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Digest of the Anarchist Tubes

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ATUBES

On the Delusion of (non)violence & Difference between Progressive- Liberalism & Radicalism: Between Trump, BLM, DAPL- INM, & Tahrir

From mohamed jeanveneuse

Introduction: There are only middles, no beginnings and ends, when the end is the beginning is the end again

Imminent scholars[i] and political philosophers, as Jean Baudrillard[ii] warned decades ago of our ‘desensitization’, ‘moral relativism’ and so-called ‘apolitical nihilism’ in a ‘post-alternative-fact’[iii] world, where images become nothing but simulacric copies of copies, along the way towards our ‘civilizational collapse’. When our species has accumulated modern mechanized tools of mass-annihilation, in the name of protection and security, capable of creating Hiroshimas and Nagasakis in a moment’s notice, let alone our sado-masochistic ability to document endless, numbing, archives of (in)escapable atrocities of vitriolic and normalized violence(s) in the hierarchized and selective (de)humanization of lives and in the name of schizophrenic causes. One would’ve thought that we would rush, be moved, collectively as a species, reaching for what’s left of our abandoned humanity, to save it.

But no, that’s not the vision that was received in our derelict reneging of our commitments to this earth’s soil and our responsibilities to nonhuman life upon which our existence relies. One would’ve imagined that we would respond differently to the prospect of imminent doom, in fearing our demise. Instead, we gobbled up fear like an ‘insatiable chocolate éclair, repackaging it all this time, relishing it as addictive video games, as TV shows, books and movies, while the entire world wholeheartedly embraced the apocalypse, sprinting towards it with gleeful abandon, as this planet crumbled all around us. We simultaneously struggle with epidemics of obesity and starvation’, with millions of people going to bed with empty stomachs, as the rest of us know that our bodies are full of toxic agro-chemicals. ‘Butterflies are disappearing, our glaciers are melting, algae is blooming, coal mine Canaries are dropping dead, sea lions and creatures are washing up on shores, and yet we won’t take a hint’, as if techno-scientific civilizational progress will ameliorate and save us, as opposed to us listening to the amphibian Armageddon emitting last croaks of our imminent extinction and doom (Kotler, 2015; Esteva, 2014). And ‘despite that with every moment, there is the possibility of a better future, we won’t believe in it,

because we won’t do what is necessary to recreate’ a new reality, so we dwell on this oh so terrible future as we resign ourselves to it and do so for one reason: ‘That the future doesn’t ask anything of us today’ (Kotler 2015; Esteva, 2014). Yes, ‘we see the iceberg and were warned of the titanic, but all hands aboard we steered for it anyway, full steam ahead’ (Kotler, 2015; Esteva, 2014). Why? Because we want to sink and that was never God’s fault in any way but rather ours...

This piece fundamentally argues that ‘Ideologies’ and ‘pure politics’ relating to romanticized notions of ‘community’, ‘self’, ‘resistance’ and so-called ‘revolutions’, do not exist. That all there is are consistent ethical-political principles and practices binding us in relation to each other as a species and non-human life. Indeed, that identity politics, albeit useful, are limited, given the destructive Eurocentric legacy of reform-based progressive-liberalism that invented them and therefore the need for distinguishing between the former and radicalism from a social movement, anti-racist feminist, and decolonial perspective. Given, that without the development of a coherent narrative and analyses between social movements as Black Lives Matter (BLM), those ‘indigenous’ as the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) and Idle No More (INM)...

Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/zvo5w6r>

Simon Chapman, A Very Distinguished Fucking Anarchist

From Freedom News UK

Over the last couple of days the strangest thought has plagued me. Two simple ugly words have kept emerging, only for me to lock them out and ridicule them as bizarre. Simon's dead. Just to write it down feels like treachery. Part of me looks forward to seeing him, to sharing a drink and dispelling this nonsense. He'd say something wry, and witty and that would be that. He was good like that. Was. Sometimes the shittiest word to ever have to use about a friend.

As part of a (temporary, and self-imposed) exile from all politics, I didn't know his health had deteriorated so much. We weren't the kind of friends who lived out of each other's pockets. There are many who were closer to him than me and I wish them all my love. But for almost 15 years he was always there. At crap protests and good ones, festivals and parties, we'd find each other and we'd usually end up drinking together. We shared a love of getting proper twatted and so we did that a lot.

The London anarchist movement would have looked very different without Simon Chapman. From the Movement Against The Monarchy to the Wombles, to May Day, several squatted social centres and finally Class War, Simon was an active presence both on the streets and behind the scenes. Countless flyers were produced by him over the years. He helped organise dozens of gigs, parties, campaigns and demonstrations and I was lucky enough to work with him on several

of them. Up until very recently he was still updating the Class War website.

