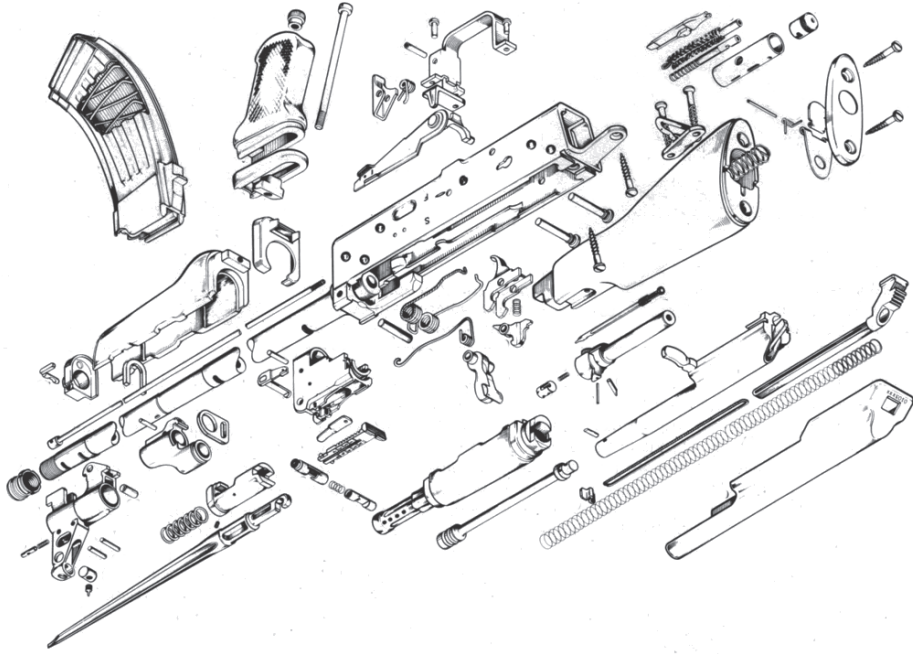
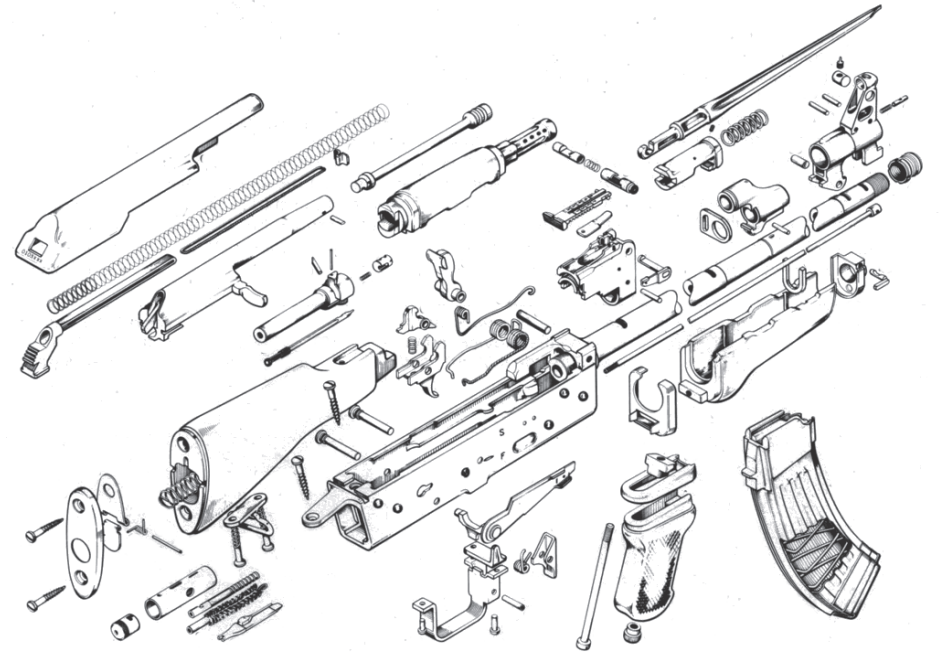


miguel amorós



**ANARQUÍA
PROFESIONAL
Y DESARME
TEÓRICO**
sobre insurreccionalismo

**PROFESIONAL
ANARCHY &
THEORETICAL
DISARMAMENT**
on insurrectionalism



miguel amorós

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is a veteran anarchist with extensive experience; he is a public enemy of domination whom the State has persecuted with various trials and imprisonments. He has published numerous texts that allow us to understand his thought clearly (it is neither complicated nor original). Due to his education and character, he has always interpreted the slightest philosophical reflection as what he calls "metaphysics". This should not surprise us; the true Bonanno has always been an agitator and a man of action rather than an analytical and enlightened thinker. My intention here is to seek out the first appearances of insurrectionalist ideas and to follow their development by following Bonanno's personal experience and trajectory with the necessary methodological precautions—acknowledging that not all insurrectionalism is Bonannism.

Alfredo Maria Bonanno was born in Catania (Sicily) in 1937 to a well-off family. We know nothing of his first thirty years; his first known writings date from 1970 and discuss atheism and the "autonomy of productive base nuclei." A piece from 1971 deals with "counterpower," which denotes *operaista* influences that could equally well come from Negri or the Maoist-spontaneist organization *Potere Operaio*. *Operaismo* was a critical current of Marxism, that, in the seventies, played more or less the role that *Socialisme ou barbarie* did in France, taking the renewal of theory all the way down to the libertarian rank and file. He also translated classics such as Rudolf Rocker or the suspect Gaston Leval. When the waters of Italian anarchism began to toss as a result of May 1968 and the strikes of the "hot" autumn of 1969, our protagonist was sufficiently ensconced in ideology to position himself clearly "on the left" in a generational debate. The young libertarians did not want to limit action to propaganda and proselytizing; they wanted to participate effectively in real struggles to contribute "to the growth of revolutionary consciousness in the masses." The organization of glories past and its followers, on the other hand, were more concerned with meetings and congresses than with the struggles themselves and aspired only to "join the greatest number under one acronym or banner," not worried about "attack[ing] Power: [rather] they try to disturb it as little as possible in order to conserve the tiny spaces they find themselves struggling in—or believing they are struggling in." It was, then, a movement that "has inherited ideas, analyses and very specific experiences, but it does not have any direct relationship with struggles" ["Fictitious Movement and Real Movement," Jean Weir trans. modified to accord with Amorós' text]. The tangle of agreements and organizational procedures allowed those responsible for a small bureaucracy to paralyze any initiative that deviated from the official line, which is why the

