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A Reading of Fifty Shades on Bonanno
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ness. In fact, we affirm it. That's what we and other anarchists do in our collectives, unions, social centers, or neighborhood movements. What we *do* denounce is the attempt to obscure this and criminalize those who are honest about it.

Postscript

I am an anarchist and I am also working class. I didn't become an anarchist during a fierce class struggle—I was born into a time when such conflict was subdued. I became an anarchist because my mother passed on humanist and revolutionary values, her profound sense of solidarity. And she did that *from outside* of me, after I was born.

From outside came music loaded with messages and class consciousness—bands like *Sin Dios*, *Hechos Contra el Decoro*, *Última Esperanza*, *Habeas Corpus*… There were books written by anarchist militants and revolutionaries that filled me with reason, strength, and hope. They were on a shelf, outside of me.

Out on the street, I found others like me. They were working class and politicized. They taught me a lot, recommended books, movies, more music. They hosted forums, actively spread their ideals… They proposed things to the world, outside of themselves.

From outside—or waiting for me in spaces or in time—came my awakening, my commitment. Maybe it would've happened during a revolution, but that wasn't my fate. I thank all those who inspired me, influenced me, and pushed me toward the political positions I hold today. They were a vanguard to me. Among them were Amorós and Carmona. Though we disagree on many things, I'm grateful for their work.

periods of the FAI are dismissed as Bolshevik degenerations or historical mistakes.

It still baffles us how anarchists who publish anarchist ideas in anarchist publishing houses for anarchists and social movements—who propose anticipatory action—can perform rhetorical somersaults to pretend they're just another indistinct part of the masses. In other words, political agents who make strategic proposals end by denying that they are political agents (making strategic proposals), and criticize others for doing the same by labeling them authoritarian or vanguardist.

This is where the spatial metaphor so common among autonomists shines. Those who advocate liberating spaces, inhabiting capitalism's margins, building bubbles or hollowing out the system, base their whole rhetoric on spatial metaphors. Anticipation, for them, appears as a functional subterfuge. To break it down: someone, clearly distinct from others, publishes under their own name and tells us what anarchists should do—liberate spaces and prepare for class conflict. He denies what's obvious: there are three distinct subjects here—author, the anarchist advance-guard who prepares spaces, and the masses to be welcomed into those spaces. He insists he's not a vanguard, not outside the masses, even though he clearly performs a different task. He also claims the anarchists preparing for future class struggle aren't a different subject either. This sleight of hand—which keeps everyone "pure"—rests on two tricks: replacing the word *outside* with *before* and accusing anyone who refuses this trick of being authoritarian and vanguardist.

By now, it's well known that identity—any identity—is built through opposition and contrast with the other. The question is: how artificial is this construction of autonomist anarchism as a non-vanguardist current? We clearly do *not* denounce the obvious difference between a politicized anarchist and someone who isn't. We do not oppose militants intervening in social reality to help develop mass conscious-

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promoted socialist ideas, supported self-organized projects, and proposed strategies within mass movements—but it's also at odds with what Amorós himself states just a paragraph later and with his own political production.

What exactly is Amorós proposing? What does he claim is the right task? He says: "It must consist in organizing the theater of social war…," which "means liberating spaces for the development of consciousness among the masses, in other words, for the emergence of autonomous struggles." Essentially, he's proposing the same thing that Pablo Carmona suggests for the libertarian movement: anticipation.

In other words, according to Amorós, anarchists' task is to build spaces open to future class struggles—not yet present but foreseeable. This is a serious proposal. He assigns libertarians a role with two potential benefits under his logic: preparing the battlefield and doing so without being a separate entity from the working class. But how does this trick work—where some act ahead of the masses without being distinct from them? It doesn't. It's a linguistic sleight of hand, a poetic dodge.

The Debate on "Outside and Before"

Anarchism, as an anti-authoritarian socialist conception, has always been alert to co-optation, diversion, and instrumentalization of social and workers' struggles. The authoritarian deviations of "real socialism," which became anti-revolutionary machines, make this tension understandable and necessary. The problem arises when a whole doctrine is built to obscure one's own activity as a false subterfuge—hyperbolizing anti-authoritarianism. This leads not just to erasing anarchism as a political actor, but also to omitting historical proposals that don't align with this exaggerated stance. The Democratic Alliance of Bakunin, Malatesta's anarchist party, the Platform of Russian exiles, or even certain

In Amorós's own words:

> "We say that revolution in capitalist societies is carried out by the oppressed masses when they become aware of their antagonism with the ruling class and want to break free from their domination—not by formal or informal minorities. But the organized force of domination, the State, is stronger than the raw forces of the masses; thus, the first condition for revolutionary victory is the organization of the masses, and this organization will naturally arise from social struggles—not artificially from activist voluntarism or propaganda.
>
> If the time is not ripe, it's because there are no conscious mass movements. In the meantime, one does what one can, but the absence of massive struggles can never be compensated for by a few activist groups or by constructing organizations from the outside. A strategic defense must consist in organizing the theater of social war to fight the class enemy. That means liberating spaces for the development of mass consciousness—that is, for the emergence of autonomous struggles." *[Bold emphasis ours]*

