as their communities are paved over, I come from the teardrop of a mother mourning her murdered son, I come from Araucanía and the reclaimed land [ed. – see **The Intensification of Independence in Wallmapu**], I come from the heart of the poorest..." In an abbreviated trial he claimed responsibility for the actions they were accused of, and after some months of prison struggle and hunger strikes is now released.

7. ed. – Two arrests had occurred in July, respectively relating to the high-profile blackout of radio and TV following a transmission mast arson near Bath (see **Return Fire vol.1 pg66**) and the coordinated torching of private security, telecommunications utility, luxury and fox-hunting supporter vehicles one night in inner-city Bristol. Eventually both charges got dropped.

The activities of forest and mountain, the outdoors as their enthusiasts say, have been experiencing a kind of boom for some time it seems. So many people in the mountains, the woods, in courses ranging from climbing to hiking, from camping to "survival" (that terrible word from a TV show...) are blooming.

At the same time we hear a lot of talk about the ethics of going to the woods and mountains, what is right and what is wrong, springing up from the custodians of truth (and those guys are everywhere) and new-agers in climbing boots. However, following this "rediscovery" of the "wild", problems have been created in relation to overcrowding of the mountains and woods on the one hand, with all that that entails, and on the other the development of a dangerous tendency to transform the "wild" and make it more accessible and appealing to the nomadic masses moving from the city for longer or shorter periods, weekends or holidays, to breathe "fresh air".

So more and more places are springing up that are tending to transpose the city environment – measured and calculated – into environments that had perhaps instead maintained its particular characteristics unchanged for a long time, to a different degree from place to place. And so the "wild" becomes a domesticated offshoot of the city, which in the case of mountain villages means a distortion of the place to spots of wild renovations or new construction at the limit of (and beyond) the eco-devastation monstrosity.

The plaudits that one hears from many quarters about the repopulation of some mountain areas [using the example of Italy] are just the delighted cries of those who manage to get some extra money in their pocket (directors, house owners and building speculators in boots), **but the mountain is still dying, just like the countryside of the plains.**

Knowledge and skills, local traditions and dialects are being lost, sacrificed on the altar of usability and saleability. Obviously I don't want to throw the baby out with the bathwater, there are some interesting situations that attempt to recover a more direct relationship with the environment around them, but the mass trend, unintelligent and brute, is to seek to extend city life to the countryside, mountains, forests...



Organisational food for thought

For those who decide to break with the metropolis-centric system that society is increasingly imposing, to move permanently to "depressed" areas like the countryside or the mountains, problems are certainly not lacking.

If abandoned houses can be occupied – and that is desirable – and the same goes for land for cultivation, one of the points remains how to recover the resources that we cannot self-produce, like fuel for possible means of transport (individual or in common), a dental visit, a purchase (where you cannot make do otherwise...), of shoes, or clothes, etc...

One way to address the relationship that, like it or not, exists with capital and the market could be to organize with those in solidarity, sharing skills and tasks, thus creating a strictly horizontal and self-managed network of micro production which invest part of their time and their skills using exchange where possible and if entry into the market is partly necessary, dividing earnings from any sale in the local markets of products and artifacts with all those participating in the group.

Groups of recycling and reuse^[1] that lengthen the life of products, both for their own use and for any exchange or sale, self-production groups, etc... which obviously should not have rigid forms but interchangeability among themselves, thereby socializing skills and dexterity. Obviously that cited above can only be food for thought, at best useful to the debate and certainly not exhaustive compared to the complex problem of the organization of existence outside the metropolis and commercial circuits.

Environmental devastation, indifferent beneficiaries

As we said it looks as though the "wild" has entered the daily lot of many, touching various sensitivities that they have been squabbling over in public debates, websites and forums, ethical issues and methods of how to frequent the natural environment or not, rumour upon rumour

“In the urban centres of the industrialised North may be observed a curious mass behaviour from time to time. Those who apparently consider urban culture and lifestyle as the pinnacle of progress and modernity, for whom the cities are centres of 'Life', of freedom, of culture, rush away from these very cities whenever they can. A flight into 'Nature', the 'wilderness', 'underdeveloped'[...] Since the eighteenth century *nature*, the rural areas around cities, the land of the peasants has been increasingly transformed into a mere Hinterland for the cities, or perceived as an aesthetic experience: the romantic landscape. Like the external colonies, the land, where the food for the urban population is grown, is not only ruthlessly exploited and destroyed by industrialised agriculture, it is also devalued as backward and unprofitable, like a colony. But paradoxically, this land is also the object of urban longing. [...] What are people seeking? It seems obvious that what is sought is exactly the opposite of what the myth of modernity has promised as sees as positive: the total control of nature and natural processes by science and technology, the 'civilizing', that is, taming of all 'wild' forces[...] Also the search for adventure is a reaction to modern society with its many technical novelties. Obviously, people's basic curiosity is not satisfied with ever newer technical inventions. On the contrary, industrial society, in spite of its affluence and its leisure and entertainment industry, is permeated by a deep sense of boredom and apathy. The modern lifestyle leaves little to people's own creativity and work, everything is preplanned and organized, there are no more adventures. We are entertained, animated, fed, stimulated by professional experts. [...] Industrial capitalist-patriarchal society is based on fundamental dichotomies between Man and Nature, Man and Woman, City and Village, Metropolises and Colony, Work and Life, Nature and Culture and so on. I call these dichotomies *colonisations*. The desires analysed are all directed towards that part of these dichotomies which as been amputated, externalized, colonised, submerged, repressed and/or destroyed. This is one reason why the longing for these colonised parts can only be sentimentalized; they must be romanticized and added on to the existing modern paradigm. [...] The beautiful illusion of Nature, the simulation of originality and spontaneity, the aesthetic and symbolic representation of Nature makes this world of machines more tolerable. The market opportunities for selling these symbolic representations of Nature grow in proportion to people's growing frustrations with the hollow benefits of modern civilisation. As we have noted, however, even these illusions cannot be bought unless the symbioses, the living relationships between humans and other natural beings, are disrupted. Progress, since the time of Enlightenment, means precisely this disruption and separation of the modern human ego, the modern subject, from all such symbioses.” – Maria Mies

about those who shout their dedication to the forests and mountains the loudest (anathema for those who drop litter on the path – something actually execrable – or take wood for their campfire), all devoted body and soul to their dear nature, so you'll never hear these new Thoreau's^[2] say a word about the environmental devastation that is truly crippling the countryside, woods and mountains.

To listen to interventions, or read pages and pages on forums about the incivility of those who dirty part of the forest, and not hear a word or read a line about the destruction coming from the biomass [*power plant*] in Pollino, quarrying the Apuan Alps^[3] or the high-speed train [*ed. – see 'The Maximum That Our Abilities Allow'*] for example, is delirious, all the more as to talk about it means to attract the antipathy of many, where at best you are accused of fanaticism. Imagine then if you decide to point out that there is an abyss between a paper towel on a bush (which personally makes me very angry) and thousands of cubic metres of concrete, just as there is between a couple of cut branches and a biomass power plant that will eat quite a few more trees...

Obviously this kind of attitude is not surprising, and is ascribed in all respects to the habits of

behaviour that we have seen above with respect to the way of living the mountain as *an extension of the city*, and by city I mean not only the physical space that it occupies, but also the ideological system underlying it and the mental structures and cognitive consequences deriving from it.

The scope of the defence of territory, for the "citizen", is always ascribed to the private channel of opinion (and this is obvious if you compare the number of those who complain about a littered path and then how many actually deal with it and go tidy up), opinion which moreover submits itself to a whole series of situations that lead to chatter either remaining such, or at least never putting in question the system as the crux of the matter.

If it is true that the wild is set to become an offshoot of the town, domesticated, raped, then the "love" of the "citizen" will be no more than the use of a "service", which as such can be replaced when it is no longer available.



In this optic, defence of the wild simply becomes a request for a better service, adapted to the expectations of those who benefit from it, like the many others who come and go, maybe substituted by other urgencies of the moment.

Alongside this we must then place the habit of never questioning the assumptions of so-called "progress", convinced that any "innovation" is functional to the improvement of our living conditions, all helped by our domestication to accept, substantially, (and often without even realising, head down and as a natural condition,) the imposition of those "in charge".

The defence of opinion of the wild is therefore something *private*, at least as long as the "public" is not putting its hands on it.

Then there are those who do not accept the choices of power passively (for various reasons, not least individual economic interest), but still without questioning the general structure of dominion and decide to struggle by entering into dialogue with



“Points of view are for those who decide for others, those who are delegated and appointed by society, the citizens; wild drives don’t need political/cultural explanations. We can see and feel directly what they are doing to the Earth, to the animals, to anti-authoritarians, and this is sufficient to give a reason to our attacks, every time with more determination and strength... forward anarchists, let’s sabotage and destroy the present!

– F.A.I./F.R.I. 'Subversive Anti-Civilisation Individualities'

the managerial authorities, so deploy all that is "legally" possible to stop – for example – the construction of 'x' power plant... resulting, in the vast majority of cases, in spending years and money in an endless dispute that brings nothing but frustration and a lovely new installation.

Individuals who resist, the importance of a defence that is also attack

Fortunately, there are also individuals who, freed from the shackles of compliance, rebel against the presumed inevitability of the choices of power and oppose themselves to devastation in a direct unmediated way that there cannot but be when the stakes are the destruction of the world around us (be it a forest, a mountain or whatever). Refusing to submit to the dictates of capital, whoever opposes the devastation to some extent also plays a hand in attack, showing that you can fight, that the famous grain of sand *really can jam the machine*, and that if you consider something important, *you carry it through to the end*.

The repression of dissent in defence of the interests of power is obviously strong in such cases, and as I write, I can only think of Remi [ed. – see *Radical Scavengers Come Out of the Woodwork*], the French fighter killed by the police of the transalpine government while he was opposing the construction of a mega dam at Testet, which was to serve to feed crops of GM maize, but military repression is not the only one where whoever does not bow down faces massacre.

In addition to the social rejection created around the "violent" ones that protect trees there is also often the open hostility of the drawing room environmentalists who, in those meagre defences, see on the one hand their chatter render sterile and outdated, displayed in all their superficial useless by concrete acts of resistance (to paraphrase an old song, the truth hurts...); and on the other, being, as written above, only users of power, see most of the assumptions on which they base their certainties being challenged: certainties of slaves, that's true, but certainties nevertheless and therefore to be defended.

The tragedy of the battle, the impossibility of mediation between the two parties, means that the fighters of the earth are hopelessly alone with those in affinity with them, except in rare cases where their paths and actions meet and establish a dialectic with other realities that, at that moment, decide (more or less instrumentally) to embrace some type of practices.

But the radical defence of the wild not only runs the risk of being crushed by military

repression, in some cases it also runs the more devious one of being reabsorbed into the concertive logic of power when its action binds itself to that of other actors who may share the stage with them but have substantially different objectives and not only: the loss of autonomy, and therefore radicality, is a danger that also lurks behind concepts like the *quantitative* myth of the struggle, that is the mythicization of *the mass* as an insurgent/revolutionary actor.