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Bonanno ha sido antes agitador y hombre de acción que pensador analítico
y esclarecido. Nuestra intención será la de detectar la aparición de las ideas
insurreccionalistas y seguir su desarrollo acercándonos a su experiencia y
trayectoria personales con la debida precaución metodológica, insistiendo
en que el bonannismo no es todo insurreccionalismo.
Alfredo Maria Bonanno nació en Catania (Sicilia) en 1937, en el seno de
una familia acomodada. Nada sabemos de sus primeros treinta años; sus
primeros escritos que conocemos datan de 1970 y versan sobre el ateísmo y
la "autonomía de los núcleos productivos de base". Un escrito de 1971 habla
de "contrapoder", lo que denota influencias "operaristas" que bien podrían
venir de Negri o de la organización maoespontaneista "Potere Operaio". El
"operaismo" era una corriente crítica marxista que en los sesenta había
desempeñado más o menos el mismo papel que "Socialisme ou barbarie"
en Francia, llevando la renovación teórica hasta en las mismas filas liber-
tarias. También realizó traducciones de clásicos como Rudolf Rocker o el
dudoso Gastón Leval. Cuando las aguas del anarquismo italiano empezaron
a agitarse como consecuencia del mayo de 1968 y de las huelgas del otoño
"caliente" de 1969, nuestro personaje ya estaba bastante rodado en la ide-
ología para posicionarse con claridad "a la izquierda" en un debate genera-
cional. Los jóvenes libertarios no querían limitar la acción a la propaganda y el
proselitismo, y deseaban participar efectivamente en las luchas reales, para
contribuir "al crecimiento de la conciencia revolucionaria en las masas". La
organización de las viejas glorias y sus seguidores estaba más pendiente
de sus reuniones y congresos que de las propias luchas y no aspiraba sino
a "sumar el mayor número de personas bajo una sigla o bandera", no tan
preocupada "en atacar el Poder como en tratar de molestarlo lo menos posi-
ble a fin de seguir disponiendo de pequeños espacios donde luchar o
donde ilusionar con su lucha." Era pues "un movimiento que se coloca como
depositario de un patrimonio de ideas, análisis y experiencias bien precisas,
pero que no tiene relación directa con las luchas" [Bonanno, "Movimiento
ficticio y movimiento real"]. La maraña de acuerdos y procedimientos organi-
zativos permitían a una pequeña burocracia de responsables paralizar cualquier
iniciativa discrepante con la línea oficial, por lo que la cuestión organiza-
tiva principal casaba bellamente entre los viejos militantes insurreccionalistas
generación activa. La Federación Anarquista Italiana estaba organizada en
base a un "pacto asociativo" redactado por el mismísimo Malatesta. En

organizational question was the main *casus belli* between the immobile older militants and the new active generation. The Italian Anarchist Federation was organized on the basis of an "associative pact" written by Malatesta himself. Inasmuch as it was a "synthesis" organization, anarchists of all tendencies were included, although not anarchists of all tactics, since these were conveniently redirected through the congresses, where "small centers of power" controlled, judged, condemned or absolved minorities. The youth defended a flexible structure of "affinity groups" with neither program, nor rules, nor committees, nor any criterion of unity other than individual autonomy and personal responsibility. Critical of the unions, they promoted small organizations at the base independent of any political or union structure, such as the Autonomous Movement of Turin Railway Workers—the ideal means for anarchist intervention in struggles. Bonanno affirmed: "We are partisans of organization. [...] But organization cannot be a thing in itself, isolated from the struggle, an obstacle to be overcome before gaining access to the area of the class clash" (ibid). However, the question that most separated the older libertarians from the youth was that of revolutionary violence. At a time when the Italian bourgeoisie was experimenting with terror, the problem of a violent response was impossible to ignore, and armed struggle or attentats were but facets of this problem. The official militants not only avoided getting involved in such debates, but also tried to isolate them, using calumny and manipulation against anyone who suggested that they needed to happen. A moment had arrived in which what brought young anarchists together with the FAI was much less than what distanced them. The splits were not long in coming. The breaks began in 1969; some impatient people joined Lotta Continua or Potere Operaio, while others set up the Federated Anarchist Groups and published *A Rivista Anarchica*, which for years was the magazine of "alternative" anarchists. An interesting contribution that they made was the critique of "technobureaucracy" and the new "managerial" capitalism, a sort of carbon copy of John Burnham's *The Managerial Revolution*, which Bonanno studied and popularized in later writings. A third current was made up of those inspired by the Platform of Arshinov and Makhno, like the French ORA, advocating an even more rigid and above all more vanguardist organization, a guardian of the principles of an old and protected anarchism.

However, splits aside, the main problem for the FAI from 1968 on seems to have been Situationist ideas, those true solvents of stereotypical militant slogans and anarcho-sindicalist/antimarxist commonplaces that cemented together a stagnant and paralyzing idea-space, incapable of realizing a unitary and radical critique of the new class society with which to orient struggles

against the new form of Power. The Situationist International, which had an Italian section, had ended up embodying the figure of "historical evil" for the officials of the FAI, ideologues of a certain "anarchism" that was perfectly compatible with a modern class society. The tension between the officials and a contestatory sector in constant ferment that accused them of bureaucratism and ideology and that advocated a critique of everyday life, spoke of workers' councils, or defended violent methods, provoked a paranoid sort of defensive reflex among the former. The FAI bureaucrats felt themselves infiltrated by mysterious Situationist agents and reacted by calling for a congress, the tenth, in Carrara, April 10, 1971, dedicated entirely to combatting the phantom of the SI. The congress decided to exclude the "anarchosituationists" to prevent their example from spreading to local groups and federations. The insignificant FAI, obsessed by what were ultimately just the antibureaucratic effects for the first stage of proletarian autonomy, remained blind before the true danger: the instrumentalization of the anarchist movement by the secret services of the Italian State. Indeed, the police blamed the fascist bombs in Milan (April 29 1969) and Piazza Fontana (December 12 1969) on anarchists. One of them, Giuseppe Pinelli, was thrown through the window of a police station; another, Pietro Valpreda, was chosen as the scapegoat of the attentats. The issue went beyond the libertarian media and had the entire society in a state of tension. To aggravate people's morale even more, in May of 1972 the anarchist Francesco Serantini was beaten to death by the police at a demonstration, and Chief Superintendent Calabresi, the one responsible for Pinelli's death, was executed by a commando unit a few days later. The FAI, alarmed by these events, did not hesitate to distance itself from violent responses to repression, even condemning the attentats and bombs against the police and the magistrature. Bonanno, who had condemned the bombing of the Milan Police Command a year earlier, had the opposite attitude, as documented in the pages of his publication *Sinistra Libertaria*, signing his name to an article entitled "I Killed Chief Superintendent Calabresi."¹ For this sense of humor and courage, in October of 1972, he was awarded a sentence of two years and two months for "defense of the crime."

