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On The Question Of Technology

An inside on green anarchism and its relation with
the rest Greek anarchist movements

Conspiracy of Cells of Fire

17/11/2013

(The following answer was given by Christos Tsakalos of the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire, on air, during an interview by the self-organized radio of 105FM. The question was what does the CCF think of technology)

I think this is one of the most important questions, as in Greece, the part of anarchist criticism of technology, unfortunately, is a part that is quite unrecognized and isolated, while on the contrary, technology is all around us. And technology is neither marginalized nor isolated. Summarizing the core of my answer, I could tell you that, in my opinion, every science is in the service of the authority. Technology turns our lives, what we live in today, what we feel, into a mechanical process, into statistics. In a laboratory experiment, one could say. If one looks around at the consequences of the tech-industrial complex, they see that it alienates us from the natural environment, from human contact, from emotion.

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We live in concrete cages that we call apartments. We walk among strangers. Highways are the veins of a system where people, goods and money circulate together, all mixed up. All those in the name of profit. We have mass entertainment with technological substitutes. We communicate via keyboards. We fall in love through screens. We desire through showcases. The funny thing is that man once thought that with the technological revolution they would be liberated. But, in fact, their technological revolution put on new velvet shackles, technological shackles. Our life itself, if you notice, is poisoned on a daily basis by plastic food, by flue gas, by radioactivity, by laboratory diseases, by drugs. At the same time, the natural wealth, the forests are being destroyed, burnt, cut down to either become housing estates, highways or department stores. Our very existence, our individuality, since we are talking about technology, is being violated by the technopolice. Our movements are recorded through the electronic camera eyes. Our habits, our desires, our tastes, our hobbies, are stored on hard drives, on credit cards, on the internet, in a huge data warehouse that we find ourselves. These are the achievements of technology. Animals are being captured and killed, either in the context of laboratory experiments on technological development or, even worse, on human aesthetic choices. That is, they are transformed into bags, shoes and clothes. All this shows that the so-called quality – because the defenders of technology and the industrial complex emphasize that all this has offered the quality of life – must now crush any other form of life, in the name of the new man-god. That is, anything that happens today is a catastrophic human endeavor against anything that is not human. Against the whole planet earth.

To answer to a possible response that arises when such conversations are opened, about the good and bad use of technology, when people claim that technology is a means and the user is the one who will either make good use or misuse it and we should not be totally against technological development,

no I don't think technology is a means. Technology is a concept. And, in particular, it is an anthropocentric view of life, a view that places man at the center of the universe, giving them the right to dominate nature and animals for their own benefit. Therefore I can't isolate the issue of technology and bring it down to a level of use. We need to understand that the very core of technological thought has to do with an anthropocentric perception of the universe. Thus, we end up, at least for me, in one of the most extreme forms of fascism and totalitarianism. The tech-industrial complex is literally turning life into a repetitive predetermined process. Nothing more, nothing less.

We too, dear folks, if we look at it differently, become numbered guinea pigs. That is, because we now have the knowledge and the information, if one sits down and thinks, with the technological means that exist, one will realize that humans themselves have finally become a commodity of the westerners. That is, we have made a complete mutation through technology. Here a question arises, one could say that "nicely, and with all that you say, what do you suggest, a return to nature, that is, a return to primitiveness?". I live very far from such perceptions. By no means do I support primitivism. Nor do I have the illusion that nature is compassionate or morally good or morally bad, nature cannot be defined in moral terms, again anthropocentric. Nature is nature, it is something very simple. What we are saying, then, without idealizing nature, is that we want to discover a new way of life and a new form of human connection with the natural environment and animals. A completely different way of connecting – which can sometimes be harmonious and sometimes even conflicting. But it will certainly be freedom. That is the difference.

Now, in Greece – that's why I made the introduction and said that unfortunately the issue of criticism of the fascist technocratic complex is quite misunderstood and unrecognized by the Greek anarchist movement – we see, unfortunately, that more and more often, this critique is considered somewhat suis

generis, to put it simply. The funny thing is that those who speak of the latter are the ones who live with the fantasy of the social revolution and the struggling people. Now, who's the suis generis and who's not is another story. So the bet that comes with all this is to understand that those of us who are interested in attacking the nature-exploiting system must also attack the human-exploiting system. We need to understand that these are inseparable things. This attack is not done in words, it is done in deeds. A vegetarian diet or a sensitive animal-friendly consciousness is not enough to tear down and destroy this world. There is a need for a concrete attack; the companies and industries that plunder nature need to be targeted with bombs, dynamite, fire, and of course the people who run these companies should also be hit.

Alfredo and Nicola, who I mentioned earlier, the two Italian comrades, realizing the complex of techno-industrial fascism, chose to shoot the executive of a large nuclear company in the leg. In general, outside of Greece, there is a very rich legacy of the militant extremist econarchism, so to speak. There is, first of all, the legacy of ALF and ELF. In the US, imagine that ALF and ELF, are called "Green Scare" or "Green Terror" by the American secret services and are considered to be the second greater threat internal enemy, after Islamic terrorism. There have been many blows against nature and animal exploiting companies, and the most pleasant thing we've seen lately is a connection between a core of the ELF and the FAI, especially in countries like Russia. The militant eco-anarchist current is very active there, and it leads to corresponding attacks on continuity. We believe that this is an ideal bet for Greece as well.