Where the battle for the earth becomes a search for consensus, the revolt against devastation becomes *politics*, and politics is nothing but conciliation and compromise, concepts that should burn along with the machinery with which they want to devastate the earth, not go out the door and come back through the window of hysteria of participation.

We certainly do not want to relegate those fighting for the earth to cosmic solitude, but also we do not want such important issues to be substantially sacrificed or even watered down by bourgeois concepts like mass and majority, moreover – if we really want to think in such terms – we cannot know, as if it were evident, whether a bulldozer that burns has less impact than the "popular" struggle than a march of 60,000 people that takes place while the trees fall... In this perspective, the best thing would be to continue straight along the road of direct defence of the wild, not disdaining also to reason with others on the basis of affinity (which is much more dynamic and interesting than speeches aimed at creating movements of "a thousand souls"), in which, it having become less to their sensitivity to swallow their frustration, are generally precisely those who from the barricades glimpse a radically new world.

1. Capital has realised the potential of these practices, so that the same corporations recover their own products to be "thrown away" and then readjust them – the term used is "recondition them" – and sell them at "second hand" prices.

2. ed. – Henry David Thoreau, influential early (Euro-)American naturalist. In his later years, he moved away from his earlier pacifism with his statements in support of a group of slavery-abolitionists (Thoreau himself participated in the 'Underground Railroad' for fugitive slaves) who seized a federal armoury in 1859 to arm a slave revolt before being overwhelmed in battle 36 hours later, preceding the American Civil War.

3. ed. – A 'protected' national park in northwestern Tuscany, where the mountains are blown apart for marble quarrying for industrial manufacturing – ending up in household abrasives, soap, and tubes of toothpaste – polluting the air and waterways.

'THE ADVANCE OF URBANISATION'



In Europe, across the centuries, human influence over the wilderness defined a substantial modification of many geographic areas. Deforestation,

reclaiming grounds from swamps, draining of rivers and lakes, diversion of water courses, terracing, are just a few from many other methods of intervention that became necessary, during the pre-industrial period, under the pressure of demographic growth. **Since the first industrial revolution, the advance of urbanisation triggered the abandonment of areas from the countryside and the low mountainside – more evidently in the last fifty years – inducing the decay of "rural society" in favour of mass society; many lands,**

once used for farming and cattle, have been abandoned, while many towns and settlements became inhabited. Due to this process (typical in advanced capitalistic countries), many areas have turned back into wilderness, growing new woods and biodiversity. In Italy, an example of this transformation is the ridge of the Appennini mountain chain; a natural corridor that connects the Strait of Sicily to the the Alps, a spinal column with great faculties of mobility and connectivity [*ed. – in a biological sense*] which, for now, doesn't seem of interest to the techno-industrial appetite.

'THE MAXIMUM THAT OUR ABILITIES ALLOW'

Nobody can deny that the correspondence between thought and action should be the fundamental characteristic of being an anarchist. If we think that the destruction of this world is necessary, we must act accordingly. We cannot resort to friendly and harmless tricks that are easy to silence, deceiving our minds that are hungry for freedom.

[...] It is not enough that those to come remember that the insurrection is not the result of the arithmetic sum of attacks by anarchists; I'm talking about something else entirely. Our lives are too short to be worn down with hundreds of happenings designed to awaken the slumbering masses so that they come forward punctually at the appointed magical day. Only when we have specifically attacked that what exists have we managed to tear off pieces of freedom; if only for a few moments, we free ourselves from the shackles imposed by daily routine and the law.

[...] **But, as always happens in reality, things are a bit more complicated.** Unfortunately, this sole action is not a panacea for all of the ills of our movement. **Even if you are absolutely convinced that no act of rebellion is useless or harmful, I think it is crucial to ask oneself about the projectuality that it generates and, above all, about the meaning the actions give to those who realize them.** The act itself may assume very different meanings if it is conceived from the position of *attack or defense*. I'll try to give a practical example. Last year in the Susa Valley we witnessed an increase in the practice of sabotage in the fight against the TAV [*ed. – see Return Fire vol.1 pg70*]. This is perfect if the intentions of those who have made such actions are an attempt to state clearly that it is not only a simple construction of a railway line that is at stake, but rather the need to attack and destroy all of the techno-industrial system that designs it. But the meaning that you can read in several communiqués of the No TAV movement or, even more disconcertingly, in No. 5 of Lavanda sheet written by some comrades involved in this fight is another thing entirely. Such actions could be interpreted as the last resort of a people who have already used all possible means of

pressure (even peaceful means...) without getting the attention of those who govern. I am convinced that such an interpretation trivializes any positive revolutionary aspect of such acts. In fact, it suggests that if power were more "reasonable", and if it were more open to dialogue, the possibility would exist to "convince" it to mitigate its most terrible aspects.

[...] We do not strike at the enemy because our disgust at the latest wrongdoing is unbearable, but because we want to be free here and now. We do not need justifications to strike, we simply cannot accept living life devoid of meaning as mere cogs in this deadly system. We should be the ones who dictate the moments of the fight; there is a world to be demolished and the chances of defeating the technological monster become smaller in proportion to its development.

[...] Naturally, this entails a more profound commitment, and I hope that there is a way to return to a serious discussion about this. What I want to call for today, and what we should always aspire to do, is to accomplish the *maximum that our abilities allow*. When we act, we should do it primarily for ourselves and in the most resolute manner. We are no different from those who the undeniably authoritarian call "ordinary people". Whatever we do could be replicated by any person provided that it feed their own desire to destroy authority. We should not seek to convince the masses of the virtue of our contention, but should instead seek accomplices who wish to participate in the work of demolition. **We need not be afraid of our hatred, but rather launch into action with the awareness that the enemy does not hesitate for a second in the war against freedom.** [...] **Let us free ourselves from politics, even in its antagonistic decline.** It should be clear that we do not fight for a bright future, but rather for a life here and now. Anarchy should be first and foremost an individual act that *affects all our lives*: we must plot and feed each small fire that can send the world up in flames, attempting by all means to oppose the ruling order, civilisation...

In the Appennini, you don't have to go particularly high to find places that came back to a state of wilderness, between high meadows, scree slopes, peaks. Either in the mid areas of the mountain, or even in the hill belts, depopulation left free space for woods to advance and for wild animals to return. *Nature surges forward like a tide, swallowing the marks left by centuries of rural life, assimilating old trails, terraces, and old, abandoned villages. Chestnut woods, now left unsupervised, become impenetrable forests.*

The return to wilderness, as – probably – thrills the "urban ecologist" who would save wild animal and vegetable species within an abstract contemplation of the Earth which is free from his/her personal subsistence/existence (that being completely mediated by industrial processes), is a cause of distress for those who still populate these residual areas.

Mountaineers, farmers, or artisans, who still live along rural traditions, in a self-sustaining rather than industrial way, perceive the "return to wilderness" as a threat to their autonomous survival; for instance, the re-introduction of wild fauna (wolves, bears, deer, etc.) is seen as an imposition by the central government in contrast with the self-government that their isolated communities are

accustomed to. If it's clear how the protection of some endangered species is guaranteed (or not) by the system, it is as much blatant how a strengthened forest, a wolf or a bear, do not represent a significant threat to the survival of mountain/rural communities if compared to the effects of the global capitalistic processes. By any point of view, the enemy to fight is the forced acceptance of this model which tends, irreversibly, to replace a free existence in harmony with nature with "nature reserves" and techno-industrial megalopolis.



Cantabrian brown bear, of the uplands of Galicia, Asturias, Castilla and Leon, Spain

It's not one side against the other; it's not about an economical system directly bound to local resources (and less harmful for the ecosystems due to its technological limits) against a global "sustainable" economy, unavoidably sustained by complex technologies; it's not about considering Earth as a source for an autonomous subsistence or a fetish to preserve. **Nature's regain of some areas, temporarily escaped techno-industrial totalitarianism, is just a "side effect" of the advance made by capitalism and the urbanisation/industrialisation of life.** As of 2007, more than a half of the world population was packed into metropolitan areas; as claimed by IBM, which predicts an exponential growth of urban surface over all the continents: during the next fifteen years, urbanized areas should increase by 1.2 million square kilometers; in Africa, for instance, urban territories will be 590% more than in the year 2000.

Those megalopolis will expand their suburbs too; ex-agricultural lands will be invaded by industrial and commercial compounds, by mines, dumps and roads; hills and mountains will become further depopulated, invaded by "touristic development" centers and whatever that implies. The alternation of factory-cities, of gatherings around commercial focal points, and of abandoned lands returned to a wild state, linked by strips of concrete. The "western" process that returns once-human-populated areas to wildness, is strictly bound to the global colonisation carried out by the capitalistic techno-industrial model, to the progressive and relentless impoverishment of the biosphere in not-yet-civilised areas.

This process, however long it could last or expand, is doomed to succumb to the destructive power of the expanding

civilisation, which threatens the very conditions of any free and wild existence (if the nuclear poisoning of earth, air and water wasn't enough, genetically modified chimeras and the frontiers of nanotechnology will do the job).

What nature is temporarily "reconquering" in Europe, is nothing compared to what is being lost in the rest of the world. And what we are losing too: the chance of living, in many different ways, without being subject to the techno-industrial mega-machine; in other words, the ultimate completion of our total, irreversible domestication.

The progressive abandon of vast areas, not yet covered by urban ramifications, could soon benefit the strategies of exploitation and oppression. Beyond the absorption of every different kind of human community, the abandonment offers new chances of uncontested settlement for noxious projects (for instance hydroelectric power plants, wind farms, open air labs, etc), and their own "human kind": the soldier, the worker, the manager, the technician, the bureaucrat, the tourist, etc. We have many examples of local struggles, born against the imposition of similar projects. Would the twenty-year struggle in the Susa Valley against the high speed railway (No TAV) be so strongly felt and fought if that valley was long since abandoned?

To fight against something which is not just tangibly noxious, but against the very distortion of traditional lifeways too, has always been an explosive mix – as the inexhaustible struggles of tribal peoples teach us. To defend ourselves, we are always ready to attack. **But why are we willing to truly fight, without compromises and with our life at stake, only when we have (or believe to have) something tangible to protect?** Is the very free existence of the whole of life on the planet, threatened by the techno-industrial devastation, not enough?

To directly and closely perceive a threat seems to be a kind of "radicality ratio", especially where the opposition against and people's interconnection of domination's dynamics seems feeble. If, on the one hand, our wild sensitivity pushes us to feel complicity with struggles that aim to defend even just a square-inch of earth, on the other we are not so naïve as to perceive it as a real liberatory perspective.

To have no "immediate gain" in the struggle, to have "nothing to defend", doesn't mean that everything is lost, it cannot mean resignation to inaction; on the contrary, it must tell us that, having no will to maintain and defend anything of what we have been given, we have to attack, always and everywhere, trying to strike where it hurts most.

If it is true that the precious and visceral bond with the land where you live is something that mercantile culture, pre- and post-industrial, has always tried to sever to replace with a relationship of subjugation and dependency upon itself, the only way to defend it is to undermine the very foundations of civilisation.

