


“...what is unappetizing about the call for attack by the communisateurs and Tiquunists is exactly that they are communisateurs — they are Marxists — they want the communes so they can have spaces to build their Party, or build whatever of their organizations, to opportunistically centralize and “increase power” (anonymous 2009, 17). This is in preparation of them launching their inevitable revolutionary war against the bourgeoisie, and following their victory, the communizers would of course seek to institute the dictatorship of the proletariat (also referred to in some circles of the Marxist far-left as the proletarian semi-State).”



Communes & Land Projects: A Nomadic Critique of Communization

by Zhachev

heterogeneity naturally. This is another difference between the views of Wilson and the views of the communisateurs. Wilson, displaying at least some awareness of the concept of nomadology, understands the need for not just escape, but dispersal, and generally describes his writing project as being against history, progress, and the narratives they bring with them. Wilson's T. A. Z. may be utopian, but it isn't even in the same realm as the comunization texts in terms of millenarianism.

My issue with attempting to permanently occupy spaces through any means whatsoever is that land occupation does nothing but encourage and even solicit domination over nature, domination over the other animals we share space with, domination over each other, and so on. I don't have any interest in controlling things or others. In fact, I should not even separate myself from these things I've just mentioned in the ontological sense. The word land itself implies domination: I landed a job, I landed a date, I landed the top prize. To land, to be landed, to have stopped being in flux, is not dissimilar to having occupied a thing, and is often the same. This is, according to James C. Scott, the primary goal of the State: to fix populations to specific geographic boundaries. We might say in English, "I have this land. This land is mine." Which is to say, because you stand there on it, apparently dominating over it, it is yours. I am here, so now this is mine. That's what it means to land, to have it, to be landed. It's like Manifest Destiny for everyone, an ideology not restricted only to whites and Christians. I am not part of this community, it is mine altogether! It belongs to me. In fact, God created it like this, just for me!

As you are hopefully beginning to see, or already seeing, we can not lay claims over spaces without first attempting to ontologically separate ourselves from nature, an impossible task. We are nature. Everything that exists, and even things beyond our awareness and perception, are also part of nature. It pains me to say it, but even technology is technically part of the natural world. I refer to this as pluralistic naturalistic holism. For billions of years before our arrival, the planet Earth was already one big commune. For the fishes, for the lizards, for the flowers, for the bees and ants — I think we have just forgotten our place in it.

Cover illustration "We will not forget trial & tribulations" by Ron Mitchell depicting a band of lower (Chickamauga) Cherokee on the move out of upper Cherokee lands after refusing to ally with settlers.

Tiqqunists is exactly that they are communisateurs — they are Marxists — they want the communes so they can have spaces to build their Party, or build whatever of their organizations, to opportunistically centralize and “increase power” (anonymous 2009, 17). This is in preparation of them launching their inevitable revolutionary war against the bourgeoisie, and following their victory, the communizers would of course seek to institute the dictatorship of the proletariat (also referred to in some circles of the Marxist far-left as the proletarian semi-State).

I am not against the breaking of legs in general, in the typical sense of moral opposition to a particular action, or beyond having my legs broken. And I’m not above, against, or beyond party-crashing tactics, either. I am an individualist, and in the sense of applying force, of many kinds, an occasional nihilist. But I would never use violence with the aim of controlling others. My attack is direct, purposeful. Violence must only be applied when and where it has to be, to the appropriate degree it has to be, without enjoyment, or with the goal of controlling others in mind. Saying this is not to ignore all the reasons violence does happen. But attack to destroy, because you must. I would use violence in self-defense, and perhaps even out of self-interest, but I differ from the communisateurs in that when I apply violence, my intentions and actions are meant to be centrifugal. They are directed away from a given pole of focus or concern. That is why Bolshevik coups are of no concern to me. Neither is direct action that aims to coerce people into dictatorships, the Party, or the Parties way of thinking. This kind of homogeneity is a hallmark of the State, Civilization, and Capital. I am not at all interested in being involved in any kind of community, network, or worknet that aims to progress in a quantitative way, to grow in numbers, or one that maintains a membership. My associations with others are never aiming to be coercive. I wear my intentions on my sleeve. Whether there are two or two-hundred people doing what I am doing and communicating with me about it, makes no difference. Although, groups bigger than three-hundred are increasingly Leviathanic. I suppose this also includes domestic living communities and villages. I prefer small groups. Under ten is perhaps best for me, and we all differ, but the point is small groupings of any size within natural limits encourage