4 pamphlets on the State, abstention, and revolution. Around this time he

1 There may be some confusion here on Amorós' part. Bonanno was jailed in October 1972 for an article in *Sinistra Libertaria*, but the Milan Police Command was bombed in 1973, so the article in question would have been published later—presumably after Bonanno was free. Additionally, the article Amorós seems to be referring to bears the significantly different title "I Know Who Killed Chief Superintendent Calabresi."

terminado por encarnar la figura del "mal histórico" ante los propietarios de la FAI, ideólogos de un determinado "anarquismo" perfectamente compatible con una sociedad de clases modernizada. La tensión entre los propietarios y un sector contestatario en constante ebullición que les acusaba de burocratismo e ideología y que proponía una crítica de la vida cotidiana, hablaba de consejos obreros o defenidía métodos violentos, provocó un reflejo defensivo entre los primeros de tipo paranoico. Los burócratas faístas se sentían infiltrados por misteriosos agentes situacionistas y reaccionaron convocando un congreso, el décimo, que se celebró en Carrara el 10 de abril de 1971, dedicado íntegramente a combatir el fantasma de la I.S. El congreso tomó la decisión de excluir a los "anarchosituacionistas" para evitar que el ejemplo cundiese en los grupos y federaciones locales. La insignificantante FAI, obsesionada por lo que eran más que los efectos antiburocráticos del primer estado de la autonomía proletaria, permanecía ciega ante el verdadero peligro, el de la instrumentalización del movimiento libertario por los servicios secretos del Estado italiano. En efecto, las bombas fascistas de Milán del 29 de abril y las de Piazza Fontana del 12 de diciembre de 1969 fueron atribuidas por la policía a los anarquistas. Uno de ellos, Giuseppe Pinelli, fue arrojado por la ventana de una comisaría y otro, Pietro Valpreda, fue escogido como cabeza de turco de los atentados. El asunto trascendía los medios libertarios y puso en tensión a toda la sociedad. Para exacerbar más los ánimos en mayo de 1972 el anarquista Franco Serantini fue apaleado hasta la muerte por la policía en una manifestación y el comisario Calabresi, responsable de la muerte de Pinelli, fue ejecutado por un comando al cabo de unos días. La FAI, alarmada por los acontecimientos, no dudó en distanciarse de las respuestas violentas a la represión llegando a condenar los atentados y las bombas contra la policía y la magistratura. Bonanno, que había condeñado el bombarzo en la Cuestoria de Milán un año antes, tuvo una actitud opuesta hecha constar en las páginas de "*Sinistra libertaria*", publicación de la que era responsable, firmando un artículo titulado "Yo maté al comisario Calabresi", sentido del humor y valentía que le valió en octubre de 1972 una condena de dos años y dos meses por "apología del delito".

Cabe pensar que leyó bastante en el trullo porque en 1974 publicó algunos folletos sobre el Estado, la abstención y la revolución. A estas alturas ya creía haber arrojado a la balanza de las justas tédricas el peso decisivo de su pensamiento, editando una espesa antología titulada "Autogestión y anarquismo". Al año siguiente dio a imprimir el libro "Autogestión y anarquismo" conficcionalado a la manera de cortar y pegar (editado también en España), mientras seguía con sus artículos para la revista tédrica bimestral

pre-revolutionary phase, so the fundamental thing was the autonomous organization of workers, for which "autonomous base nuclei" or "autonomous worker nuclei" were necessary: these were just "small autonomous base organizations dedicated to the radical struggle against the present structures of production" ["A Critique of Syndicalist Methods"]. These nuclei would be the place where anarchists met the proletariat. He distrusted larger structures such as workers' assemblies, since they restricted the autonomy of groups and could be easily manipulated by bureaucrats and demagogues. He did not say much about the steps that came after that—and then a qualitative jump in social tensions put the question of arms on the table.

In the mid-70s the Italian state had weakened to the extreme. It revealed its frailty by recurring to staging terrorist acts that pointed to fictitious enemies with the complicity of the mass media and the Stalinists. The attempts at industrial restructuring aggravated social revolt, which moved from the factories to the street. In Bonanno's words, "the revolutionary movement, including the anarchist movement, was in a phase of development, and anything seemed possible, including the generalization of armed conflict." The existence of a militarized party like the Red Brigades provoked in anti-authoritarian milieus the fear that it would seize control of struggles. The debate on armed libertarian alternatives gave birth in 1977 to *Azione Rivoluzionaria* (AR), "a combat structure as open as possible to the base." The critique of arms, "the only force that can make a project credible" according to AR, was reaching the level of open confrontation among revolutionaries (no longer in the FAI, which, much more interested in syndicalism than revolution, obviously condemned armed struggle). Some saw it as a separated violence that did not lead to class conflict but to the spectacle of conflict, contributing to criminalize the "autonomist movement" and to provoke its repression. For AR the movement would not be taken seriously, and seriously feared, without an armed guerilla. It was logical for repression to follow the revolutionary offensive, guerilla or no guerilla, but thanks to the guerilla's role as lightning rod, throwing itself onto the repressive apparatus, the movement still had its bases, its newspapers, and its radio stations. Bonanno's first response was the text "Revolutionary Movement and Project," followed by the book *Armed Joy*, which had a great impact in its time owing less to breaking militant taboos than to being banned soon after publication (in Bologna close to three thousand were distributed or sold). There was a Spanish edition called *Armed Pleasure*. The book has no analysis of the moment, nor does it seriously discuss weapons: it is a book of principles, not strategy. Its novelty is not in its content, recuperated from the *Comontismo* group (1972-1974) and

