A Samhain Memorial

Anti-Capitalist Meetup: Samhain 2015 Anarchist/Socialist Open Memorial Thread

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November 1, 2015

SAMHAIN. Pronounced "sow-ween" or "sow-ain", the term is the old Gaelic name for this time of year. Today it is better known as Hallowe'en, All Hallows Day, All Saints' Day, and All Souls' Day, and covers the time between October 31 to November 2 inclusive.

It is a lot more than going from door to door begging for candy, although this enjoyable modern ritual also has its place, binding us to our ancestors' other children (especially those who still ***are*** children!).

But it goes much further than that.

This week, I thought I would simply open a Samhain Open Memorial Thread amongst the Anti-Capitalist Meetup community. On this day, when the ancient, pre-Christian Lore of the Celtic peoples of Western Europe teaches that the Veil between the living and our dead Ancestors is thinnest, it is appropriate to bring those Ancestors to remembrance by name that our memories of them and our debts ***to*** them may live on. Let us remember them, love them, revere them, and give them our gratitude in Solidarity for what their lives have given us.

I thank ZhenRen for his contributions to our Diary of two weeks ago, which I have taken the liberty of adapting to this week's Diary by making a very small set of textual changes to expand the poetry to cover all of our Ancestors instead of just one.

With that, let us begin……..

From this Comment by ZhenRen, I open our Memorial this evening:

Come, you ancestors!
Brothers, sisters, comrades, come!
Come you all, for the Veil is thinnest
On this very night of nights!
Come ye, that we may love you again
That we may bond with you again
That we may share Solidarity with you again
For:
"Our heart is with you!
Our anger is fuelled by your strength.
We are all here.
We are all here.
It's just your bodies which will stay where they are.
You will be with us forever.
You will be our light and illumination forever."

— words after "For:" adapted from Emel's eulogy of Ali Kitapci

I offer the text from Istanbul Indymedia in Ali Kitapci's memory as a lesson tonight:

For Ali Kitapci..

It's raining. On all our memories with Ali...
It's raining. Yet yesterday the killers have washed away the blood on the street long ago.
It's raining.
All those drinks we had together, all those actions we went, all those slogans we shouted, all that gas we breathed. Ali's asthma crisis..
It's raining.
State attacks.
It's raining so badly.
All the comrades, we are together just like we did 20 years ago.
We are together, just like it happened in 1936!
Ali had given his life to the class struggle, to the trade-union movement.
He was one of those unnamed "heroes" struggling to transform the anarchist movement from a weak breath into a lively alternative of freedom.
Let his memory be our comrade...
We won't forget, we won't forgive!

To this I add: We are all together, just like it happened in 1936….. and 1886…. and 1917…. 1914….. 1940…. and many, many other times!

On this night, ***all*** of our comrades are together; we living reaching out to you who live no more as we live; but yet you live on, ***so long as we do not forget……***

I call to remember our Anarchist Ancestors, the Heroes of Haymarket 1886, the ones who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our holy Cause as well as those who, like us, lived for that selfsame Cause afterwards. Comrades, sisters, and brothers, please suffer me to name them:

August Spies
Albert R. Parsons
George Engel
and Adolph Fischer

spilled their life's blood at the murderous hands of the State of Illinois; whereas

Samuel Fielden
Michael Schwab
and Oscar Neebe

suffered imprisonment, privation, and other bitter sacrifices for the same sacred Cause we hold so dear!

To these, please allow me to add:

Emma Goldman
Paul Proudhon
Mikhail Bakunin
Alexander Berkman

and, of course, **Ali Kitapci** himself, whose life and actions in Anatolia, ending with his untimely and unfortunate death, inspired what amounts to a far better Anarcho-Socialist Samhain Memorial than I could hope to write by myself alone!

Let me add to these some names that might sound just a little strange here: **Benjamin Franklin** and **Thomas Jefferson.** Yes, these men were typical bourgeois richies of their day; yet certain ideas they proposed had reach far beyond their grasp or even their understanding. I refer to **the individual-held freedoms of religion, speech, and press,** without which it would still be a ***crime*** in all English-speaking nations to even mention the ***word*** "Samhain", much less celebrate it as we are doing now! (The subjects of the UK's Monarch only fully received this freedom in 1951 source, and South Africans ***still*** don't have it source!)

To these, I offer a more personal memorial: to my maternal grandfather **James E. Riley**, who taught me far more things than I could hope to relate with my expected remaining lifetime; but relevant to our Memorial and our Cause, he taught me that Socialism was not the fearsome bugaboo that most sources in my native Colorado Springs, Colorado wanted me to think it was, but rather, truly, the sole alternative to total and complete barbarism!

Brothers, sisters, and comrades, I now turn the floor over to you. Come and make your memorials to those who have gone before us in the Solidarity of our Cause, that the rest of us may also give them their due for what they have given us to carry forward!

And let Solidarity, Peace and Love ever be between us; but let there be no Peace for our Adversaries until there be true Justice for us and ours!

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