ANTI-DEVELOPMENT ANGER

11.04.15, U.K.: *Sabotage on a construction site in the centre of a Scottish city: cables cut on a site vehicle, against "the absolute domestication and acceptance of this systematized undead life inside society, state, civilization."*

07.04.14, Santiago, Chile: *Fire engulfs part of the worksite for the metro expansion, set by 'Kapybara Group' of the Informal Anarchist Federation / International Revolutionary Front (F.A.I./F.R.I.)* "The harmful consequences of the techno-industrial expansion will not be tolerated without the necessary response, we walk keeping a close watch on your warehouses, supermarkets, areas of urban expansion, [we] attack in the fields and your cities, we will defend tooth and claw what remains to be defended..."

16.03.15, Bristol, U.K.: *Slingshot fire takes out windows of construction company Balfour Beatty, who are destroying a wildlife corridor and allotment projects for a new bus route to "cart people to and from their daily boredom".*

22.02.14, Atlanta, U.S.A.: "[W]e poured a mixture of sand and water into the fuel tanks of two tractors used in the construction of a new Atlanta streetcar", *one of the major downtown development projects.* "[Our action] did not take long to plan or to enact and we found all of the materials on the side of the road."

17.02.15, Athens, Greece: *Three excavators torched by 'Nomads from the Opposite Side.'* "We refuse to spend our days among concrete walls, breathing and consuming the shit of civilisation, enduring the constant noise of the social factory's restless machines, crowded by millions like rats, in an environment of plastic aesthetics, knowing the wild world and its creatures only from books and screens..."

09.01.12, Buscate, Italy: *Quarry attacked by the Earth Liberation Front (E.L.F.),* "leaving several incendiary bottles under two excavators, a truck, the circuit panel of the main processing machine and in an office, on the control panel. The woods are razed and the earth eviscerated to produce concrete[...]. We don't want to improve urbanisation or to make it more "green"..."

23.06.11, Reboredo & Boiro, Spain: *A backhoe, bulldozer, tanker truck, and cement mixer burn for hours on the AVE (high-speed railway) construction site. Elsewhere in the A Coruña province, two Coca-Cola bottles filled*

with nitric acid and aluminum foil pellets explode in front of the home of the owner of the same construction company. They had previously been regionally targeted by 'Anti-Authoritarian Commandos Against Capital & the State', when they blew up a tanker truck on a luxury flats construction site against "the extremes of non-life that capitalism drags us to".

18.06.11, Eastern Townships, Canada: Hostile graffiti left in sensitive locations as part of "an ongoing string of small "defacing" actions carried out [in] one of the main cornerstones for the invasive suburban developments in the region", by E.L.F./F.A.I. 'Appalachian Hydra'. "We believe that the "face value" is the most sensitive part in this industry[...] Savagery is the only answer to the hypocrisy of civilization."

07.04.11, Rome, Italy: Anonymous saboteurs enter a construction site "destroying any space that is still wild to construct department stores, malls and parking lots. [...] We approached the seven machines (bulldozers and others) that were present; with wire cutters we cut oil tubes, cables and wires, and then we poured gravel and sugar in the tanks and we disappeared..."

28.08.10, Los Dinamos forest, Mexico: E.L.F. sabotage against a worksite. "This project, still at an early stage, consists of deep wells that would take water from the river to allow the expansion of the city and anthropocentric progress." Stones, bricks and rubble are used to block the pits, 'Civilisation out from the wild' etc. left on building materials, three machines burn.



"Comrades, we would like to think that you too have the blazing desire, not to *take the streets back*, but to *make them unusable*. The streets are not ours, they never were and never will be, and we do not want them to be, they are part of this world of concrete and cement which keeps us locked up, keeps us from having our feet in the earth, and to see beyond. Any day, anywhere there are streets, a few loved ones suffice to find the cracks in the street from where to pull out pieces to throw back to those it belongs to."

– In Response to 'Comrades in the Streets'

THE PRISON CITY

[ed. – A leaflet distributed in London, U.K., during the 2015 occupation on the Aylesbury housing estate (one of the largest in Europe) which was being cleared. The combative mixture of squatters, tenants, radicals and others at points held off eviction attempts of riot cops by the hundred, and ripped down metres of council security fencing designed to isolate the occupation in the face of security guards, while a crew going by the moniker 'A.C.A.T.' (All Cops Are Targets) smashed out the glass of an attendant riot van. As asserted by the (former) counter-information space In the Belly of the Beast, "[t]he unabated 'social cleansing' that is occurring in London against those who do not fit into authority's image of the perfect city, must be answered with a violence that signals the breakout, instigated by those [who] taint the glass palaces that rise in the urban nightmare, those caught in the prison being built around us. The city has never been for those who refuse to obey! It must burn instead, not negotiated with, we do not fit within their plan[...] their regimented excuse for life!"]

Our experience of the city is limited and subjective. Each day we cover the same paths, heads down, almost without seeing a thing. Somewhere in the back of our minds we carry a vague image of where we are in space and time: **massive anonymous buildings, cultural containers, churches, palaces, shopping centres.** Linked by reassuring tube maps, symbolized in picture postcards, they combine in creating – with courts, prisons, cop stations, army barracks lurking in the background – a sense of stability and permanence.

Over time we can even feel attached to this – imaginary – place because it is here that we have passed years of our existence, almost without noticing, illuding ourselves that we are alive and happy or at least convincing others through our public face. Just as the prisoner can muster a few fond memories of his time behind bars – because it was years of his life, the only one he [sic] has – we can end up loving and needing our incessant processing through the ruthless metropolitan meat grinder. Everybody, even the homeless staking out a few inches for a night in the doorway of one of the temples of consumerism – forbidden territory in hours of daylight – has a role to play.

But the London of our illusions, be they dreams or nightmares, *does not exist.*

What we see and experience is only an infinitesimal part of what is really a militarised territory within which masses of people remain corralled inside their designated places. With all its specificities this territory is no different to any other square inch of the planet, ruled by a system based on domination and exploitation that leaves not a single blade of grass uncontaminated and free.

The forms that this domination takes are constantly adapting, developing and inventing new ways to better exploit the earth and control its inhabitants for goals of

profit and power. While terror and despotism are still the norm in many parts of the world,

advanced democracies such as Britain prefer to rule using the soft weapon of consensus. This involves the eager collaboration of their subjects under the banner of free speech and participation.

Indispensable to this project are the media in all their forms: newspapers, television, 'social' media, etc. Through these, the structures and values that we are expected to adhere and contribute to (and kill and die for when ordered) are reinforced. These include *patriotism, monarchy, democracy, progress, work* (not just to survive but as a value in itself), *belief in and obedience to the law, belief in and obedience to supernatural beings.* And *fear.* Fear of the 'terrorist'. Fear of the stranger. Fear of the young. Fear of retribution. Fear of those who say *No!*

So seemingly contradictory, all of the above have one thing in common – THEY ALL CONTINUE TO EXIST BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN THEM, because we do not question them in our minds or in the way we act...

The prison city of London is not a theatre of open war waged by riot cops, armoured vehicles and commandos flaunting automatic rifles (always at the ready in the wings). It is an ordered territory that works to perfection, all of us going through the green lights, stopping at the red. It is a mediaeval castle in cybernetic form, whose self-controlled inhabitants move around their designated routes. As long as they adopt one of the identities available in the supermarket of alienation. As long as they are adequately supplied with the *passe-partout* – cash or credit – that opens all doors. **As long as they carry the key to their cell in their pocket, apprehensively turning it each night before putting their head on the pillow and falling asleep. Leaving the rich to slumber in peace. Leaving the gold to remain in the vaults. Leaving the prisoners to suffer in their cages.**

Unless.... Unless....

It's time to wake up! It's time to act!

It's time for our dreams to become their nightmares!



RADICAL SCAVENGERS COME OUT OF THE WOODWORK



[ed. – This text concerns the aftermath of police killing Rémi Fraisse in 2014, a young fighter fatally struck with a concussion grenade during the 26th October assault on the police-defended construction site of a much-protested dam destroying woods and wetlands (a Z.A.D., or zone to be defended, had been raised in the area of Testet by opponents). Many cities in France exploded in revolt, while the French embassy in London and consulate in Barcelona were both splattered with red paint, construction machinery in a gentrifying part of Brussels burned, etc. Amidst the riotous demonstrations and night-time attacks, the media as ever were keen to find 'spokespersons' who they could bring into the spectacle of representation and dialogue, and unfortunately they found them once again in the commune of Tarnac. Tarnac was the site of a police raid in 2008, and residents were accused of sabotage on the international high-speed rail network and also authorship of 'The Coming Insurrection', by the Invisible Committee. That particular text, and others by the 'Tiqqun' tendency, has seduced radicals (including some anarchists) in many places as well as being lauded by academic scavengers and the literary world, as a 'cultural' appropriation and mystification of more readily-understandable insurrectionary and anarchic tendencies. It's not the place to critique the ideas and (truthfully, rather few) proposals of the Invisible Committee here, but the following text tackles how they carry out their ideas of 'building power' in practice; by collaboration with the media.]

form of language the guarantee of the incorruptibility of meaning. It is not immune against the dangers of communication. Expressing it on the lands of domination is enough to erode its significance or even to reverse it."

The Mirror of Illusions, Notes of *La Bonne Descente* discussion (Paris), 1996

Intervening in the media with the old Leninist argument (about parliament) to use it as a platform, not only reinforces the legitimacy of these instruments of domination, but also endorse the democratic game of dialogue rather than confrontation. **"You do not argue with the enemy, you battle"** is certainly an old saying from the revolutionary experience, but it concerns only those who really intend to remove all authority. For others – like to start with the politicians of "the movement" – it is certain that one day one may use tact, manage sensibilities and work strange "alliances", "composing with what is where it is", meaning to adapt to the existing order rather than subvert it. To accept the rules of the game rather than blow up the game itself. We have seen the resurgence of this dynamic in recent years in Val Susa [ed. – see *Return Fire vol.1 pg70*], Valognes^[1] or Notre-Dame-des-Landes [ed. – see *Return Fire vol.1 pg81*] after the clashes that pushed out the cops. **It has long been known that all politicians do not sit in Parliaments but also emerge from struggles, and the conquest of power (or hegemony) sometimes borrows byways.**

To refuse the mechanism of politics – of which recuperation and representation are full parts – is not a question of principle, it's a condition of real experimentation of autonomy and self-organisation. **Only dialog of the revolted, among themselves in a space of anti-authoritarian struggle where words and their meanings are not mutilated by means of control and consensus imposed by power, can possibly overgrow organised confusion.** It's there, away from all representation, that ideas without masters or owners that drive us will, at last, belong to all those who recognise themselves in them.

1. ed. – There in Normandy (northern France), there is resistance to passing 'Castor' nuclear waste trains from The Hague to be stored in Gorleben, Germany.

