The Anarchist Temperament in the Maelstrom of History

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In anarchism, beyond the two different philosophical concepts, the communistic and the individualistic, that divide it in the theoretical sphere, there are two spiritual and physical instincts—indeed, of life practically and materially experienced—which serve to distinguish two temperaments that are wholly common property to both theoretical and philosophical tendencies. Although both children of the same social suffering, we have two different instincts that give us two different forms of suffering, of hedonistic origin.

There are those (communists and individualists) who suffer—as Nietzsche would say—through an over-abundance of life and those who suffer from the impoverishment of life. Those communist and individualist lovers of quiet and peace, of silence and solitude, are among the latter. Those communists and individualists who feel their inner self as a mighty dionysian quiver overflowing with power, and life as heroic manifestation of force and will. They are the ones who have the instinctive and irresistible need to throw the flame of their "I" against the walls of the outer world to demolish and live the tragedy. We are among these!

We are in anarchism—first of all—from original instinct and passionate feeling. Our ideas are nothing other than bold and brilliant creatures born from the primitive monistic embrace with negating theoretical reason.

Today the history of humanity has reached one of its many maelstroms—perhaps the grandest—where the human spirit is called to radically renew itself on the magnificently horrendous ruins of fire and blood, catastrophe and destruction, or cravenly crystallize itself in the decrepit and corpse-like concept of life that out-dated bourgeois society has dictated and imposed on us.

If a strong handful of rebels, higher people and heroes would be able to leap beyond the two currents of anarchism, suffering from vital over-abundance, to rally around the black flag of revolt, setting fire to the hearts of all the European nations, the old world would collapse, because around Heroes everything must fatefully transform into tragedy; and only in tragedy are born the renewing spirits that are able to hear, more nobly and highly, the festive song of their free life.

If this handful of daredevils will not leap out of the shadow to throw the black glove of defiance and revolt into the foul face of bourgeois society, the reptiles of political-hack demagoguery and

all the speculating acrobats and hypocrites of human sorrow will remain the masters of the field, and over the tragic sun that seeks to enlighten the dark maelstrom of the sombre history that is passing, they will throw the obscene mask of white lead carried over the free horizon of human thought by that debauched clown named "Marx," and everything will end in a vile and grotesque comedy before which every anarchist should commit suicide out of dignity and shame.

For that portion of Italian anarchists who suffer from vital over-abundance; for that portion of Italian anarchists—individualist and communist—for whom battle, danger and tragedy are among their spiritual and material needs, the time has come!

The hour of imposing themselves and dominating. The true freedom and right of the human being is only in his capacity to WILL!

Right and freedom are Force!

What for others is painful sacrifice must be for us a gift and a joyous holocaust.

We need to throw ourselves on the wave of past time, tread the rounded tops of the centuries, manfully go back in history in order to drink at the virgin springs from which the blood of the first, free human sacrifices still gushes, hot and smoking.

We need to go back, barefoot and naked, among the living stones of the mythical, legendary forest and nourish ourselves, like our distant ancestors, on lion's marrow and on wild nature.

Only in this way—like Maria Vesta—will we be able to say to the first Hero who stoically and calmly knew how to offer his flesh to the red flames of a grim, crackling hostile blaze: Now we too, like you, can sing under torture.

The Life that society offers us is not a full, free and joyful life. It is a crushed, mutilated, humiliated life.

We must refuse it.

If we don't have the strength and ability to violently snatch from its hands the high and vigorous life that we so powerfully feel, let's throw this specter on the tragic altar of sacrifice and final renunciation.

At least we will be able to put a heroic crown of beauty on the bloody face of the art that enlightens and creates.

Better to rise on the flames of a fire and fall with broken skull under the volley of an unconscious firing squad than to accept this specter of ironic life, which is nothing more than a sinister parody of life.

Enough, oh friends, of cowardice. Enough, oh comrades, of the ingenuous illusion of the "generous act of the masses."

The mass is straw, is straw that socialism has put to rot in the stable of the bourgeoisie.

Errico Malatesta, Pasquale Binazzi, Dante Carnesecchi and thousands of others unknown who rot in those miasmal and deadly madhouses, which are the prisons of the Savoy monarchy and for which the small medal holders of the P.S.I. (Italian Socialist Party) have demanded at the parliamentary pigsty for the means to build others more vast, must for us be so many spectral regrets, walking in fearsome forms, among the uncertain twists and turns of our doubtful minds; they must be so many hot bursts of blood that break out from our hearts to shoot over the lines of our face and cover it with bleak shame.

I know, we know, that a hundred HUMAN BEINGS—deserving of this name—would be able to do what five hundred thousand unconscious "organized" ones are not and will never be capable of doing. Don't you see, oh friends, the shade of Bruno Filippi who sneers and watches us?

So are there no longer ONE HUNDRED ANARCHISTS in Italy deserving of this name? Are there no longer a hundred "I's" capable of walking with flaming feet over the whirling peaks of our ideas? Errico Malatesta and all the thousands of others who've fallen into the hands of the enemy at the first signs of this social storm, wait with noble and feverish eagerness the lightning that brings down the collapsing edifice, that illuminates history, that raises the values of life, that light the path of humanity…

But the brilliant and fateful lightning cannot break out from the heart of the masses.

The masses that seemed to be fervent admirers of Malatesta are cowardly and powerless.

The government and the bourgeoisie know it. They know and they sneer.

They know: "The P.S.I. is with us. It is the indispensable pawn for the baleful outcome of our wicked game. It is the Abracadabra that takes form in the Abracas and Abra voice of our magical, millenarian sorcery. The cowardly masses are its slaves and Errico Malatesta is old and sick. We will make him die in the hidden darkness of a damp cell, and later we will throw his corpse in the faces of his anarchist comrades…"

Yes, this is what the government and the bourgeoisie think in the hidden chambers of their idiotic and malicious minds. Do we want to bear this vile challenge with indifference? Do we want to bear this bloody and brutal insult in silence? Are we such cowards?

I hope that these three huge question marks of mine, so solemn and terrifying, will find in the ranks of anarchism a virile response that says: NO! With a terrible thundering still more terrible…

It is from the fiery summits of the luminous peaks that the liberating lightning must break forth.

The strong OLD MAN waits. Heroic comrades: TO US!

The corpse of an old agitator always costs more than the lives of a thousand malicious idiots.

Brothers and sisters, remember this.

Let's act so that the deepest of all human shame does not fall on us.

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