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encuentro entre los anarquistas y el proletariado. Desconfiaba de estructuras más amplias como las asambleas obreras porque coartaban la autonomía de los grupos y se podía ser fácilmente manipulado por burócratas y demagogos. No se definió demasiado sobre los pasos siguientes hasta que un salto cualitativo en la conflictividad social puso sobre el tapete la cuestión de las armas. A mediados de los años setenta el Estado italiano se había debilitado en gran medida y había revelado sus flaquezas recurriendo a los montajes terroristas que señalaban enemigos ficticios, con la complicidad de los medios de comunicación y los estalinistas. Las tentativas de reestructuración industrial agravaban la revuelta social que pasaba de las fábricas a la calle. En palabras de Bonanno, "el movimiento revolucionario, incluyendo el anarquista, estaba en una fase de desarrollo y todo parecía posible, incluso la generalización del conflicto armado." La existencia de un partido militarizado como las Brigadas Rojas, provocaba en los medios autoritarios el temor a que éste tomara la dirección de las luchas. El debate sobre alternativas armadas libertarias dio lugar en 1977 al nacimiento de *Azione Rivoluzionaria*, "una estructura combatiente lo más abierta posible a la base". La crítica de las armas, "la única fuerza que puede hacer creíble cualquier proyecto" según A.R., alcanzaba niveles de enfrentamiento, no ya en la FAI (que, más interesada en el sindicalismo que en la revolución, obviamente condenaba la lucha armada), sino entre los mismos revolucionarios. Para unos se trataba de una violencia separada que no favorecía el enfrentamiento de clase sino el espectáculo del enfrentamiento, contribuyendo a criminalizar el movimiento de la autonomía" y a provocar su represión. Para A.R. el movimiento no hubiera sido tomado en serio y seriamente temido si no fuera por la guerrilla armada. Era lógico que la represión sucediese a la ofensiva revolucionaria hubiese o no guerrilla, pero gracias a que ésta hizo de pararrayos echándose encima al aparato represivo, el movimiento todavía conservaba sus sedes, sus periódicos y sus radios. La respuesta de Bonanno fue primero el texto "Movimiento y proyecto revolucionario", seguido por el libro "El goce armado", muy impactante en su momento debido más que a la rotura de tabúes militantes, al hecho de estar prohibido al poco de publicarse (en la concentración de Bologna fueron repartidos o vendidos cerca de tres mil). Hubo una edición española que llevó por título "El placer armado". El libro no contiene ningún análisis del momento, ni discute seriamente de armas: es un libro de estrategia sino de principios. La novedad no reside en su contenido, recuperado de la obra del grupo "Comontismo" (1972-1974) y de los escritos del ex situacionista Raoul Vaneigem, "Terrorismo y revolución" (1972) y "De la huelga salvaje a la autogestión generalizada" (1974), de

the writings of the ex-Situationist Raoul Vaneigem ("Terrorism and Revolution" [1972] and "From the wildcat strike to generalized self-management" [1974], which were quite popular in Italy) but in that it brings together and, with a superficial touch appropriate for any and all readers, deals with every issue that could concern rebels who do not particularly like to read and for whom revolution is a kind of generalized open bar party. Despite some disdainful words he has for May '68, his language is prositu: revolution is a festival, never work, self-management is the self-management of exploitation, struggle is pleasure, play is a weapon, destruction of the commodity, etc. The word *spectacle* is repeated dozens of times, while references to the State, more appropriate for anarchists, are minimal. On some pages, Bonanno feigned, in Vaneigemese, to "oppose the non-work aesthetic to the work ethic." Although not long before, he had fought for the "autonomous organization of production," now "The only way for the exploited to escape the globalizing project of capital is through the refusal of work, production and political economy [...] The revolution cannot be reduced to a simple reorganization of work. ... The revolution is the negation of labor and the affirmation of joy." Despite having dedicated a book to the idea that the expropriated should reappropriate the totality of the productive process, that is, self-management, now he condemned it as a mystification: "If the struggle is victorious the self-management of production becomes superfluous, because after the revolution the organization of production is superfluous and counter-revolutionary." Someone looking for an outline of strategy or just practical ideas to face the immediate problems of that revolution which in 1977 was played for double or nothing was not going to find them in the book, always one mystification ahead, including the parts about armed struggle. Besides congratulating himself for violence against the police, bosses, or the journalists of power, and that bit about "hurry to arm yourself," he warned against making the machine gun sacred, since armed struggle did not represent "the entirety of the revolutionary dimension." In any case it was unquestionable, since any criticism of it would help "the torturers": "When we say the time is not ripe for an armed attack on the State we are pushing open the doors of the mental hospital for the comrades who are carrying out such attacks." And that's all: a call to have a good time and leave the armed groups be while the Italian proletariat faced the choice of abolishing work or continuing to work. Bonanno, since the pages of *Anarchismo*, had affirmed the generalization of illegal behavior and the pre-revolutionary slant of the moment, but the guerilla organization AR ironized about the purely literary character of the positioning of the "critical critique of Catania" that "will finally clarify what

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the revolutionary tasks of anarchists are. Given the premises, we should expect this kind of response: anarchists should bring the exploited to revolt. If we interpret that with ill will, this will mean: the old guard, the Leninists, the Stalinists, the workerists, all revolt. Why do anarchists limit themselves to bringing others to do it? Who will push them? Are they not once again outside of history? A well-meaning interpretation: to push the exploited to revolt in the only possible way, that is, to revolt themselves, not with rivers of ink...” (AR, “The Movement of ‘77 and the Guerrilla”). The general strike never happened, so that armed groups and unrealistic elements like Bonanno were more and more isolated. Although the ebb of the movement of 1977 left armed struggle as the only way out for many rebels, there were never the ten, one hundred, one thousand armed nuclei that AR announced in its founding statement. The unions imposed order in the factories and the police imposed it in the streets. The State reinforced itself; illegal acts were harshly repressed. There were waves of detentions; armed struggle dissolved like a sugar cube in water. In 1979, most of the members of AR were imprisoned and, from their cells, announced the guerilla was over. Some went over to the Leninist organization *Prima Linea*, which produced doubts about the ideological steadiness of the former organization, so roundly proclaimed in their leaflets and communiqués. At the end of 1977, Bonanno was arrested for *Armed Jay* and, on November 30, 1979, condemned to a year and a half of prison for having written it. Far from cowering or repenting, he made common cause with activist prisoners, such as those of the Red Brigades or the P38, publically lashing out against Amadeo Bertolo and Paolo Finzi, who, in *A Rivista Anarchica*, had gone all out in attacking his review of a book on Emile Henry. It was the first time he had been publically attacked in an anarchist newspaper; they laid into him for showing off in meetings. Bonanno took advantage of the occasion to deal with the question of class violence minus suspicious moralizing: “A terrorist is not someone who confronts power with violence in order to destroy it; it is one who uses violent and cruel means to secure the continuance of exploitation. That is why, since only a small minority is interested in that continuance (bosses, fascists, politicians of every stripe, union officers, etc.) it is logical to deduce that the ‘true’ terrorists are the latter, insofar as they use violent means to perpetuate exploitation. These people’s violence is carried out in the force of laws, in prisons, in the obligation to work, in the automatic mechanism of exploitation. The rebellion of the exploited is never terrorism.” (“Of the Terrorism of some Idiots and Other Matters,” 1979). Assimilating constraints to extreme forms of oppression, he identifies it all with terrorism: “Let us say that a terrorist must be one who terrorizes another,