"Our strength won't come from our naming of the enemy, but from the effort made to enter one another's geography."
Comité invisible, To Our Friends

Mathieu Burnel, co-accused in the case of Tarnac, chattered in good company Friday, October 31, on the Tonight Or Never show, broadcast by the official spokesman of state terrorism, Channel France 2. At a time when clashes occur daily in cities for almost a week following the police killing of a protester in the fight against the Sivens dam, an early dialogue between "a representative of the radicals" and representatives of power could finally be established. **Blessed, therefore, are all those citizens who scrupulously continue to pay their mite to the public service to fulfill its sacred duty to maintain order (including dialogue between dominated and dominant) when times are grim. For without representatives, no more represented, and therefore, hello anarchy!** To stock the shelves of supermarket with cathode opinions, Mathieu Burnel used his best round of effects to rival Juliette Meadel (national secretary of industrial policy for the Socialist Party), Corinne Lepage (European delegate of MoDem [*Democratic Movement*]), and Pascal Bruckner (reactionary philosopher).

On the theme "Ecology, a new battlefield?", he once again revealed to the blind the practical consequences of the words "grow our power" or "not to name the enemy but compose with him [*sic*]" [ed. – typical *Invisible Committee* phrases]. Facing potentially uncontrollable situations, power regularly needs interlocutors, including virulent ones, as we are reminded, in another style and time, by Daniel Cohn-Bendit's apparition at ORTF [*French state radio and TV*] on May 16th 1968, after the general strike début [ed. – *Cohn-Bendit was a self-appointed 'student leader' during the May '68 revolt in France; now a member of the European Parliament*]. And

if, as remarked an old bearded man [ed. – *Karl Marx*] dear to the authoritarians [ed. – *and to the Invisible Committee*], history often serves its old meals up again, this time as farce, it is also because **power has only the buffoons it deserves.** October 2014 is obviously not in May 1968 ("*Fuck May 68, Fight now!*") said a tag on the walls of Athens in 2009), but not everyone has the lucidity to wait until after the uprising to rush to TV shows and try to take the lead. Unless the insurrection is already there, of course!

Speaking of course for all and for everyone – as "our generation", Rémi Fraisse (who would have been of "those people who try to take minimally seriously the issue of their existence") or "today's youth" – the cheap opportunists now claim to embody this rage of a thousand faces. After radio and TV appearances with his colleagues Benjamin Rosoux (Municipal Councillor of Tarnac since March 2014) or Julien Coupat (who received nine journalists for four hours in an apartment to be interviewed in November 2012), he wasn't there this time to defend himself from police accusations, but to tout his wares about an "insurrection that came" [ed. – reference to the *Invisible Committee's 'The Coming Insurrection'*].

"The idea of using, to the advantage of the revolutionary, media niches that authority itself granted them is not only illusory. It is downright dangerous. Their presence on the sets is not enough to crack the straitjacket of ideology in the heads of spectators. Confusing **expressive power and transformative power**, and believing that the sense of what we express by the word, by the pen, by the image, etc. is given a priori, without having to worry about who has the power to do so; believing that there is content that may exist in various forms without being affected; old illusions of the reified world where activities appear as things detached from society by nature. But no more than other forms of expression is the subversive

THE INTENSIFICATION OF INDEPENDENCE IN WALLMAPU

– Critical Reflections on a Solidarity Trip to Generate Electricity in one Mapuche Community in Struggle

[ed. –The Mapuche, which means “people of the earth”, are Chile’s largest indigenous group. They resisted the Spanish conquistadors for more than 300 years, and ultimately won treaties with the Chilean state recognizing their right to everything south of the Bío Bío river, roughly the southern half of Chile. But in the late 19th century, a new wave of European settlers arrived, and the treaties were broken, with Mapuche lands seized in violent takeovers. Even with the return of some lands in recent decades, the Mapuche hold a small fraction of what they inhabited until the late 19th century. Revolt continues in these quarters, often joined by anarchists. Parts of Argentina are also Mapuche, where they also struggle for land and against the oil industry and similar. We found this text very insightful as to the nature of anarchist solidarity as a practice. However sceptical one might be of ‘independence’ as we know it, here are experiences of comrades navigating those tensions on the ground in a non-ideological manner.]

Glossary

Bío Bío — a river that runs west from the Andes and empties into the Pacific at the modern day site of Concepción. For hundreds of years, this was the treaty-guaranteed northern boundary of the Mapuche territories.
che — person or people
gringo — European or North American
lamuen — sister or compañera
latifundistas — major landowners, a holdover from the colonial system of production
lof — a Mapuche village community
longko — the closest translation is chief, although not a coercive figure and only one of several vocational authorities at the community level
machi — medicine man, a spiritual leader and healer (can be man or woman)
mapu — land, earth, territory, or space
newen — force or strength, of the kind that flows from nature
peñi — brother or compañero
presismo — prisonerism, a dead-end practice of obsessively or ritualistically supporting prisoners, often in a fetishizing way
rewe — a voluntary aggrupation of lof in a contiguous local territory
Wallmapu — the Mapuche territories, or “all the lands”
weichafe — warrior
werken — literally a messenger, a community authority responsible for working on behalf of the community and maintaining connections with other communities
weupife — a person in a community responsible for maintaining and transmitting the collective historical memory
winka — literally “New Inca,” meaning white person or non-indigenous person

Introduction

In the last decade, an increasing number of Mapuche communities have carried out the “productive recovery” of their lands. Using direct action to take back their traditional territory from whomever has usurped it – usually logging companies or *latifundistas* – they take this land out of the capitalist market and put it to a traditional use for local needs, either through farming, grazing, or forest commoning. While this line of struggle has been hugely successful, inspiring other communities to begin forcefully taking back their own lands, those that have ejected the usurpers and asserted their claims to the land have often faced new problems.

After a community successfully reclaims its lands, repression usually decreases and quality of living improves, leading to a different atmosphere in which the struggle is less conflictive. **In this new, more comfortable atmosphere of struggle, certain recuperative ideas can sneak in.** One of these is the temptation to put newly acquired lands to economically productive use, out of a desire to achieve a higher standard of living along Western lines.

Closely related to the infiltration of a capitalist worldview, principally seen in the desirability of jobs and money, is the influx of evangelical Christianity. Evangelical churches are recruiting aggressively in South America, and their presence is always accompanied by a decrease in solidarity, an extension of the capitalist worldview, and a greater vulnerability to resource extraction and other development projects. Specifically in Wallmapu, evangelicals often work as snitches and they aggressively demonize the Mapuche culture. Communities in which the Christians have not yet taken root have a

clear and effective solution – burn down the churches – but communities with an already significant Christian presence have lost their togetherness after the more conflictive moments of struggle passed and Christians could begin pushing for a successful reintegration into *winka* society or simply ignoring the earthly reality of social conflict.

Another major problem stems from the lack of access to electricity and water. Most Mapuche communities steal their electricity from existing power lines. But in the depths of the forestry plantations that occupy the greater part of Mapuche lands, there are no power lines to pilfer from. What’s more, the exotic, genetically modified pine and eucalyptus planted in straight rows in a nearly endless monoculture (the World Bank labels these as “forests” in its development statistics) dry up the water table. In other words, many Mapuche communities have successfully kicked out the logging companies or big landlords, only to find that they could not have electricity and water in their newly reclaimed lands. **Taking advantage of the vulnerable situation, logging companies and NGOs used charity to discourage resistance, building infrastructure projects to reward non-conflictive communities.**

To overcome this obstacle, some Mapuche communities in struggle have begun looking for ways to set up their own water and electricity infrastructure. In the furtherance of this goal, one community invited a handful of *gringo* anarchists with the necessary skills and resources to help them set up an electricity generation system that could subsequently be recreated in other communities. This article is about that collaborative project.



The Community

We can call the community where the project took place *Lof Pañgihue*. The people of *Lof Pañgihue* lost their lands, along with the rest of the Mapuche, in the 1880s during the surprise invasion by Chile and Argentina. As with other *lof*, many *che* were killed, and others became refugees, eventually moving to the cities. A few were able to remain in the *lof* and rebuild, though their herds and the best of their lands had been stolen from them. The *rewe*, *ayllu rewe*, and *fütal mapu* with which the Mapuche had traditionally come together for ceremonies or defensive warfare had disintegrated.

The Chilean government was giving away Mapuche lands, and many *gringos* came and set up large estates on which the Mapuche had to labor as peons. The struggle in the early years was focused on survival, retaining their language and spirituality, and resisting the landlords. In the days of Allende [ed. – *Socialist president of Chile in the 1970's*] and Pinochet [ed. – *the military dictator who overthrew him with the backing of U.S.*], the Mapuche linked their struggle with the leftist anticapitalist movement in force at the time, often joining armed struggle groups like MIR and Mapu-Lautaro. Around that time, several thousand people were living in *Lof Pañgihue* on just about a hundred acres of land. A large amount of land was nationalized by the Allende government as part of a program to eventually give it to poor people (Mapuche and *winka*) on an individualized commodity basis. The Pinochet government, however, gave this land to the logging companies, and *Lof Pañgihue* was soon surrounded by pine plantations.

In the early '90s, many Mapuche embarked on an autonomous line of struggle, increasingly rejecting the leftist mode of struggle that had utilized the Mapuche as footsoldiers, or the Marxist analysis that insisted on branding them as peasants who had to join the international proletariat in order advance and liberate themselves.

The people of *Lof Pañgihue* occupied about a thousand acres that had been usurped by various *latifundistas*, using sabotage, attacks on police guardians, and constant pressure to eventually get the landlords to give up their claims. They also built houses and began farming or grazing on the recovered land. More recently, they began recovering another thousand acres currently usurped by a logging company. They have been cutting down pine for use as firewood and replanting native trees. With the return of the native trees, mountain lions, native birds, and other

forms of life have also started to come back, including medicinal plants that the *machis* gather for traditional cures.

Multiple members of *Lof Pañgihue* have been imprisoned, and others face an array of minor and serious charges, in retaliation for their struggle. The police maintain a constant level of repression against the community, and they have also destroyed houses, stolen tools, tear gassed babies, shot rubber bullets at the elderly, and beaten, harassed, and arrested their *weichafe*, *werken*, and *longko*.

In the face of the repression, a neighboring community gave up on land recovery actions, even though many in the community still did not have any land. In another controversial decision, they also accepted a charity project from the logging company that brought water to the village. But after just a couple years, the pipes broke, and the community has neither the know-how to fix them, nor the money to pay for replacement parts. **That enforced dependence is a built-in part of charity. The logging company rewarded the community for giving up its struggle, but it was not so stupid as to hand out a reward that would permit any degree of independence.** They did not involve the community in building the infrastructure, nor did they use cheap local parts that could be easily replaced.

The major obstacle faced by *Lof Pañgihue* is the lack of water. Thanks to all the pine plantations, the middle of the valley where they and the other community are located goes bone dry in the summer. No water for drinking, no water for the animals, no water for the crops. There are year-round streams at the edge of the valley, but no power lines to steal electricity from. They don't need a lot of electricity, since they are not pursuing a Western model of development, but having radio and telephone is not only a major convenience, but a way that different communities stay in contact and spread the word about repression. And, let's not romanticize, the occasional washing machine is seen as a big plus.

If they can relocate their homes and gardens to the riparian side of the valley, leaving their current site for grazing, and if they find a way to generate power, then they will have land, electricity, water, their dignity, and a way forward in the struggle, whereas the community that accepted charity and made peace with the State will only have electricity and half the land they need.

