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## Digest of the Anarchist Tubes

compiled from January 2017

volume 3, #3

# ATUBES

### **Turkey: Meydan anarchists — 'we are being cornered'**

*From Freedom: Anarchist Media,  
Publishing and Bookshop (UK)*

Late last month the editor of Meydan anarchist newspaper in Istanbul was sentenced to a year and three months in prison for “supporting terror,” the latest in a string of attempts by the Turkish State to shut down dissenting voices against Erdogan’s government. Today we are proud to publish a translation of Meydan’s uncompromising response, from their latest edition.

#### **We are being cornered**

With the fear and shock that constantly oppresses our lives, with the agendas that change by the day, by the hour, with the constant repetition we see in news articles, debates, newspapers and radios, with the shares and retweets, the media that takes us for idiots and is fed by manipulation, with the gentrification and demolition policies that erase our past, our identity and our memory, with the “illusion of democracy” that weakens and imprisons our freedom, and with the reality that becomes more and more incomprehensible everyday, we are being cornered.

We are being cornered because the rulers require it in order to declare their authority and assert their dominance over our stolen

willpower. We are being cornered because the rulers require it to keep their power and to create new objects to use in their own wars. We are being cornered because this is the only way the government is able to create space for itself and exist.

#### **We are being cornered by misery**

The days that have to keep going through the exhaustion, the bodies that fall powerless, the minds that become unhappy as they weaken...

The rulers submerge the streets that we use to walk to school in the mornings, to go to work and to catch a bus in darkness. They corner us with unhappiness by squeezing us into minibuses and metro buses that are full to the brim and sending us to work at the crack of dawn. As the government corners us with unhappiness, they drag us towards hopelessness and despair.

We must resist the government that decides when we may sleep and when we must wake, that snatches our morning sun and pushes us towards darkness and despair in order to win back our bodies and minds. We must find the courage to defy those who would turn us into blind and deaf, unknowing and unfeeling individuals and break out of this complacency and cornered-ness.

#### **We are being cornered by panic**

The broadcasting

prohibitions that follow exploding bombs, the unfounded accusations after suspicious packages are found and bomb threats are made, the people who choose or are forced to choose to stay away from crowded places, the dollars that are exchanged in order to “prevent a crisis,” the people who dream of running away from the land that is oppressed by war, death and economic crises...

In the land we live in, the government dominates the individual with fear and panic, it incapacitates, corners and in time, annihilates. As the government enforces this state of fear and panic in all public areas, the individual loses control, becomes vulnerable and is cornered into the annihilation imposed by the rulers.

Our lives are cornered into the grip of crises or death, and our days are spent looking for a way out of fear and panic, out of this cornered-ness.

The only way out of this fear and paranoia that wear down our bodies and minds, and that allow the socio-economic circumstances to slowly consume us, is through creating spaces for ourselves outside of this panic-culture. The way to create a world where we won't be cornered and imprisoned by fear and panic is to expand the spaces where the rulers impose fear on us and eliminate the culture that makes paranoiacs of us all.

Read more <https://tinyurl.com/jnv935t>

## Alexander Berkman's Prison Memoirs annotated: an interview

*An annotated edition of Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist has just been published by AK Press.*

*From Kate Sharpley Library*

Jessica Moran and Barry Pateman who edited it are both part of the Kate Sharpley Library team. We took the chance to ask them a few questions:

**KSL:** Prison Memoirs is a classic, and much reprinted. You've annotated the text to help readers understand 'the radical world that Berkman inhabited'. What else did you hope this edition would do?

**[JM]** I don't think Prison Memoirs has been out of print in the almost 105 years since its original publication in 1912. It's a classic for a reason, there is so much going on in the book, and each reading brings new elements to light. So partly we just wanted people to read it and with the footnotes give readers some help in bringing the book to life. Because the book is now over a hundred years old, many of the contemporary references, are references that a reader then would have understood without any trouble, but 100 years on they may need a little explanation. But also we wanted to highlight for the reader how the radical tradition Berkman was part of and educated himself in, also shaped him, and gave him the strength to survive prison. The other thing we wanted to do is counter some of the idea that this memoir is the complete factual truth, we wanted to tell some of the stories behind the story Berkman told.

**[BP]** Yes. We felt it was important to explore the radical milieu that

Berkman was part of but also, and this may seem contradictory, we wanted to encourage people to understand that Prison Memoirs isn't necessarily the truth about Berkman or his time in prison. He, himself, was very clear that book was a Memoir and Not an Autobiography. It's understandable really. He had blanked out some of his prison experiences. Years of solitary had left him unsure about the chronology of events (and if they ever happened!!) and I think he felt that a more creative approach (the invention of characters, the crunching of various events into one incident etc) would allow him to convey the reality of his experiences in a more evocative and harrowing way. Time and again we see people quoting Prison Memoirs or Living My Life as fact. That's an approach we might want to ponder on.