This paragraph is loaded—so let's start unpacking. For Amorós, class consciousness, or consciousness-for-itself, which turns workers into a revolutionary subject, emerges from class conflict and self-organization. So far, we agree. What surprises us is that, despite his historical knowledge of anarchist struggles, he writes that "this organization will naturally arise from social struggles—not from activist voluntarism or propaganda." Not only is this inconsistent with the historic actions of revolutionaries—who have always

In March of this year, Miquel Amorós published *Reading Fifty Shades of Bonanno* with Calumnia—a work of research and critique on the thought of the Italian author who passed away just six months ago. While reading it, we couldn't help but repeatedly think about two things: first, the striking similarity between Amorós's dismantling of the anarcho-insurrectionalist tendency and Bonanno's ideas, and a scene from the infamous movie *Billy Madison* starring Adam Sandler. From that so-called comedy, a sequence became popular in which the protagonist dominates a group of kids in dodgeball, taking advantage of the physical disparity between an adult and elementary school children. This essentially defines the bulk of the text: Amorós throws punches without mercy at a proposal that lacks analysis, strategy, and self-critique.

From this spectacle of "abuse" arises the second question: why now? Insurrectionalism within the libertarian praxis of our immediate environment is perhaps at its most famished state, both practically and theoretically. Even so, Amorós delivers a thorough study and critique while bypassing more urgent debates such as: the recomposition of the far left after the neo-reformist cycle that restored the status quo questioned post-2008 crisis; the importance and form of strategic discussions; the need to produce critical thought in preparation for the coming social and climate crisis; and critical analyses of the hegemonic positions in the libertarian movement over the past decades… All essential to drawing conclusions that could shape the alternatives we build.

This essay arrives at least twenty years too late, and frankly, we don't see a compelling reason for its timing.

Without delving further into this dynamic that so surprises us, in this article we want to open a debate with Miquel Amorós's proposal, which can be summarized in no more than three of the 87 pages. The essay we're working on is richly documented, reflecting an admirable political commitment. We stress that we're not reducing his entire argument to a

few paragraphs to dismiss his ideas, but because we see them as highly representative of the hegemonic current within the libertarian movement of the past 30 years: libertarian autonomism. We thus hope for a calm yet intense debate, an honest dialogue free from absurd reductions or gatekeeping.

To be clear from the start: our analysis is not against insurrectionalism. In fact, we share many of Amorós's critiques, and would go even further in emphasizing its anti-intellectual tendencies and, above all, its complete irresponsibility—not just regarding repression following their actions, but in the demobilization of struggle due to the inevitable defeats of implementing a reckless and childish non-strategy. This is a debate with Autonomist proposals, consistent with the one we published in dialogue with Pablo Carmona's strategic line (zonaestrategia.net), which has become hegemonic to the point of being rendered invisible and deeply embedded in anarchist practice, often referred to as Common Sense or Tradition, in the worst sense of those words.

What do we mean when we say that the autonomist strategy is hegemonic in the libertarian movement and functions as common sense?

In his book *Envisioning Real Utopias*, Erik Olin Wright lays out three clearly differentiated strategies that emerged from classical socialist movements and persist today: Social Democracy, which has evolved into a reformist path fully integrated into the system; the rupturist or revolutionary path associated with various forms of Marxism that see capitalism as irreformable and advocate its destruction to build an alternative; and lastly, the Interstitial path, commonly known as the autonomist strategy. This last proposal emphasizes building alternative spaces on the margins of capitalism, believing their accumulation will eventually replace the dominant system. Needless to say, all three have evolved and are not homogeneous within themselves.

Wright's link between autonomism and anarchism is painful to us but contains some truth. While anarchism has historically produced radically revolutionary ideas—Bakunin being its main figure—the autonomist current has always been present within it. From Landauer to Bookchin, from grassroots libertarian autonomism to collapse-based proposals, from the legacy of 20th-century anarcho-syndicalism to many insurrectionalist ideas, the notion that liberated spaces can accumulate and serve as the foundation for an alternative to capitalism is nearly a constant.

This proposal has often been based on an idealization of pre-capitalist periods and an exoticization of other societies. Perhaps when Landauer, at the beginning of the last century, spoke of building socialism outside capitalism's grasp, such spaces existed. Later proposals—from anarcho-syndicalist institution-building to Bookchin's libertarian municipalism—have shown that such bubbles are only feasible during exceptional historical moments (like armed conflicts in Kurdistan, Zapatista Mexico, or the Spanish Revolution). They've also revealed their fragility and difficulty in expanding their influence or building federations to broaden impact.

Not everyone will accept this critique of autonomism's limits, but most will do so from "common sense." As we've argued elsewhere, those born after the 1980s haven't adopted autonomy through deep reflection or training, but as a tradition. Anarchists squat spaces and thereby "liberate" them, get evicted and squat again. Meanwhile, they set up small community centers or cooperatives to make a living without a boss. This is done not out of strategic analysis, but because "it's what can and should be done"—the same lack of strategy that Amorós criticizes in Bonanno. It becomes a tautology, a closed argument, or even an aphorism. This practice doesn't emerge from rigorous analysis, lacks self-critique, and often degenerates into reformist tendencies like municipalism or seeking grants in the name of the alternative economy.