The Anarchists

We got the invitation through a Mapuche friend we had worked with on our previous trip to Wallmapu. Having been their guest, and having collaborated on land recovery, translation and diffusion about their struggle, prisoner support, and other projects, we had a personal basis of trust, solidarity, and friendship. Without that, they never would have thought of contacting us when they learned that a nearby

community needed to find a way to generate its own electricity.

The next step was finding comrades who were interested in the project and had the needed skills. We prepared for

several months making arrangements, getting resources together, and practicing techniques for the fabrication of different generation systems.

We also talked about our expectations and desires for the trip.

A clear priority for everyone involved was a total rejection of charity. **We did not see ourselves as privileged people going to help underprivileged others, nor as allies to the Mapuche struggle. The only reason we considered going was because the Mapuche were struggling for their freedom, and we as anarchists were involved in a distinct but interconnected struggle for our own freedom.** This was, in a sense, the "community of freedoms" Fredy Perlman writes about.

The purpose of the project was to deepen the relationship of solidarity between different people in struggle. We were being invited because of specific skills some of us had, but we had no illusions about being unique in that regard. Only because the Mapuche had created such a potent, insightful struggle was this project even possible. It is no coincidence that none of us had ever set up an electricity generation system before; never before had doing so held revolutionary implications. We wanted learning on this trip to go both ways, and we knew that it would. Speaking for myself, the conversations and experiences I had on the previous trip to Wallmapu, the worldview and the vision of struggle I encountered, forever altered my own practice as an anarchist.

Because it was impossible to communicate directly with the people in the community until we arrived, when planning the trip we decided we should begin with a



conversation about our goals, motivations, and expectations. We would not get distracted by the technical details, as important as they were. We were not going to set up a generation system in a village, *we were going to deepen our relationships*. The material infrastructure was an anchor that would permit the intensification of anticapitalist relations, and a point of leverage for the liberated social relations to push back against the imposed capitalist social relations.

As such, success for the project could be defined as the following:

- 1: forming relationships that would enable mutual solidarity
- 2: working together with *peñi* and *lamuen* in a collective process to install one or several models of electricity generation using local materials, with an emphasis on passing on skills, such that the model could be recreated without external aid and set up in other communities in struggle.

In other words, if we effectively set up an electricity generation system in a community and left, and the people there did not know how to make another one on their own, the project would have been a failure for us.

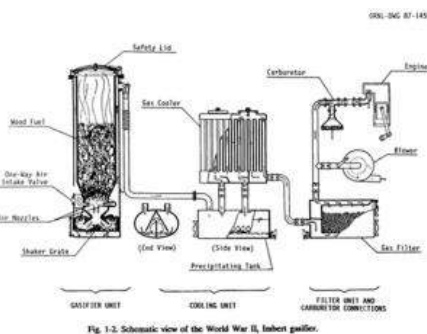


Fig. 1-2. Schematic view of the World War II, Inbert generator.

The Project

Solely on a technical level, the project was fairly complicated. The plan was to fabricate one system that would use wood chips to create power, and one or two run-of-river systems that would use pressurized water to turn a drive shaft and generate electricity.

Logistically, it became even more complicated. We needed to get a workshop space, an arc welder, a gas welder, an angle grinder, a drill, a metal lathe, a dozen hand tools, and a hundred other items that would constitute the primary materials. We had to get the materials as cheap as possible, in local stores and junkyards, so we could be sure that the *peñi* and *lamuen* could replicate everything after we had left. Then we had to build everything with Mapuche comrades so that they would learn the process. **And we had to do all this in a context of constant repression, with new arrests and raids happening every week, some of them directly impacting**

on the project. The possibility of being arrested, deported, and banned from Chile hung over us throughout the entire project, should the state decide to define what we were doing as a political activity. The Chilean constitution prohibits foreigners from participating in political activities, and the state's repression against the Mapuche specifically aims to isolate – one community from another, and all of Wallmapu from the outside world. To us, the project was not at all a “political activity,” in fact it went far deeper, and precisely for that reason we had to be extremely careful and low key.

A couple of friends took us out to *Lof Pañgihue* for the first time. The police seemed to know we were coming and controlled [ed. – I.D. checked] us near the entrance to the community, but that was hardly unexpected, given the level of surveillance they use against the Mapuche struggle.

The initial conversation between us and the *longko* and several *werken* and *lamuen* of the community went as well as we could have hoped. They explained their struggle to us, and the history of their community: the loss of their land with the Chilean invasion, further losses during the Pinochet dictatorship, the manipulations of their Marxist allies, the autonomous path of their struggle, the beginning of forceful land recoveries, the repression, the lack of water, the dependence on state electricity infrastructure.

Then we explained why we were there, that we were anarchists fighting against the State, that we respected the Mapuche struggle and wanted to create stronger connections of solidarity, that we came to help them set up a system for generating electricity but it was absolutely important for us not to create dynamics of charity. We recognized that we would be gaining a great deal from them, and learning things that would be helpful for our own struggle.

They thanked us for coming and asked us what models we were proposing to build. The only models for ecological electricity generation that they had had contact with were wind and solar, which in their region were only ever used by rich landlords.

We explained the two systems and their benefits. They were much better suited to the region, geographically and climatically, than wind or solar. They were more discreet, harder for the police to find and destroy during a raid, and cheaper to replace should they be broken. They would not hurt the land: the wood system only released as much carbon as the trees serving as fuel had taken out of the atmosphere, meaning as long as they weren't deforesting their land there would be no net pollution. The only other waste

product was charcoal which could serve as fertilizer. And the water system only required a small stream running down a slope. The stream would not have to be extensively dammed or diverted, and all the water taken from it would be returned to it. Both systems could be made with materials available in the stores and scrapyards of the nearest city.

We told them we had raised the money for all the costs of installing an electricity generation system, but to expand that system to meet the needs of the whole community, or to set one up in another community, they would have to meet those costs. However both models were designed to be highly economical and durable. The most expensive, inaccessible part was the alternator in the water system and the generator in the wood system, but the cost was not too great for a whole community to assume.

They liked the proposal, and they took us out to the site to make sure the geography and the available water supply were adequate. Then we had lunch together and talked a while about our respective struggles. In the evening we made ready to head back to the city, where other Mapuche comrades were looking for tools and a workshop. The *werken* from *Lof Pañgihue* said they would hold an assembly for the whole community to decide on our proposal, but he was sure everyone would be excited about it, as they had been talking about the need for such a project for some time. They would call us soon with confirmation and measurements from the site so we could start getting materials, and then they would arrange to send some people to the city to work alongside us and learn how to build these systems.

The day could hardly have been more fortuitous, but we encountered an early problem that would later create serious difficulties. Although we had been

preparing on our end for months, because of limited and insecure communication, preparations in Wallmapu had not been able to move forward. The community had been able to send out its request, but had not been able to get detailed information about the specific proposal in order to start preparing. The logistics on this project were far more complicated than on the project three years ago, requiring local knowledge and very specific skills, and we did not have the direct connections to begin organizing those logistics until we arrived in Wallmapu. But as they say, sometimes you need to do something before you can get the skills and resources you need to be able to do it. This was definitely the case with our project.

But initially, back in the city, things went fast. Other Mapuche comrades who were

friends of the friends we made last time helped us find the cheapest shops and the best junkyards. It helped immensely that several of them were welders, mechanics, or other technical workers, so they had all the necessary tools and knew where to get things we never could have found in a month.

Shortly, we got confirmation from the community that they wanted to work with us to realize this project, but they had to delay a bit before they could come to the city. So we waited. Days turned to a week before they told us they would not be able to come. Repression clearly played a role in this, but it also made us worry that the project would not be fully participatory, that it might slip across the line from solidarity to charity.

We had not wasted the entire week, since we continued getting to know the comrades in the city, sharing meals with them, learning the local histories of struggle, sharing stories about our own battles. But there was no way around the fact that our time there was limited, and with one week less, we were beginning to lose the chance at the nice leisurely pace we had originally envisioned.

Discussing it with everyone involved, we decided to start fabricating the systems with a couple *peñi* from the city who were already experienced welders or builders. They would then be able to show others how to make the systems.

Still, we had vastly different rhythms. The *peñi* worked full time, and sometimes on weekends too, and they also had a completely different concept of punctuality. It soon became clear that to get done in time, we would have to do a lot of the fabrication ourselves, and then on our relatively short time together focus on practicing vital techniques and explaining the overall process of fabrication.

It was far from ideal and all the delays and time alone made us entertain serious doubts. *Were we giving more importance to this project than our Mapuche comrades? Was the shared participation we were striving for a lie?* So we (this being the reduced group of *gringo* anarchists) talked it out and decided that if the promised participation was not forthcoming, we would leave the two generation systems half-finished and head for home. **It was neither an ultimatum nor a surrender, just the recognition that letting solidarity devolve into charity would be the worst possible outcome of the trip.** It was far better, from the perspective of anti-State struggle, to leave half-completed systems rather than fully completed systems, because that meant that the generation systems would only ever be more than semi-expensive

junk if the people they were intended for learned how to finish making and installing them.

Fortunately, we were able to have a heart-to-heart with a couple of the *peñi* in the city, both of whom helped set us straight. Having a heart-to-heart conversation about the possible failure of a major project is no easy matter, especially when there are huge cultural differences and the other people involved, while friends of friends, were total strangers until a few weeks earlier. **The outcome underscores the importance of good communication and solid relationships based on friendship.** The “dead time” we had spent waiting for the chance to get to work, and instead hanging out with new friends and getting to know one another, was more important in the end than the technical work on the systems, as the latter would have failed without the former, and the former – the good relationships – opens a whole world of possibilities and other projects.

The comrades we spoke with clarified for us how little detailed information had gotten through before our arrival, making it impossible to prepare in advance. They told us how enthusiastic many of them were about this project, and how such a project constituted an important and needed step forward in their struggle. They reiterated how they had limited time, and while they were fully committed, could not help out more than a few days a week, which just didn't mesh with our schedule of coming for a month and working every day. **And they clued us in that Mapuche from the countryside operated on a completely different calendar and there was absolutely no way around that. While those who lived in the city might say 8 and arrive at 10, the Mapuche from the countryside would say Monday and arrive on Wednesday.**

Being told that it was a question of different rhythms helped us understand the difficulties we had been having and feel good about the time that had gone by, since we had no desire to impose our pace. The local rhythm will always take precedence over whatever expectations of rhythm outsiders may bring with them. In short order we saw ample proof that the Mapuche comrades in no way lacked commitment, and it was in fact still their initiative.

But the fact that we so closely approached defeat, in my mind, was perfect. It forced us to draw a line, to define victory, and we decided it was better to accept failure than to declare a false victory.

Shortly thereafter, a couple *peñi* from the community arrived, helped us get a few

more materials that had so far eluded us, and took us and the equipment back to the *lof*. We worked feverishly the next few days, as we had pushed back our timeline considerably and our return dates were approaching. But the work in *Lof Pañgihue* was incredibly inspiring. We woke up every morning while the stars were still out, the *lamuen* set up a cooking fire, we discussed the day's work together, and some of us cooked or acquired materials while the rest of us labored together along the river bed, speaking in a mixture of Spanish, English, and Mapudungun, digging, building frames, reworking the turbine, and installing the electronics. When it got dark, we would stop, but the conversations about the project and about our larger struggles would go on over supper and until midnight.