del posicionamiento de la “crítica crítica de Catania”, que “por fin quiere aclarar lo que deberían ser las tareas revolucionarias de los anarquistas. Dadas las premisas sería de esperar una respuesta de este tipo: los anarquistas habrán de empujar a los explotados a rebelarse. Si lo interpretamos con malidad eso querrá decir: la vieja cantinela, los leninistas, los estalinistas, los obreristas se rebelan ¿por qué los anarquistas se limitan a empujar a los demás a hacerlo? ¿Quién les empujará a la vez? ¿No estarán de nuevo fuera de la historia? Una interpretación benévola: empujar a los explotados a rebelarse de la única manera posible, es decir, rebelándose ellos, no con ríos de tinta...” (A.R., “El Movimiento de 1977 y la guerrilla»). La huelga general no tuvo lugar, quedando los grupos armados y los elementos irrealistas como Bonanno cada vez más aislados. Aunque el refugio del movimiento de 1977 dejó la lucha armada como única salida para muchos rebeldes, no hubieron los diez, cien, mil núcleos armados que anunció A. R. en su declaración fundacional. Los sindicatos impusieron el orden en las fábricas y la policía, en la calle. El Estado se reforzó y los comportamientos ilegales fueron duramente reprimidos. Se produjeron oleadas de detenciones; la lucha armada se disolvió como un azucarillo en el agua. En 1979 la mayoría de miembros de Azione Rivoluzionaria cayeron presos y desde las celdas dieron punto final a la guerrilla, pasando algunos a la organización leninista Prima Linea, cosa que despertaba dudas sobre la firmeza ideológica de aquella organización, tan rotundamente afirmada en sus octavillas y comunicados. A finales de 1977 Bonanno fue arrestado por «El Gozo armado» y condenado el 30 de noviembre de 1979 a un año y medio de cárcel por haberlo escrito. Lejos de acobardarse o de arrepentirse, se solidarizó con los activistas prisioneros, incluso con los de B. R. o los P38, arremetiendo públicamente contra Amadeo Bertolo y Paolo Finzi que desde «A Rivista Anarchica» se habían despachado a gusto contra su recensión de un libro sobre Emile Henry. Era la primera vez que le atacaban públicamente desde una tribuna anarquista y le restregaban sus exhibicionismos en las reuniones. Bonanno aprovechó la ocasión para tratar la cuestión de la violencia de clase sin entretenerse en moralismos sospechosos: «Terrorista no es el que se enfrenta al poder con violencia para destruirlo, sino el que emplea medios violentos y crueles para asegurar la continuidad de la explotación. Por eso, ya que solo una pequeña minoría se interesa en dicha continuidad [patrones, fascistas, políticos de cualquier tipo y color, sindicalistas, etc.], es lógico deducir que los «verdaderos terroristas son estos últimos, en cuanto que emplean medios violentos para perpetuar la explotación. Y la violencia de esta gente se realiza en la fuerza de

the "dissociated", those who promised never to fight the state in exchange for penitentiary benefits, and he signed up for the chorus of those who asked for amnesty. Bonanno rightly attacked them in the 1984 booklet entitled *And We Will Still Be Ready To Storm The Heavens Another Time*, which earned him another trial. From the easy defeat of the revolutionaries he drew conclusions that went against those of the surviving anarchist organizations, since they indicated the need for violent action against persons and things that embodied repression, bourgeois justice, technobureaucracy, syndicalism, and capitalism, all of which must "be translated into precise act, acts of attack, not just in words, but in deeds" ("The Illogical Revolution," 1984). True anarchists must be in permanent revolt and begin to attack: "We insistently reaffirm that the use of organized violence against exploiters, even if it takes the form of minoritarian and limited action, is an indispensable instrument in the anarchist struggle against exploitation" (*And We Will...*) After years of beating around the bush, finally the step was to be taken. The prison cell discussions and the shameful spectacle of the repentant and dissociated had each contributed something. Bonanno, who we thank for forgetting Spinoza and the "diffuse worker", pronounces obvious truths that are fortunately not disguised by his pretentious verborrhea: "They will not give us an amnesty. We will have to pay for it." The price will be the revolutionary spirit, ideas, dignity, bravery. "By accepting the agreement today, tomorrow at best we might perhaps struggle inside the ghetto where power will have parked us. ... Collaborating means surrendering to the enemy outright." For the extremist Stalinists: "The reduction of class war to a mere military confrontation carries within it the logical conclusion that, if we undergo a military defeat on this terrain, the class war ceases to exist as such. From this we come to the not just theoretical but practical absurdity that in Italy today, after the defeat of the combatant organizations, there is no longer an actual class war, and that it is in everyone's interest (and in the State's interest first of all), to negotiate a surrender in order to avoid the development, or the continued development, of a process of struggle that is absolutely nonexistent and completely useless as well as dangerous for all of us" (ibid). In fact, the betrayal of Negri and the collaborators resided in their weird Leninism, which translated everything into terms of separated power. As self-proclaimed representatives of the working class, they were the privileged interlocutors of the State and their salvation was to crudely depict the central question. As a defeated party, they were not going to fight for their freedom, but to negotiate their freedom to take up the struggle again by other means. With their future mortgaged by the agreements with the State, what would that struggle look