**KSL:** It's clear from the diary that you print as appendix that writing Prison Memoirs cost Berkman two years of huge effort. Can you outline how the idea to write it arose, and what Berkman wanted it to achieve?

**[BP]** Berkman had been toying with some memoir of his time in prison from early on in his incarceration. The prison journal Zuchthausblüthen (Prison Blossoms) that he created with Carl Nold and Henry Bauer contains the odd piece of autobiography and the plan was to create a book from this. Apparently quite a lot of this material was lost for one reason and another. Once out of prison Berkman never found writing particularly easy, especially when writing about his time in the Western Penitentiary. He was helped and encouraged by Emma Goldman and Voltairine de Cleyre in the

creation of Prison Memoirs —de Cleyre especially offered help with Berkman's English and his sense of narrative and structure with regard to the book—but often he didn't want to go back there in his head. He wanted to forget rather than remember. It's actually quite hard to know what Berkman wanted to achieve with his book. His letters and diaries are frustratingly short on that type of information. I think we can presume he wanted to achieve three things. Firstly he wanted to deal with the memories and emotions that haunted him. Secondly he wanted to portray the horror and the ineffectiveness of prison experience. All the casual everyday cruelties, all the constant indignities easily destroyed the human spirit. No one deserved to be put through that, no matter what their crime. Even the worst criminal had sparks of humanity that needed to be respected and saved. They were victims, themselves, of an unforgiving economic and cultural system. Thirdly, and perhaps more implicit, was a critique on the narrowness of anarchist discourse. Simply put what did it have to say to these men living in constant degradation? Throughout his life Berkman struggled with the nature of anarchist propaganda and who it should be aimed at. It shaped his approach not just in Prison Memoirs, but in all his writing and editorial efforts, including Mother Earth, and especially The Blast, but also in Now and Then: The ABC of Communist Anarchism, etc. All that began during his prison experience.

Read more <https://tinyurl.com/h2ukph8>

## The death of politics

AN EDICIONES INÉDITOS ORIGINAL

Trump has been sworn in, the Left and Liberals have come out in droves to denounce a president whom Congressman & Civil Rights Leader, John Lewis, has declared illegitimate. Though the grounds for illegitimacy, as he states, are not necessarily based on Trump's racist, sexist, isolationist, ultra-nationalist, anti-queer agenda but rather that he is the subject of a Russian conspiracy. (Though we have had presidents who have been slave-owners, rapists, leaders of genocide, fervently anti-queer and yet they were able to complete their terms.) Others more generally decry Trump as a Neo-Fascist set to bring 1939 onto American soil. The U.S. Radical Left clamors to revive itself and swell its numbers. Though this Radical Left has chosen, more and more so, to speak the language of politics rather than of revolt (or revolution). This Radical Left sometimes speaks of communism as a set of affairs to be installed, and to which proletarians must be won over to, rather than the means by which proletarians will free themselves.

In Mexico, there are already some who are finding a fruitful ground for a rupture away from capitalism and politics. Though even there it is commonplace to point to the more radical elements of the response to the #Gasolinazo (state mandated rise in fuel prices) as part of a deep-state conspiracy to discredit more populist responses: marches, protests, list of grievances.

Here in the U.S. we had massive marches across the country, under the umbrella name "Women's March" (on January 21st). A variety of critiques have been directed at it:

its centering of white womanhood & its feminism, the trans\* exclusionary images & slogans, its championing of non-violence and a generally pro-police sentiment. On Trump's inauguration day, January 20th, we saw the black bloc emerge, with an attempt at demonstrating both a show of force but also to disrupt as much as possible the pomp & circumstance of the day.

Though we all delighted in the punch-out of Richard Spencer, self-proclaimed leader of the "alt-right" movement, by someone dressed in black bloc we could say that the same critique could be made of both the "Women's March" and of the black bloc: they both were a but response to a political moment. A political moment which bears deep consequences for this country and for the world, but a political moment all the same.

Largely, most of the large-scale revolt we have seen in the United States, and around the world, the last few years have not been a reaction against a political moment, but ferocious responses to domination both economic and direct. See:

- the #Gasolinazo
- Ferguson
- Baltimore
- Labor Reform in France
- Education Reform in Mexico

An attempt to create revolt has always been the modus operandi of the Left and even of Left-Anarchists in a vanguardist way. Rather, we contend the task at hand is to foster and help further along revolt, but the Left can only see the world politically even when it has its historical-materialist glasses on.