At the end of it all, seeing the pulleys connected to the alternators begin to turn, that unassuming circular motion was one of the most beautiful sights.

Affinity and Difference

When working together with anarchists from another country, you typically find that you speak the same revolutionary idiom and share an overwhelming affinity which is put into sharp relief by certain cultural and historical differences, which often prove useful for self-reflection by the contrast they provide.

Working together with Mapuche who are struggling for full independence, the gulf is even wider. Our histories share few common reference points (though these are of extreme importance), our worldviews are different, and we communicate within distinct idioms of struggle. The strong points of affinity capable of bridging this difference have all the more meaning, and reflect on anarchist ideas about decentralized global struggle.

Neither the Mapuche nor their struggle are homogenous; however in general they have chosen to frame both of these as unified entities. Some Mapuche believe in political parties, in NGOs, or in Marxist dogma about economics. But one aspect of their shared framing of the struggle is a focus on the communities and the land. **This is the center of the Mapuche struggle, where communities are regaining their land, and it is precisely where leftists, NGOs, and political parties have the least hold. The former are all given a niche by the institutions of the State, whether the media, the universities, or the development funds, meaning they tend to only have a presence in the cities.**

Among the Mapuche in the communities, or those in the nearest cities who focus on aiding the rural struggle rather than leading it, there is a clear tendency to reject the

State, capitalism, Christianity, and the entire Western worldview, including the pernicious narrative of progress.

Many *peñi* and *lamuen* we met had a crystal clear view of what was going on in Bolivia and how much it represented what they wanted to avoid. The “plurinational state” of the indigenous [President] Evo Morales had recognized various indigenous peoples within Bolivian territory, putting their rights down on paper, and this had changed absolutely nothing. Legal recognition meant nothing as long as they did not have their land. **But “having their land” in the Western sense was also meaningless**, because it would only imply individualized title to a commodity that had to be put to productive use on the market in order to be maintained.



The Mapuche are the “people of the land.” In their idiom, as with many other indigenous peoples, “having land” is interchangeable with “belonging to land.” It cannot be just any land, divided into parcels. It must be the land with which they have a historical, spiritual, and economic connection. Mapuche land recovery is an assault on authority at the most fundamental level, because it destroys the very meaning of the capitalist idiom, denying the Western construction of the individual, and insisting on the inalienability of person and environment.

This is a more fleshed out, studied view of what anarchists were going for when they first took up the call, “land and freedom.” It is no coincidence that anarchists, open to the possibility of learning from other struggles rather than imposing a unifying dogma, adopted this slogan in part from indigenous people fighting in southern Mexico in the days of Zapata and Magon [ed. – see *A Flourishing Movement & a Laboratory of Repression*]. Marxists, meanwhile, declared such a posture to be

reactionary, believing that agriculture had to be industrialized and taking for granted, therefore, the alienation between person and land.

At a panel discussion about repression in the communities, the Mapuche youth organizing the event hung a banner over the speaker’s table that read: *Wallmapu liberado, sin cárcel ni estado.* “Wallmapu freed, without prison nor state.” They have living memory of a stateless, decentralized society, and with this memory as a lens, all coercive institutions, from prisons to schools, appear as building blocks of their colonization.

Given the importance of these affinities, along with the sincerity and dedication of the Mapuche I have met and the resilience of their struggle, I am inclined to pay attention to the differences. Not because I think we can or should copy the Mapuche struggle, nor out of a romanticized idea that their struggle has no failings. But it is a powerful, inspiring struggle, and the differences between their version of a stateless struggle and our own cannot help but aid us in reflecting on our own strategies.

A couple of the people we got to know in *Lof Pañgihue* were remarkably upfront with their criticisms, though they made it clear that those criticisms came from a place of respect. They praised Chilean anarchists for their consistent, disinterested solidarity with the Mapuche struggle, and noted that they were piqued when they saw that anarchists were fighting against the State, placing bombs, and going to prison; clearly these were committed enemies of the established order. However, they did not have a clear idea of what the anarchists were fighting for. Those who had spent time in the city had seen anarchist social centers and libraries, but what were the anarchists actually trying to create?

All the major leftist anticapitalist groups in earlier decades had used the Mapuche as footsoldiers and “the Mapuche conflict” as a mere source of discontent. **It became clear to many that should the Marxist guerrillas ever win, they would only impose a new Western order on Wallmapu, as had happened to every other indigenous nation when Marxists had taken over.** For them, independence specifically meant not being subordinated to a state.

The anarchists had only been around for a short time in Chile, eight years in their estimation. Because it was not clear what

the anarchists wanted, they were cautious that they might also be fighting for power. Should they ally with anarchists and win, would the anarchists accept that they did not have any say on what happened in the lands south of the *Bío Bío* river, or would they also try to impose on the Mapuche territories? Did the anarchists have an answer for the “Mapuche conflict” or would they respect Mapuche autonomy?

They did not understand why solidarity events at the anarchist social centers often turned into parties. What did the parties have to do with the struggles or prisoners they were supporting? Mapuche solidarity events often focus on letting people know why they are struggling, and the rightness of their struggle, or on holding a ceremony that would bring *newen* to their prisoners.

They also asked why so many anarchists were vegans, not seeing a connection between respecting animals and not eating them. Fortunately, most of the anarchists they had met, in addition to being vegans, held strong criticisms of civilization. I worry that, had their prior experience been with leftist anarchists who believed in the narrative of civilization and progress, they might never have reached out to us. As it was, none of us were vegan, and all of us were critical of civilization, so we got along just fine.

Then there were a couple specific grievances they had, both relating to Chilean anarchists. One was an occasional imposition of rhythms, as when a group of masked anarchists started smashing banks at a Mapuche solidarity demo in Santiago. The Mapuche were not opposed to smashing banks, quite the contrary, but they did object to what seemed like anarchists trying to speed up their struggle.

The other grievance related to a video they had seen on TV of a Santiago anarchist transporting a bomb which blew up prematurely. The surveillance video portrayed the anarchist catching on fire, and his comrade running away and leaving him there. The Mapuche would never abandon a comrade like that, they said. They attributed it to inexperience on the anarchists’ part^[1]. One question they asked us frequently was how long we had been involved in the struggle and what had made us become anarchists.

A Mapuche friend who was close enough to not have to worry about politeness chided us anarchists for not having *newen*. This will be an especially difficult difference to explain, especially since the closest analog to *newen* among North American anarchists is “woo” or “magic,” and the concepts seem completely different in practice. Suffice it to say that a comparison would be misleading. In my experience the

Mapuche are very matter-of-fact about *nuewen*. **Beyond simply rejecting a mechanical, scientific view of the world, as do many anarchists, the Mapuche live out a different worldview that is firmly anchored in the totality of their economic, spiritual, and physiological life, and therefore they do not relate to *nuewen* as a performance in an alienated spiritual sphere.**

I will point to a few other differences pertaining directly to the Mapuche vision of struggle that I think can be instructive for anarchists.

The Mapuche in struggle are far from pacifist. On the contrary, sabotage, direct action, self-defense, and the attack are assumed as an integral part of their struggle, and the topic of burning things down is a constant source of mirth and laughter, exactly as it is with anarchists (which is surprising, given that humor is often the first thing not to translate). The similarity ends there. Not every Mapuche is expected to be a *weichafe*, or warrior, and the *weichafe* are not the central participants in the struggle. The *weichafe* are not more important than the *machis*, the *werken*, or the *wepufe*. On the contrary, the *weichafe* are at the service of the community, and their activity is in a certain sense meant to complement and be guided by the activity of the rest of the community.

The Mapuche have a lot of prisoners, and they do an excellent job of supporting those prisoners. But they do not fall into *presismo*, or a detached focus on their prisoners, an activity that certain anarchist circles present as the most radical. On the contrary, their focus remains on the struggle that resulted in people falling prisoner in the first place. The assertion that a powerful struggle supports its prisoners can be taken in two directions, after all. Supporting prisoners so that the struggle will be stronger, or strengthening the struggle so that the prisoners will be supported.

Connected to the Mapuche success in supporting their prisoners and resisting heavy state repression, at least in my mind, is the long-term view that the Mapuche typically take. One can often hear the phrase, “We have been struggling for over 500 years, and we may have to struggle 500 more.”

This is interesting because the historical referent that frames this view – colonization – should be equally important to people of European descent and to anarchist theory itself. The State swelled exponentially with the early beginning of capitalism. What the Spanish state tried – and failed – to do to the Mapuche had already been done across Europe [ed. – see *Memory as a Weapon; The Witch's Child*]. The alienated worldview that anarchism has struggled with for its entire history, sometimes discarding it, sometimes reifying it, comes down to the separation of land and freedom which is the essence of colonization and all the political movements against colonization that have won *freedom* without *land* and *land* without *freedom*.

The same long view that could allow us to make historical sense of this alienation can also give us the patience to weather repression. As urgent as a particular case of repression may feel, we will not answer the broader questions of repression in our lifetimes, but we also do not face them alone: we have gone through all of this before.

A common criticism that anarchists might have of the Mapuche struggle has to do with gender. But this criticism should be put into perspective. As a friend in the project aptly put it, “*Our opinion about gender in Mapuche society doesn't matter.*” It would also be wrong to assume that our opinion is entirely external. In fact, it was a criticism shared by several Mapuche comrades, although they tended to frame it in a different way.

We were able to talk frankly about gender with several of the *lamuen* and *peñi* we were closer with. Many of them said that the machismo of Chilean society had rubbed off on the Mapuche, which was traditionally not a patriarchal society. **However, accepting that assertion requires allowing for a distinction between patriarchy and gender binary. In Western history, patriarchy and gender binary are largely inseparable.**

But are we willing to assert this as a global truth? Mapuche society is built around a traditional division of gender, but this division constitutes two autonomous spheres of activity, rather than a hierarchy. In practice, women are full participants in the Mapuche struggle. Some spaces of this struggle are mixed, others are separate, but none are made invisible or subordinate. The question that we as outsiders are unable to know is, *what happens to those Mapuche who do not accept their assigned role?*

Gender roles are gradually changing within the Mapuche struggle but, for better or for worse, the rhythm, form, and ends of that change are not necessarily recognizable to a feminist mode of struggle.

What Made This Project Possible

I hope comrades will take it as a matter of high standards and not self-congratulation if I describe this project as a great success that goes far beyond the complacency and repetition of most anarchist projects. It was not a success because those who made it happen are particularly successful anarchists; on the contrary, we probably aren't. It was a success because we were able to identify our weaknesses and find comrades with the skills necessary to shore up those gaps.

In order to encourage better anarchist projects, I wanted to identify the prerequisites for making it happen. Although the project was a joint affair with Mapuche comrades, I can only talk about our side of things.