The establishment of intentional communities of all kinds is a popular fad yet again. Perhaps we have reached a point where economic pressures and the failure of government have heightened the desirability of such living arrangements. Leviathan has spread its slimy tentacles across every corner of the globe, and the jungles of concrete — the urban sprawl — have reached nearly everywhere. In the United States, the furthest distance to complete isolation from any road or structure is only 18 miles from one point to another. Where I am currently, this number falls to 6 miles. It gets as low as 2 miles or less in some US States. This shows how the urban setting is now essentially inescapable. There is a total of 2.43 billion acres of land in the United States, and its overseas territories. 17.5% of this land is Alaska. Out of these 2.5 billion acres of land, only 4.5% of it is wilderness today. The State of Alaska comprises 52% of the wilderness in the US. The State of New York, an exception in terms of population, but completely median in terms of geographical land mass, has less than 1%. It is the same for my home State. As a matter of fact, every State in the US besides Alaska and California (14%) have 4% or less. 31 States, including Hawaii, plus Puerto Rico, have less than 1% of the US wilderness area. Connecticut, Delaware, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, and Rhode Island don't have any wilderness areas at all. In lieu of this lossage, the very human, yet also wild desire to “get away from it all’ and return to the land and nature is perfectly understandable. Our personal connections to pristine nature are as tenuous as ever. Hundreds of millions of people have never spent a single night camping outdoors. It’s difficult, if not impossible, to escape the ever-present noise and high-pitched buzzing of the AC units, Internet routers, giant flat-screen TVs, PC fans, etc. We are inundated with overwhelming, panic-inducing amounts of ads and information. On top of all this, most feel forced to engage in wage-slavery, for some boss. These realities and countless others paint an increasingly bleak picture of what civilization has to offer to the individual, or any of us, today.

The old idea was that we need to confront the bourgeoisie and the State head-on through class warfare via popular revolution. After centuries of failures, this outlook has been exchanged for one that says we can and must start doing communism now. This is often justified

by obscure Easter eggs offered up from the writings of Karl Marx. Anarchy, class warfare, communization, and revolution are all seen by communisateurs as synonymous concepts. The Tiqqunistic text *Call* by an anonymous author describes “the process of instituting communism” as “only tak[ing] the form” of “acts of communization” [original emphasis], such as “making common such-and-such space” (2009, 22). The text also describes “this constellation of occupied spaces where, despite many limits, it is possible to experiment with forms of collective assembly outside of control, we have known an increase in power.” (2009, 17)

This optimistic talk of occupying spaces, becoming free of control, the talk of increasing power, of acceleration, is surely bothersome especially coming from neo-Marxoids like the communisateurs, but similar suggestions have also been made by anarchists, including Peter Lamborn Wilson (aka Hakim Bey). Similar claims about communes are made in T.A.Z.: The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism, first published in 1991. Much of the ideas of the communisateurs seem informed by, if not lifted from, these older writings of Wilson. And much like the communisateurs have asked us today (more than a quarter century later), Wilson also queried us the same way back in 1991:

“Are we who live in the present doomed never to experience autonomy, never to stand for one moment on a bit of land ruled only by freedom? Are we reduced either to nostalgia for the past or nostalgia for the future? Must we wait until the entire world is freed of political control before even one of us can claim to know freedom?”

...a certain kind of ‘free enclave’ is not only possible in our time but also existent”...(38)

“What of the anarchist dream, the Stateless state, the Commune, the autonomous zone with duration, a free society, a free culture? Are we to abandon that hope in return for some existentialist acte gratuit? The point is not to change consciousness but to change the world.” (39)

Wilson, like the communisateurs, sees this as “the seed of the new society taking shape within the shell of the old” (41):

“I do suggest that the TAZ is the only possible ‘time’ and ‘place’...for the sheer pleasure of creative play, and as an actual contribution to the forces which allow the TAZ to cohere and manifest.” ... “A world in which the TAZ succeeded in putting down roots might resemble the world envisioned by ‘P.M.’ in his fantasy novel bolo'bolo. Perhaps the TAZ is a ‘proto-bolo.’” (52)

Both anarchists of Wilsons ilk, and the communisateurs of today, seem unfocused or uninterested in what many across the communist left (specifically its more traditional groups) have deemed “defensive struggles”, which is a term meant to refer to the increasingly extreme austerity measures imposed on the general populous by the ruling class (attacks made by the bourgeoisie). When I talk about defense, I usually mean the defense of nature rather than the economy. We have seen these attacks come in the form of tax hikes against everyday working families, instead of tax hikes for corporations and the wealthy captains of industry. Another example of these attacks by the bourgeoisie was the use of public revenue in the US to shore up companies and ensure the economic bailout of corporations following the 2008 US stock market crash. But Wilson differs from Marxist class warfare advocates in that he advocates camouflage and social concealment; “a tactic of disappearance” (1991, 50). Wilson believes the commune should blend in to its surroundings as best it can, hide, and not be outwardly confrontational, or stir up trouble with the neighbors. It’s more anarchist in this regard, but even with statements like “TAZ is a nomad camp” (43), the bolo’boloism of T. A. Z. and Wilson doesn’t quite cross into true nomadism, advocating something more similar to hermitry.

The communisateurs differ from Wilson in this regard in that they all want communes as a launchpad for centralized communist attack. Attack is something Wilson rarely mentions, if at all, which is a shame because I like attack as much as the next person! But what is unappetizing about the call for attack by the communisateurs and