En mayo de 1984 la policía realizó una razzia contra los anarquistas vinculados a la revista «Anarchismo». Bonanno y sus compañeros fueron acusados de pertenecer a Azione Rivoluzionaria, pero el momento fue resultado de un fracaso del movimiento revolucionario se produjo en medio de un sínfin de delatores y arrepentidos. El mismo Toni Negri encabezó a los «disociados», aquellos que se comprometían a no combatir jamás al Estado a cambio de beneficios penitenciarios, y se apuntó al coro de los que pedían amnistía. Bonanno arremetió justamente contra todos en el libro de 1984 titulado «Y nosotros estamos siempre dispuestos a empujarnos mutuamente en el cielo», lo que le valió otro proceso. De la fácil derrota de los revolucionarios sacó conclusiones que iban en sentido opuesto al de las organizaciones anarquistas supervivientes, pues apuntaban hacia la acción violenta contra las personas y objetos que encarnaban la represión, la justicia burguesa, la tecnoburocracia, el sindicalismo y el capitalismo, todo lo cual debía «traducirse en actos precisos, en actos de ataque, no sólo verbal, sino en los hechos» («La Revolución ilógica», 1984). Los verdaderos anarquistas debían estar en revuelta permanente y pasar al ataque: «Reafirmamos con insistencia nuestra convicción de que el uso de la violencia organizada contra los explotadores, incluso cuando revise el aspecto de acción minoritaria y circunscrita, es un instrumento indispensable de la lucha anarquista contra la explotación» («Y nosotros, etc.»). Después de años mareando la perdiz, por fin se había decidido a dar el paso. Las discusiones de la cárcel y el espectáculo de los arrepentidos y disociados habían contribuido a suyo. Bonanno, a quien agradeceremos que se olvidara y del «obrero» y «difuso», dice verdades evidentes: «La amnistía, no nos la daremos. La tendremos que pagar. El precio será el espíritu revolucionario, las ideas, la dignidad, el valor.» Si aceptamos hoy el acuerdo, mañana como muchos otros lucharemos dentro del gueto en el que nos habrán apareado el poder. ... colaborar no es un acto de debilidad, sino un acto de valentía. Para los estalinistas: «La reducción de la guerra de clases a un simple enfrentamiento militar lleva a la conclusión lógica de que si sobre tal, se llega al absurdo, no sólo teórico, sino práctico, de que hoy en Italia, después de la derrota de las organizaciones combatientes, no se trata ya de una guerra de clases en actos, y que intereses a todos (y en primer lugar al Estado) negociar una rendición para evitar que se desarrolle un proceso contra-funcional absolutamente ficticio y completamente perjudicial para cada uno (ibidem). Efectivamente, la traición de Negri y los colaboradores residió en

like? Bonanno accurately indicated that it was one thing to drop your weapons because you had changed your mind and another to do it because the dominant power demanded it of you: "they don't want your 'critique', they want your *mea culpa*" (ibid., JW trans. modified). Before the state, no one is innocent: "We are all responsible for our dream of storming the heavens. We cannot turn ourselves into dwarves now, after having dreamed, elbow to elbow, each feeling the others' heartbeats, of attacking and overthrowing the gods. This is the dream that makes power afraid. [...] No one can be neutral; we are guilty of the planning and preparation of that climate which filled us with enthusiasm and led us along. Even the most critical of us could not claim perfect innocence. In the eyes of the State, it is precisely this climate that is guilty. We must assume responsibility for this" (ibid). But these flashes of lucidity were not enough to shed light on the new panorama of the 80s, with a submissive working class and thousands of people in prison. To search for a balance sheet of the process that led to this disaster in his works is to search in vain. Bonanno only offered us a reaffirmation: "In these times of liquidation and stagnation, we reaffirm that our struggle is a struggle for total liberation, here and now." Using an inverted Manicheanism, he opposed class struggle to insurrectionary revolt, by not considering the latter as a moment of the development of the former, but as an instrument: "For us, intermediate struggles are not a goal but a means that we use (even rather often) to achieve a different goal: that of urging people to revolt. [...] The important thing is that intermediate struggles must reach a violent outcome, a breaking point, an essential line beyond which recuperation would no longer be possible." To get there, he needed to be aware of the necessity of generalizing violence and that was the function of the "specific movement": "we must create the possibility of a specific movement that is capable of encountering the real movement, in places and moods in which the latter's pulse becomes perceptible to the former" (ibid.). To the degree that such logorrhea made sense, it sounded bad: the masses were incapable of reaching revolutionary goals without the concurrence of an elite (be it called "specific movement"); if not, its "intermediate" struggles would never reach the necessary insurrectional level. Bonannist anarchism was beginning to concretize as a vulgar adventurist and vanguardist ideology, fairly close in its theoretical foundations to the militarist extremism of the "armed party." In the following years Bonanno elaborated the basic concepts of the insurrectionalist ideology, setting out from the separation between class struggle and insurrectional struggle, a separation that only a select "specific" minority could help to overcome. His work began to be known outside of Italy and he himself became an infamous

al teorizar. Según él la clase obrera quedaba progresivamente al margen de la producción por pérdida de productividad y, además, la revolución podía tanto reducir el nivel de vida como aumentar el nivel de vida. Pero si se decidía por la vía pacífica, se corría el riesgo de que la revolución fuera abortada por la reacción de la burguesía. Bonanno se había percatado de esto y se había planteado la posibilidad de un ataque directo a la burguesía. En 1987, en un artículo publicado en la revista "Enciclopedia de las Nuisances" para presentar la nueva serie de "Anarchismo", anunció su intención de publicar un artículo sobre el tema. Cortes no dudó en aceptar el artículo y Bonanno publicó el artículo en la revista. En 1987, en un artículo publicado en la revista "Enciclopedia de las Nuisances" para presentar la nueva serie de "Anarchismo", anunció su intención de publicar un artículo sobre el tema. Cortes no dudó en aceptar el artículo y Bonanno publicó el artículo en la revista. En 1987, en un artículo publicado en la revista "Enciclopedia de las Nuisances" para presentar la nueva serie de "Anarchismo", anunció su intención de publicar un artículo sobre el tema. Cortes no dudó en aceptar el artículo y Bonanno publicó el artículo en la revista.

shelved indefinitely, but I have already said that theory is not his forte and, having to regularly fill up a couple of publications, he unscrupulously proceeded with the materials he was pirating. For example, in 1987 he copied the layout and typography of the magazine *Encyclopédie des Nuisances* for the new series of *Anarchismo*, which would be a harmless anecdote were it not for the fact that three articles of the *EdN* were copied in two successive issues of Bonanno's organ. Unexplained cuts, abusive interpolations, arbitrary revisions and numerous unintentional errors forced the *EdN* to propagate a communiqué that concluded "Those who, showing off a critique that is not their own, begin by concealing its origin as much as possible, as well as hiding the struggles from which it emerges and the relations they imply, show, in this way, that they are not capable of using this critique and discovering the secrets of their time, or of understanding the diverse specialized operations of spectacular democracy. Where fiction rules the large stage, small falsifications are of no importance. We nevertheless take advantage of the occasion to declare our modest conviction that the latter explain the triumph of the former, and that the collapse of the former comes through the end of the latter." Such trifles did not concern Bonanno. His problem was, on one hand, "attack", and, on the other, the police's attempts to implicate him in various attentats.