It was the streets where his heart lay though and he was no passive peaceful protester. He got nicked all the time when he was younger. He fucking hated capitalism, was never afraid to get his hands dirty and despised the police. And he had good reason.

In 2003 Simon was arrested during a vicious police tear gas attack at a particularly fruity anti-capitalist protest in Thessaloniki, Greece. It was claimed he was carrying petrol bombs in his rucksack and he was held on remand with charges hanging over him that could have seen him spend the next 20 years in prison. Six other people were arrested and charged in similar circumstances. All denied the allegations against them. Photographic evidence soon emerged that showed the rucksack the police claimed Simon was carrying was not the rucksack he was arrested with. It was a transparent fit up.

The treatment of those arrested was obscene. All were beaten savagely following their arrest. For the first few days of his incarceration Simon was left virtually blind after the police smashed his glasses. He couldn't see a fucking thing without his glasses. Despite these abuses the UK's Labour government did not lift a finger to help. Neither did any other state. So the prisoners took the only action left available to them and began a hunger strike.

A militant Europe-wide campaign fast emerged demanding that all seven prisoners be released. Greek embassies were picketed

across the continent and in some cases attacked and occupied. In Barcelona the Metro system was shut down during an international day of action in solidarity with the prisoners. In the UK a relentless campaign targeted the Greek Embassy and Tourist Board. Parts of Athen's University were repeatedly occupied, whilst fierce demonstrations throughout Greece resulted in more arrests.

In the end Simon didn't eat for almost seven weeks. All the hunger-strikers were repeatedly hospitalised, such was the strain on their health. In the final days the prisoners stopped accepting fluids. By now the solidarity campaign was at fever pitch as the risk that someone might die grew ever closer. Mainstream media across Europe began to take an interest, lured by sensationalism and smelling blood. Faced with international embarrassment, and concerned about creating seven martyrs who would shine a light on the corrupt Greek police, all the prisoners were released on November 6th 2003 and the charges against them dropped. Simon came home.

Then, five years later, the bastards came for him again. After repeated appeals from the Greek state prosecutor the charges against four of the original seven were re-instated. In 2008 Simon was found guilty of a string of exotic sounding and terrifying charges including Distinguished Riot and the creation, possession and explosion of bombs. He was sentenced in his absence to eight and a half years in prison.

Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/gS89bw7>

Anarchists for Peace and Free Speech

From Splice Today by Crispin Sartwell

Clothed in rage and black balaclavas, anarchists have shown up at anti-Trump protests and campus actions against right-wing figures, often as the most or the only militant force. They burned a limo and broke windows near the White House during the inauguration. They were at Berkeley, agitating against right-wing provocateur Milo Yiannopoulos and at NYU trying to shut down comedian Gavin McInnes. When white supremacist Richard Spencer got sucker-punched on video at the inauguration, many in the blossoming anarchist Twittersphere became armchair Nazi-punchers.

In the history of anarchist theory and practice stretching back to the mid-19th century, there is a strand of violence (as well as of brutal police repression), which has publicized and often discredited the movement. But it's an appropriate time to point out that there's also a rich tradition of pacifist and peace-oriented anarchism, particularly in the United States, which includes such figures as the feminists Lucretia Mott and Sarah Grimké, the abolitionists William Lloyd Garrison and Nathaniel Peabody Rogers, and, moving further abroad, the novelist Leo Tolstoy.

Garrison, for example, was called an "absolute non-resistant," which was also true of Mott, a devout Quaker. Both opposed the government of human beings by human beings on the ground both that it was tantamount to slavery and that it rested on physical violence.

Declaring the position of the Peace Convention in Boston in 1838,

Garrison wrote: "We cannot acknowledge allegiance to any human government; neither can we oppose any such government by a resort to physical force. We are bound by the laws of a kingdom which is not of this world; the subjects of which are forbidden to fight, which has no state lines, no national partitions, no geographical boundaries; in which there is no distinction of rank, or division of caste, or inequality of sex."

Tolstoy reprinted the whole of Garrison's declaration in his book *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*, which was in turn important in the development of Gandhi and King's approaches to non-violent resistance.

Potentially at least, anarchism and pacifism are, as Garrison and Tolstoy saw, bound together conceptually; it's plausible to argue that government could not operate at all without physical force, coercion, incarceration, and other forms of violence, so that pacifism entails the rejection of state power. Mott said that people "should have no participation in a government based upon the life-taking principle—upon retaliation and the sword." On the other hand, anarchism does not entail pacifism, and many anarchists have considered themselves insurrectionists and violent revolutionaries.

This debate has extended throughout the history of anarchism. In DC and London in the 1980s, for example, the political punk movement split between militant anti-fascists and "peace punks." The two strands continue among anarchists now, though the more war-like party is the more visible.