The Democratic Party is

essentially dead in the water. Many on the Radical Left are not deriding party politics, or parliamentary politics but rather are calling for a working-class party. To push for a political party at that moment when voter turn-out has been at its lowest in decades is not only politically unsound, it is tone-deaf.

*"Granted, we don't have a political party in the United States. We don't have a labor party. And we're a long way away from becoming a force that can enact policies to represent and empower the working class. But we're building momentum and making demands."*

– Jacobin Magazine, "The Party We Need"

The Radical Left offers more of the same because their strategy and tactics are precisely centered on a field where workers, whether racialized, gendered, employed or not, have not been able to win in decades: politics.

*"We are still speaking of a new cycle of struggle in the worn-out language of the old. We can refine that language as best we can, but we have to recognise that it is nearly, if not completely exhausted."*

– Endnotes, "Spontaneity, Mediation, Rupture"

This language is largely the language of politics which boils down the capacity for any substantive change in our lives into polls, charts, numbers and voting turn-outs.

### **If not politics, then what?**

One of the prevailing guiding principles for those of us of the insurrectionary kind is reproducibility:

Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/j7butz5>

## The flower growing out of the underworld: An introduction to eco-extremism

*\*Taken from Issue 1 of Atassa: Readings in Eco-extremism, available now from Little Black Cart\**

*“Una salus victis nullam sperare salutem.” (The one hope of the conquered is to not hope for salvation.)*

-Virgil, The Aeneid

*“If death comes we will keep destroying things in hell; disgusting world, I will laugh as I see you falling, in this eternal confrontation...”*

-Eleventh Communique of the Individualists Tending Toward the Wild, 2016

Eco-extremism is one of the newest schools of thought in our time, but more than a school of thought, it is a plan of action, an attitude of hostility, and a rejection of all that has come before it in techno-industrial society. Born out of various radical ideologies such as animal liberation, insurrectionary anarchism, anarcho-primitivism, and the neo-Luddism of Theodore Kaczynski, it has germinated and sprouted forth into something entirely other: into a love poem to violence and criminality; a radical ecological vision where hope and humanism are overcome by the barrel of a gun, the explosion of the incendiary device, and the knife stalking human prey in the darkness. All of its true adherents are currently unknown. It is not an ideology that was formed in the academy or even in “alternative” political spaces. Its writings can only be found (some would say ironically) on anonymous sites on the Internet. Eco-extremism was formed in the shadows, and will remain there, a clandestine threat

until all eco-extremists are captured or killed... that is, until others take their place.

Shortly after I wrote my essay in Ritual Magazine, “Towards Savagery: Recent Developments in Eco-Extremist Thought in Mexico,” the main group described in that essay, Reacción Salvaje (Wild Reaction) disbanded (in August 2015), citing a new stage of their struggle and development. Many of the websites that I used for my research also went silent or announced their end. Nevertheless, eco-extremist rumblings could be heard in the south, echoed via news stories on the Internet. Groups such as the Pagan Sect of the Mountain committed attacks in Mexico State and other parts of that country, using the same rhetoric against the “hyper-civilized”, and without concern for morality and mass technological society. One of the main journals of eco-extremism, Regresión Magazine, continued to be published out of Mexico.

By January of 2016, new eco-extremist websites and even an extensive video documentary on eco-extremism emerged online. By the end of the month, the First Communique of the re-founded Individualists Tending Toward the Wild (Individualistas Tendiendo a lo Salvaje, ITS) was issued on the main eco-extremist website, Maldición Eco-extremista, as well as on anti-authoritarian news outlets. Soon, it began to emerge that the continuation of ITS had spread to other countries, namely, Chile, Argentina, and later Brazil, along with allied Nihilist Terrorists groups in Italy. Eco-extremist texts have been translated into languages

ranging from Spanish and English to Turkish, Czech, and Romanian. Eco-extremist actions in the last calendar year have ranged from arson, bomb threats, indiscriminate bombings, to the murder of a scientific worker at Mexico’s largest university. To our knowledge, no one has yet to be arrested or investigated for these crimes.

Recent eco-extremist theory has emphasized action above historical study and theory. Much of the polemical energy earlier this year was consumed by a defense of “indiscriminate attack”: that is, bombing, shooting, arson, etc. that does not take into account “innocent bystanders,” but strikes at a target regardless of what “collateral damage” might result.

Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/gmoawql>



### About ATUBES

ATUBES is a sporadically produced digest of some of the articles and commentary featured on [anarchistnews.org](http://anarchistnews.org), illustrating some of the breadth of anarchist thinking

<https://anarchistnews.org/>