He was the first agitator since Blanqui to declare the possibility of an offensive against Power during a complete retreat of the working class. It was evidently an attempt to escape historical conditions through the overwhelming action of minorities. The main role was, according to Bonanno, to be given to informal groups, the only ones capable of acting effectively. The masses were not interested in revolutionary revelry. He condemned mass demonstrations as peaceful and useless; in their place, in addition to demonstrations "organized in the insurrectional way" he called for "the need for small destructive acts, for direct attack against the structures of capital." The responsibility for those attacks should be fully taken on by the groups and not depend on favorable or unfavorable consequences, or the level of general consciousness. The decision to directly attack Capital and the State was the business of revolutionaries, repositories of the insurrectional essence of conflict. "We either attack or retreat. We either accept the class logic of the clash as an irreducible counter-position or move backwards towards negotiation and verbal and moral deception" ["Propulsive Utopia"]. If they wanted to live their lives, liberate their instincts, negate bourgeois ideals, satisfy their authentic needs or whatever other trivialities from the liberated vocabulary of the dissatisfied rebels, words were not enough. Anarchists had to overcome

the political and moral barriers that impeded them from acting. Bonanno described such efforts as “the great work of liberating the new ethical man” (“The Moral Fracture,” in his magazine *Provocazione*, March 1988). He disdained assembly-style methods because they slowed down or stopped the more decisive actions; he also disdained initiatives that sought to bring together the maximum number of adherents: “the mania for quantity”. For that reason he paid no attention to the protest movements at the base, such as the COBAS [*Confederazione dei Comitati di Base*], constituted in November 1987. The Bonannist model was that of the “self-managed leagues” formed at the beginning of the eighties by the people of Comiso (Sicily) to oppose an American missile base. They were informal “nuclei” advised by anarchists with only one objective: the destruction of the military base. With no program, autonomous (i.e. independent of parties, unions, or any other entity), they remained in “permanent conflict” with domination and “attacking” without engaging in dialogue, negotiations, or agreements. Probably so as to distinguish them from non-immediately destructive struggles, he called these sorts of conflicts “intermediate struggles”, to contrast them with others with wider objectives, motivated by the “insurrectional task”, like the “struggle against technology” that resulted in the dynamiting of more than one hundred high voltage towers between 1986 and 1988. The translation of a German pamphlet that detailed how to blow up one of these towers earned Bonanno a new stay in prison. In the campaign of the pylons, in which rebels of various countries participated, the mania for quantity returned through the back door: the syndicalists counted membership cards, and the activists, bombings. The quantitative spirit prevailed equally in all. For the efficacy of an attack does not depend on the number of explosions, nor on the degree of destruction brought about. There are not “intermediate” struggles and real struggles; there are practical struggles and useless struggles—struggles that awaken the consciousness of oppression and struggles that put it to sleep. The police was unable to implicate Bonanno in any violent act, but it did treacherously implicate him in a jewelry store robbery. He was arrested on February 2, 1989, and freed without charges two years later. Once free, he seized the opportunity to travel to Spain and put the finishing touches on insurrectionalism, an ideology that had its influence in the anarchist milieus of various countries where anarchism was stagnant, dormant, and controlled by factions.

In 1992, Bonanno and other comrades decided to take a qualitative leap in “attack”, seizing an “organizational occasion”. To that end, they brought together the group that instigated an Anti-Authoritarian Insurrectionalist

general. La decisión de atacar directamente al Capital y al estado no compete a los revolucionarios, depositarios de la esencia insurreccional del conflicto: «D» O aceptar o no es hasta el fin la lógica de clase del enfrentamiento como contraposición irreducible y sin solución o vavamos paratras, haciela los pactos, los detalles, los embrollós lingüísticos y morales. Si querian vivir sus vidas, liberar los institutos, negar los ideales burgueses, satisface sus necesidades puntuales y otras cosas que se consideraban vocacionales, las palabras no bastaban. Cada anarquista tenía que superar las barreras políticas y morales que le impedían actuar. Bonanno calificaba esas esfuerzos de «el gran trabajo de liberación humana nuevo de la ética» («La fractura moral», en «Provocazione», publicación dirigida por él, marzo 1988). Desdeñaba los métodos asamblearios porque querían unirse y no prestaba atención a los movimientos reivindicativos de base como los COBAS, constituidos en noviembre de 1987. El modelo bonannista eran las «ligas autogestionadas» que formaron a principios de los ochenta los habitantes de Comiso (Sicilia) para oponerse a la construcción de una base americana de misiles. Se trataba de «unión» informales asesorados por los anarquistas solos o conjuntamente, la destrucción de la base asilista, sin programas, autónomos (i.e. independientes de partidos, sindicatos, o cualquier otra entidad), en conflicto permanente con el «al» y «a» que se mantenían sin diálogo, a la transacción o al pacto. Seguramente para distinguirlos de las luchas inmediatas, denominadas a este tipo de conflictos «luchas intermedias», a diferencia de otros con objetivos amplios y motivados por el «atacar» o la «lucha contra la tecnología», que se saldó con más violencia de alta tensión y dinamitadas entre 1986 y 1988. La traducción de una octavilla alemana que precisaba detalles de cómo echar abajo una de esas torres le valió a Bonanno una nueva estancia en prisión. En la campaña de los pilones, donde participaron rebeldes de varios países, la campaña de las torres le valió a Bonanno una nueva estancia en prisión. En la traducción de una octavilla alemana que precisaba detalles de cómo echar abajo una de esas torres le valió a Bonanno una nueva estancia en prisión. En la campaña de los pilones, donde participaron rebeldes de varios países, la campaña de las torres le valió a Bonanno una nueva estancia en prisión. En la traducción de una octavilla alemana que precisaba detalles de cómo echar abajo una de esas torres le valió a Bonanno una nueva estancia en prisión. En la campaña de los pilones, donde participaron rebeldes de varios países, la campaña de las torres le valió a Bonanno una nueva estancia en prisión. En la traducción de una octavilla alemana que precisaba detalles de cómo echar abajo una de esas torres le valió a Bonanno una nueva estancia en prisión. En la campaña de los pilones, donde participaron rebeldes de varios países, la campaña de las torres le valió a Bonanno una nueva estancia en prisión.