What's perhaps new in

anarchism for 2017, after its intersections with anti-globalization and anti-austerity movements, with Occupy and Black Lives Matter, is its censoriousness, its concentration on erasing symbols and silencing speakers.

Anarchists, particularly in the United States—people like Ezra Heywood and Emma Goldman—were foursquare advocates of free speech. In 1878, Heywood was sentenced to two years' hard labor for disseminating information about birth control, and in 1917 Goldman was deported for opposing conscription during World War I.

The idea of anarchists turning against free speech is in excruciating tension with the anarchist tradition, pacifist or not. Few groups have been so vilified and so caricatured, and no set of political beliefs has been as subject to censorship. Emma Goldman, for example, was a free-speech fundamentalist, appealing to Jefferson and Thoreau even as she was thrown in Rikers Island for urging hungry people to "take bread."

As she wrote in 1908: "I believe that free speech and press mean that I may say and write what I please. This right, when regulated by constitutional provisions, legislative enactments, almighty decisions of the policeman's club, becomes a farce. I am well aware that I will be warned of the consequences if we remove the chains from speech and press. I believe, however, that the cure of consequences resulting from unlimited exercise of expression is to allow more expression."

Read more <https://tinyurl.com/javeo3a>

The Anarchists vs. the Islamic State

From *Rolling Stone*

On the front lines of Syria with the young American radicals fighting ISIS

On the morning of his first battle, Brace Belden was underdressed for the cold and shaky from a bout of traveler's diarrhea. His Kurdish militia unit was camped out on the front line with ISIS, 30 miles from Raqqa, in Syria. Fighters stood around campfires of gas-soaked trash, boiling water for tea, their only comfort besides tobacco. "I've never been so dirty in my life," Belden recalls. When the time came to roll out, he loaded a clip into his Kalashnikov and climbed into a makeshift battlewagon, a patchwork of tank and truck parts armored with scrap metal and poured concrete. Belden took a selfie inside its rusty cabin and posted it online with the caption "Wow this freakin taxi stinks."

The rest of the militia piled into an assortment of minivans, garbage trucks and bulldozers, and rode south into territory ISIS had held for more than three years. Belden was manning a swivel-mounted machine gun, the parched landscape barely visible through the rising dust, when he spotted a car packed with explosives revving across the desert toward the Kurdish column. Before he could shoot, an American fighter jet lacerated the sky and an explosion erupted where the car had been, shaking the earth for miles around.

It was November 6th, 2016. The Kurdish militia known as the YPG – a Kurmanji acronym for People's Protection Units – had

commenced a major offensive to liberate the city that serves as the global headquarters for ISIS. The YPG was backed by U.S. air power and fighting alongside a coalition of Arab and Assyrian militias. Also within their ranks, though scantily reported, was a group of about 75 hardcore leftists, anarchists and communists from Europe and America, Belden among them, fighting to defend a socialist enclave roughly the size of Massachusetts.

Belden, who is 27, started tweeting photos of the front shortly after arriving in Syria in October. The first widely shared image showed him crouched in his YPG uniform, wearing thick Buddy Holly glasses, a cigarette dangling from the corner of his mouth, a stray puppy in one hand and a sniper rifle in the other. "To misquote Celine," the post read, "when you're in, you're in." He has since amassed 19,000 followers under the handle *PissPigGranddad*, puzzling the Internet with a combination of leftist invective and scurrilous bro humor. Tweets like "Heading to the Quandil Mountains to lecture the PKK about entitlement reform" are followed by "The dude with the lamb bailed so now we're fucked for dinner."

Belden had no military experience before joining the YPG. He lived in San Francisco, where he arranged flowers for a living. Before that, he was a self-described lumpenproletariat, a lowlife punk and petty criminal with a heroin habit who started reading Marx and Lenin seriously in rehab. Once sober, he got involved in leftist causes, marching for tenants' rights, blocking evictions, protesting police brutality. As he prepared for the

Middle East, his girlfriend thought he was going to do humanitarian work. She was "not stoked," Belden says, to learn that he planned to fight alongside the YPG.

The first phase of the Raqqa offensive was a mission to take Tal Saman, a satellite village of 10,000 people 17 miles north of Raqqa proper. "We pushed up to Tal Saman till we had it surrounded on a half circle," Belden says, "then we just bombarded the shit out of it." Refugees poured out of the village, seeking protection behind Kurdish lines. "Hundreds of civilians coming across for days in a row," Belden says. At night, his unit stayed in whatever building they'd just taken, camped out on rooftops in the excruciating cold. "The first week we were out it was awful," Belden says. The stepmother of a fellow volunteer from the U.S. had gotten Belden's number.

Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/hlppab2>



About ATUBES

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