The most vital element were relationships of friendship and solidarity. These could only form face to face, sharing moments of struggle and of daily life. This is an indictment of the superficial solidarity of communiques, or the abstract solidarity of NGOs, both of which commit to the idea of a distant struggle, and are therefore incapable of enabling a solidarity intense enough to challenge our practice. The relationships that enabled our project could only form in a healthy way if people on both ends were committed to their own

autonomous struggles, but willing to find points of contact and affinity between those struggles. **This is an indictment of ally politics.** Someone who is only an ally can never offer anything more than charity. **Those who believe they are so privileged that they do not have their own reasons for fighting have nothing to offer anyone else.** But we also had to recognize the fundamental difference of the Mapuche struggle, staying true to our beliefs but not trying to impose them.



Personal relationships created the possibility for a deeper solidarity, but technical skills were necessary for transforming that solidarity into an intensification of the struggle. Liberal arts education is a wasteland that imprisons North American anarchists. Without technical skills, we condemn ourselves to an anarchism of abstraction, incapable of rising above dependence on the structures of dominant society.

No one on this trip had the skills necessary to complete the project. But together, and with a lot of help from the *peñi* we worked with, we were able to pull it off by the skin of our teeth. This gave us the confidence and the experience to do something like this again. The rural Mapuche had the experience of building their own houses, and a couple of us had learned welding or at least a very basic familiarity with hand tools through squatting or an interest in tinkering. This might have barely been enough to construct one of the simpler water systems. But the more complex of the systems we were working on would have been entirely out of our reach had one of the comrades not had an attribute rare among anarchists these days: years of experience working in a factory. **These extensive technical skills, however, would have been inadequate without the aid of those practiced at adapting to chaotic situations and scarce materials. Working in a factory, in the end, is nothing like working in the field.** So the technical genius of the anarchist factory worker who participated on the project was completed by the practical genius of the Mapuche comrades who were used to making everything out of nothing. And finally, until all anarchists are polyglots, translation will be a necessary skill for international projects like these. However, translation alone can only enable projects centered on propaganda.

The skills we are talking about, in other words, go far beyond hobbies. We are talking about years of experience to acquire abilities that most of us lack, in order to overcome very immediate limitations to our struggle.

Finally, this project relied on a *strategic projectuality*. This means identifying our weaknesses and crafting projects that might overcome them, projecting ourselves into the breaches where our struggle might be overwhelmed in the near future. This is the opposite of doing for the sake of doing, or carrying out a predetermined and repetitive set of activities, which is how many anarchists spend their time.

The Mapuche had identified their lack of land, and they began to recover that land.

Only within the situation they had created were we able to work on such a project together and learn things that may be useful in addressing weaknesses we face on our own turf.

The original solidarity trip three years ago was an attempt to overcome an identified weakness in the international relationships of US anarchists. That trip made it possible for Mapuche comrades to suggest the present project to us, allowing our solidarity to advance to a new level. This is an indictment of those anarchists who either travel for mere personal pleasure, or those who use the contacts they cultivate as a form of social capital to hoard.

When the Line between Self-Sufficiency and Sabotage Becomes Fine

Why is it that in a context of total alienation, projects that focus on self-sufficiency or going back to the land almost invariably entail a cessation of hostilities with the State and a recuperation by Capital? The answer is probably equally related to the implications of buying the land or space for one's autonomy, and a spiritual acceptance of the *a priori* alienation between person and environment.

The Mapuche struggle involves the forceful recovery of land they uncompromisingly claim as theirs, and a way of being – by this I mean a seamlessly interlocked spirituality, economy, and social organization – that declares war on the alienation between person and environment. In this way of being, there is no dividing line between gardening, home-building, natural medicine, setting fire to logging trucks, clashing with cops, sabotaging construction equipment, or blocking highways.

Self-sufficiency signifies a contraction of one's relationships and an avoidance of the lines of social conflict. One who is self-sufficient need not form relationships with others. But the claiming of space and the inalienability of one's relationship to that space asserts an expansive web of relationships that we must defend in order to truly be alive.

In my free time in Wallmapu, I learned to harvest and thresh quinoa, to kill and gut a chicken, and to gather certain wild plants. In that particular context, these were not hobbies that might eventually be put to use in a strategy of avoidance. **Capitalism has been very deliberate in deskillling us, which is a way of robbing us of the possibility of intimately relating with the world around us. "Relating with the world around us" is not a leisure activity, as the bourgeois imagination would have us believe. It does not mean**

(only) walking barefoot and spending time with nature, or playing games and having picnics in the park. It also means feeding ourselves, healing ourselves, housing ourselves, and a hundred other activities. Doing things directly always requires relating with other living beings rather than relating with commodities. Feeding ourselves, within an offensive practice that seizes space from the State, is not at all a form of avoidance, but an intensification of our freedom and our war on the State.

The people in *Lof Pañigihue* were very clear: being able to produce their own electricity would be a powerful form of sabotage against the State. Theirs was not a case of middle class people putting solar panels on their houses, selling the surplus back to the power company, and living with a cleaner conscience. *It is a war to recover their territory*, to kick out the State, the capitalists, and the Western way of life. If they end their dependence on the State's infrastructure, not only have they intensified their practice of independence, *they have also made that state infrastructure vulnerable to attack.*

It is often said that there is no outside to capitalism. This is certainly true as far as capitalist projectuality is concerned, but the statement does not truly define our counter-activity unless we accept alienation as a physical feature of reality. Where land is being retaken as a part of ourselves, building the tools and developing the lost skills that allow us to relate directly to that land and to live as a part of it constitute a practice of independence from and against capitalism.

Our freedom is not merely a blank slate or the lack of imposition by the State. Freedom must be articulated ever more intensively, through the tools, skills, worldview, medicine, historical memory, food culture, and material anchors that constitute the becoming or the embodiment of that freedom.

1. ed. – *We feel it important to mention the words of the comrade himself (Luciano Pitronello, known as 'el Tortuga' or Turtle) on this matter, addressed to his accomplice in his very first open letter from prison: "Hermanx [ed. – little sibling], I want you to know that although I could never imagine the horrible things that have played with your mind or your heart [...] I am never going to have to reproach you for anything, because that night it was my turn, just like in past times it had been your turn, if something happens the second person flees, so we had agreed and so it had to be, because although you might many times feel like a traitor, you are not, in this war that we decided to take on there are no words to understand us. I may never see you again, if so, good luck in everything that comes." He lost a hand, but is now finally free.*

FRAGMENTS OF A 500-YEAR-OLD RESISTANCE TO COLONISATION

15.11.15, Angostura de Colbún, Chile: *The office and three corporate vehicles belonging to Matte go up in flames at a dam installation. A banner is retrieved from the site, reading 'Matte, Colbún, Endesa and All Venture Capitalists: Get Out of Mapuche Pehuenche Territory'.*

27.08.15, Santiago, Chile: *Violent clashes between racists and (pro-)indigenous in front of the presidential palace as truck drivers towing vehicles that had been torched hundreds of miles away in the south reach the capital to protest against arson attacks by the Mapuche.*

14.05.15, northern Araucanía, Chile: *Unknown persons lit up a container of logging equipment at the Mariposas Estate, destroying a tractor and excavator, before a confrontation with guards and shots being fired. Meanwhile, close to twenty armed people go into another logging area in Mininco, forcing drivers from their cabs to complete the attack with three trucks and a look-out post blazing. Leaflets concerning the Mapuche conflict accompanied the actions.*

14.10.14, Santiago, Chile: *Rioting broke out as Chile commemorated the anniversary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas on October 12th, 1492. This follows the murder of José Mauricio Quintriqueo Huaiquimil on October 1st; run over multiple times by a tractor-riding farm worker during conflict between Mapuche and landowners in the Bío Bío Region, after which two cops got shot and badly injured.*

31.12.13, Angol, Chile: *Not far from the police station, two helicopters of the Mininco Forestry Inc. (one of the handful of forestry corporations who together own almost 30% of traditional Mapuche territory, as opposed to the 7% in indigenous hands) are put to the torch after the guarding cop is subdued. The government had just ordered reinforcements from various forces in the country to the region, including drones and surveillance planes with infrared and heat scanners etc. to protect the flows of commerce; which hadn't prevented actions such as a previous attack on a helicopter, via firearms.*

23.12.13, Lake Llieu-Llieu, Chile: *One of the last holiday homes on the shores of the lake burns down. Pamphlets in reference to the Mapuche struggle are found nearby. After a long struggle, practically the entire north shore of the lake gets rid of capitalist advances.*

05.11.13, Chile: *Explosion against bank ATMs claimed by 'Weichafe Bomber Cell Alex Lemún' (Alex was another weichafe killed by police in 2002 during the eviction of a land occupation). Greetings are sent to Mapuche resister Celestino Córdova awaiting trial (see **Return Fire vol.1 pg67**), anarchist and anti-civilisation prisoners. "Yesterday it was a bank branch; but remember that the goal should be refined with practice, that the city is large and uncertain, and that the night is as black as gunpowder. [...] For a hot summer... we are still here."*

30.04.13, Collipulli, Chile: *Eleven wagons of a freight train transporting cargo for the forestry industry are derailed after extensive sabotage of the railway; gunspersons open fire on the crew and attempt to burn the cargo. The crew claim to identify the assailants as Mapuche.*

13.04.13, Bristol, U.K.: *To commemorate the death of former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, a ruling party Conservative Club is smashed up, and a police 4x4 gets set on fire by the same anarchist team. The death of Thatcher, who propped up Chilean dictator Pinochet's rule in the country where Mapuche warriors "continue to be persecuted by the same fascist-era laws", had provoked a festive riot in the days before.*

18.02.13, Puerto Montt & Osorno & Valdivia, Chile: *Barricades are erected to block roads in Valdivia and Puerto Montt, while in Osorno the electronics cabin of a cellular antenna is torched, and sabotages are visited upon SAESA. "SAESA is the company that extracts energy from the Pilmaikén River Hydro [ed. – threatening to flood the ceremonial sites of Ngen Mapu Kintuante and devastate the river ecology], and therefore is enemy of the Mapuche[...] Hydroelectric plants out of Pilmaikén!"*

30.04.12, Cochabamba, Bolivia: *Bank ATM set ablaze by the Informal Anarchist Federation / International Revolutionary Front group 'Autonomous Fraction of Rebel Thieves'. "For the attack without truce against our enemies, [we are with] the Mapuche People..."*

30.04.12, international route 215, Chile: *A masked group, some armed, arson two containers used as warehouses, a truck and a forklift at the construction site of the Rucatayo hydroelectric project, then flee in a company truck which is set on fire three kilometers from the plant. In addition, a backhoe that was used for works on the Trehuac bridge is arsoned.*

25.01.12, Forrowe Mapu, Chile: *Mapuche in resistance repel an elite police unit. "This morning police special forces entered the XAPILWE community firing teargas and rubber bullets at the houses. [The strong contingent of militarized police] stormed the houses, breaking doors, furniture and objects, with no explanation of the reason for their violent actions, simply searching everything, surely "looking for" evidence incriminating the youth in the area. THEY WERE ABLE TO SEARCH THREE HOUSES, until the community weichafe, noticing the attack, came together to deal with the repression, producing heavy clashes for about half an hour, until they succeeded in expelling the repressive forces." The people attribute the aggression to their resistance to the construction of the new La Araucanía mega-airport; an even easier port of entry for the big transnationals.*

17.04.11, Toronto, Canada: *Five banks vandalised and 'redecorated' "as an act of Anarchist solidarity with the Mapuche struggle for land, autonomy and freedom..."*

01.10.10, Santiago, Chile: *Molotovs against a military police office, with a greeting to the Mapuche prisoners and others showing solidarity "in England, Spain, Mexico, Greece, Argentina, Canada, and elsewhere..."*

28.09.10, Bristol, U.K.: *Natwest bank attacked with bricks and paint-bombs, 'Destroy All Prisons' left on the facade, "in solidarity with the*

35 mapuche prisoners" (who were then on hunger strike). Natwest is owned by the Royal Bank of Scotland, "which is complicit in state repression in Chile, the pillaging of the earth, and the financing of the prison machine."

18.09.10, Santiago, Chile: *'Commando Alex Lemún' blow up a transformer and high voltage electrical line (causing cuts in the area), to intervene more than sixty days into the hunger strike by Mapuche prisoners.*

17.09.10, Ercilla, Chile: *Twenty masked individuals storm a landowner's estate and shoot up a sentry box occupied by police special forces and their bus, but without injury to their personnel. After a three-hour skirmish, the group (who police identify as Mapuche from the community of Temucuicui) retreat. No arrests.*

14.09.10, Concepción, Chile: *Thirty supporters of the Mapuche hunger strikers attack their prison guards while two are being transferred to the hospital. Unrest spread to the city University.*

13.06.10, Madrid, Spain: *Windows smashed out of a Benetton store, "Here the Mapuche people are exploited" left on the scene. (Benetton corporation is taking over large portions of Patagonia, the southern portion of Chile and Argentina, driving Mapuche off their land to raise sheep for wool, as well as granting mining rights, involvement in building roads, airports, railways, etc.) "We live in a society whose ideology is progress and development; whoever does not follow these doctrines is stopped, exploited, expelled or killed. This is what happens to the inhabitants of the Mapuche territory and many other rebels against this barbarism called civilisation, who for years, with sweat and blood, clash with the huge multinationals that have colonised their land, poisoning the rivers, evicting them, murdering them and what is worse, destroying their way of life, so that we of the so-called best of all possible worlds can continue to maintain "wellbeing". This world where the everyday actions of our lives have become disgustingly artificial, where the new gods to be worshiped are science, technology and money, in which social control is absolute, where minds, bodies, the land and sea are destroyed, where there is no place for naturalness, tranquility, clean air, cheerfulness, modesty, living with nothing... this world deserves to be destroyed."*

22.02.10, Lugo, Spain: *Several masked people enter the Benetton store in the city centre, under cover of a daytime carnival festivity. They break windows and the alarm system with clubs, damage computers, and throw the merchandise to the ground, and toss red paint around. The Mapudungun (Mapuche language) phrase 'marichiwew' ('we will win a hundred times over') is left painted over the wreckage. A similar action had occurred in nearby Gijón.*

03.02.10, Neuquen, Argentina: *The second bombing by 'International Insurreccionalist Rebel*

Brigade of Jacinto Aráuz' (allied with Mapuche fighters in the south of the country) on an Argentinian airline in seven months blasts the LAN group's travel agency. Police had already cleared the area after a warning call.



'WHERE STRUGGLE IS COMMODITY, ALLYSHIP IS CURRENCY'

[ed. – This is excerpted from 'Accomplices Not Allies', published by Indigenous Action Media. The document came out of Arizona, the currently American side of the Mexican border (since US expansion in 1854). On top of a hi-tech homicidal border regime and armed right-wing paramilitary patrols, those lands are the site of intense militarisation of indigenous lands, people of which are heavily surveilled (often required to present passports while simply crossing their homeland); a situation exacerbated by Leftists within the migrant rights campaigns who turn a blind eye when similar measures would fall within "comprehensive immigration reform" (while still coveting the liberal social capital of "ally to the oppressed"; including, nauseatingly, those same indigenous). Meanwhile native land defenders maintain their dignity and resoluteness, and oppose encroachments like coal mines and motorways, as well as authoring such texts as this (which the author described as "provocation is intended to intervene in some of the current tensions around solidarity/support work as the current trajectories are counter-liberatory from my perspective"). Many stand alongside anarchist accomplices in projects such as the 2013 'A Fire at the Mountain' anti-colonial and anarchist gathering, and have manifested in the DOA (Dineh, O'odham, Anarchist) bloc on the streets – stated as seeking to challenge "both the systems of control that seek to occupy and split our lands in two as well as the organized commodification of every day life that reduces the definition of freedom to what can be produced and sold where and to whom, and compels our social relations to bend to the very same pathetic formula of production and consumption", and have established the Táala Hooghan infoshop in Flagstaff, while acts of anti-authoritarian/anti-colonial sabotage in the night are not unknown. However little we otherwise know about their ways and objectives, clearly the text makes important further notes on solidarity in struggle.]

While the exploitation of solidarity and support is nothing new, the commodification and exploitation of allyship is a growing trend in the activism industry.

Anyone who concerns themselves with anti-oppression struggles and collective liberation has at some point either participated in workshops, read 'zines, or been parts of deep discussions on how to be a "good" ally. You can now pay hundreds of dollars to go to esoteric institutes for an allyship certificate in anti-oppression. You can go through workshops and receive an allyship badge. **In order to commodify struggle it must first be objectified.** This is exhibited in how "issues" are "framed" & "branded." Where struggle is commodity, allyship is currency. Ally has also become an identity, disembodied from any real mutual understanding of support. The

term ally has been rendered ineffective and meaningless.

Accomplices not allies.

ac-com-lice

noun: accomplice; plural noun:

accomplices

a person who helps another commit a crime.

There exists a fiercely unrelenting desire to achieve total liberation, with the land and, together. At some point there is a "we", and we most likely will have to work together. This means, at the least, formulating mutual understandings that are not entirely antagonistic, otherwise we may find ourselves, our desires, and our struggles, to be incompatible. There are certain understandings that may not be negotiable. There are contradictions that we must come to terms with and certainly we will do this on our own terms. But we need to know who has our backs, or more appropriately: who is with us, at our sides?

The risks of an ally who provides support or solidarity (usually on a temporary basis) in a fight are much different than that of an accomplice. When we fight back or forward, together, becoming complicit in a struggle towards liberation, we are accomplices. [...] The nonprofit establishment or non-profit industrial complex (NPIC) also seeks out "sexy" or "fundable" issues to co-opt and exploit as these are ripe for the grant funding that they covet. Too often, Indigenous liberation struggles for life and land, by nature, directly confront the entire framework to which this colonial & capitalist society is based on. This is threatening to potential capitalist funders so some groups are forced to compromise radical or liberatory work for funding, others become alienated and further invisibilized or subordinated to tokenism. Co-opters most often show up to the fight when the battle has already escalated and it's a little too late.

These entities almost always propose trainings, workshops, action camps, and offer other specialized expertise in acts of patronization. These folks are generally paid huge salaries for their "professional" activism, get over-inflated grants for logistics and "organizational capacity building", and struggles may become further exploited as "poster struggles" for their funders. Additionally, these skills most likely already exist within the communities or they are tendencies that need only be provoked into action.

These aren't just dynamics practiced by large so-called non-governmental organizations (NGOs), individuals are adept at this self-serving tactic as well. Co-optation also functions as a form of liberalism. Allyship can perpetuate a neutralizing dynamic by co-opting original liberatory intent into a reformist agenda. Certain folks in the struggles (usually movement "personalities") who don't upset the ally establishment status quo can be rewarded with inclusion in the ally industry. [...] The "navigating" ally is someone who is familiar or skilled in jargon and maneuvers through spaces or struggles yet doesn't have meaningful dialogue (by avoiding debates or remaining silent) or take meaningful action beyond their personal comfort zones (this exists with entire organizations too). They uphold their power and, by extension, the dominant power structures by not directly attacking them.

"Ally" here is more clearly defined as the act of making personal projects out of other folk's oppression. These are lifestyle allies who act like passively participating or simply using the right terminology is support. When shit goes down they are the first to bail. They don't stick around to take responsibility for their behavior. When confronted they often blame others and attempt to dismiss or delegitimize concerns.

Accomplices aren't afraid to engage in uncomfortable/unsettling/challenging debates or discussions. [...] You wouldn't find an accomplice resigning their agency, or capabilities as an act of "support." They would find creative ways to weaponize their privilege (or more clearly, their rewards of being part of an oppressor class) as an expression of social war. [...] **Accomplices aren't motivated by personal guilt or shame, they may have their own agenda but they are explicit.**

Accomplices are realized through mutual consent and build trust. They don't just have our backs, they are at our side, or in their own spaces confronting and unsettling colonialism. *As accomplices we are compelled to become accountable and responsible to each other, that is the nature of trust.*

Don't wait around for anyone to proclaim you to be an accomplice, you certainly cannot proclaim it yourself. You just are or you are not. The lines of oppression are already drawn. Direct action is really the best and may be the only way to learn what it is to be an accomplice. We're in a fight, so be ready for confrontation and consequence.

sources if not already cited: (anonymous if unlisted)

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Articles referenced by title throughout this chapter in *[square brackets]* which do not appear in the previous pages appear in the other chapters of this volume.

PDFs of this chapter, other chapters of the same volume or previous volumes of Return Fire and related publications:
[actforfree.nostate.net
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Anarchist Library (multi-lingual, open-
source catalogue of print-ready texts)
theanarchistlibrary.org

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sites.google.com/site/anarchyinitaly

Anarchy, Secession, Subsistence
(rejoining rebellion with the land)
anarchysecessionsubsistence.blogspot.ca

Anarchy Radio (streaming and
downloadable hour of global news and
anti-civilisation analysis, every Tuesday)
johnzerzan.net/radio

Antidéveloppement (Canada, bi-lingual)
antidev.wordpress.com

Attaque (France, multi-lingual)
attaque.noblogs.org

Chronik (Germany, multi-lingual)
chronik.blackblogs.org

Contra Info (global, multi-lingual)
contrainfo.espiv.net

Disaccords (South Pacific)
disaccords.wordpress.com

Hors Service (Belgium & global, multi-
lingual) journalhorservice.blogspot.co.uk

Machorka (global, multi-lingual)
machorka.espivblogs.net

Non-Fides (France & global, multi-
lingual) non-fides.fr

Oplopanax Publishing (cache of
handsome and engaging printable zines)
oplopanaxpublishing.wordpress.com

Rabble (U.K. & global) rabble.org.uk

Resonance Audio Distro (various
readings as MP3s plus source files)
resonanceaudiodistro.wordpress.com

Uncivilized Animals (writings on
ecology, technology and society from an
anti-industrial perspective)
uncivilizedanimals.wordpress.com

Untorelli Press (an archive and
publisher of radical pamphlets against
capitalism, patriarchy, the state and
civilisation) untorellipress.noblogs.org



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