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 -actuara o no se actuara. El bonannismo, peculiar version del «do it your-
 La accion devenia un criterio moral: se era bueno o no mal anarquista segun se
 sin uniforme. ¿Cómo pararse si se estaba? «conflictividad permanente»?
 Un anarquista sin accion era como un jardin sin flores, o como un militar
 es decir, la accion. La accion adquira entonces una dimension existencial.
 y el poder se reparte. «metafisica» o la «operaciones» de la «operaciones»
 mente se le funcion de lo que hacia y lo que pensaba, pues esto que el hacer
 Los anarquistas, si querian serlo de verdad, tenian que cuestionarse diaria-
 [entrevista a Bonanno en Radio Onda Rossa, el 20 de noviembre de 1997].

por la escuela, que nos estructuras son muy mantenidas...
 propias ideas, transformamos la realidad que lo rodea, empezamos por la familia,
 cada uno debe llevar a cabo un insurreccion consiguiente, modificar las
 duras del entorno: «el insurreccionismo es un hecho personal»
 la elevacion a un estado de anarquista que ayuda a soltarse de las liga-
 simplemente una manera de ver las cosas. Producia una liberacion intima,
 «fuerza», aun se descubria que se relacionaba un modo de vida y un
 iluminacion que dentro de nosotros se produce las consecuencias de una idea
 conciencia anarquista como una «insurreccion de caracter personal, aquella
 Cuneo, enero de 1995] e insistia en ese hecho. Bonanno describia la toma de
 era una accion, no una realizacion» «La accion anarquista», conferencia de
 desearga emocional. Bonanno se habia dado cuenta de que «el anarquismo
 logica: a quienes querian accion, les daba accion. La accion tenia algo de
 feria del Mediterraneo. Las razones de su exito relativo eran de indole sic-
 prision y de la tragedia personal. Mucho menos por haberse realizado la pro-
 por la eficacia de sus acciones, a menudo opuestas con el vinagre de la
 medios juveniles no por sus lucidos por sus lucidos. Tampoco
 atractiva característica. El insurreccionismo estaba en determinaciones
 ideas desafiadoras, opuestas a la logica, pues esto que no era precisamente
 orga nizacionales. Estos se concocieron por la inactividad de sus
 sabia transmitir a los anarquistas deceptivos por la inactividad de las
 los analisis en importancia a Bonanno, poseido por un deseo de accion que
 racionalidad de la accion, pero la incoherencia y su superficialidad de
 le terrateniente para dar lugar a la insurreccion. La incoherencia de las tesis insu-
 que amaban a la insurreccion de la revolucionaria, preparada
 tales luchas sin que se erigiera un espectaculo radical de las mismas, por lo
 luchas autonomicas. En un contexto de contrariedad el activismo no solo sustituye
 el desarrollo de la conciencia en las masas, o sea, para la emergencia de las
 objetivo de combatir al enemigo de clase. Eso significa liberar espacios para

desire for action that he was able to transmit to anarchists disappointed by
 the inactivity of traditional organizations. They became followers of his ideas,
 beyond all logic, especially because logic was not their most attractive char-
 acteristic. Insurrectionalism permeated certain youth milieus not because of
 its lucidity or theoretical superiority. Nor did it do so through the efficacy of its
 actions, often seasoned with the vinegar of prison and personal tragedy. Even
 less so because the Mediterranean prophecy came true. The reasons for its
 relative success were of a psychological nature: those who wanted action got
 action. Action had something of an emotional release to it. Bonanno had real-
 ized that "anarchism is a tension, not a realization" (*The Anarchist Tension*, talk
 in Cuneo, January 1995), and he insisted on this fact. Bonanno described the
 anarchist coming to consciousness as an "insurrection of a personal nature,
 that illumination which produces an idea-force inside us," a kind of revelation
 that determined a way of life and not simply a way of seeing things. It produced
 an intimate liberation, the elevation to a state of anarcho-grace that helped
 to free oneself from the bonds of one's surroundings: "insurrectionalism is a
 personal thing; each one should accomplish their own insurrection, modify
 their own ideas, transform the reality that surrounds him, beginning with the
 family, with school, which are structures that keep us imprisoned..." (Interview
 with Bonanno on Radio Onda Rossa, 20 November 1997, trans. modified).
 Anarchists, if they wanted to be real anarchists, had to question themselves
 daily in terms of what they did and what they thought, since doing and thinking
 could not go separately. Either "metaphysics" or anarchism—that is, action.
 Action therefore took on an existential dimension. An anarchist without action
 was like a garden without flowers, or like an officer without a uniform. Why stop,
 if one was in "permanent conflictuality"? Action became a moral criterion: one
 was a good anarchist or a bad anarchist depending on whether one did or did
 not act. Bonannism, that peculiar revolutionary version of American *do it your-
 self*, offered all the charms of sectarian militancy with none of its organic ser-
 vitudes. The lack of true social movements was not so much a handicap as a
 condition of insurrectionalism: the illegal character of agitation suggested, for
 obvious reasons a certain distance from prosaic work with masses. An extreme
 individualism called "autonomy" protected the professional anarchist from all
 critique (a few passages from Stirner perhaps tended to reinforce it). The insur-
 rectoros could believe themselves to be in the limelight whatever the relevance
 or pointlessness of their actions; because they were indifferent to the masses,
 they had no one to answer to. They were their only judges. Due to a histori-
 cal irony, old Bonanno has survived his contradictions and defects, thanks to
 acne.

The Insurrectionalist International met in Athens in fall 1996, a little before or a little after Bonanno was imprisoned for belonging to an armed group. Repressive forces had also begun to act, with detentions and media-judicial montages beginning in 1994. *Anarchismo* had stopped coming out, but in *Cane nero*, published in Florence, the different informal factions of the International momentarily converged. The insurrectionalists had overestimated the revolutionary possibilities of the Mediterranean countries and underestimated the repressive abilities of an over-equipped State. The most basic kind of strategy would have posed this question first of all: could insurrectionalist practice survive the repression that was about to break out? Of course not. The Marini trial was the Italian State's response to the insurrectionalist pinprick. There were similar responses in Greece and Spain (Bonanno did not pull a Fanelli: insurrectionalism had its debut here with the Córdoba robbery fiasco in 1996). Bonanno left prison in October 1997. The divergences between the different groups, exacerbated by repression, blew up as could have been predicted. The International met a second time in 2000 somewhere in Italy and concluded its existence. Four years later the Marini trial ended with harsh sentences for most of the defendants. Nevertheless, in one way or another the insurrectionalists keep at it and have not forgotten their prisoners. "Offer flowers to the rebels who failed," Vanzetti said. My critiques do not prevent me from acknowledging his courage, and our disagreement is not an obstacle for me in demanding his freedom.

Written at the request of some friends.

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La ausencia de verdaderos movimientos sociales no era un hándicap sino una condición del insurreccionismo: el carácter legal de la agitación aconsejaba por cuestiones evidentes de seguridad mantener una cierta distancia con el pro-saico trabajo de masas. Un extremado individualismo llamado "autonomía", al que si algunos pasajes de Stirner contribuían a reforzar, protegía al anarquista profesional contra las críticas. El insurrecto podía creerse en la pomada cualquiera que fuera la pertinencia o la insensatez de sus actos, pues indiferente a las masas, no rendía cuentas ante nadie. El era el único juez de sí mismo. Por una ironía de la historia, el viejo Bonanno había sobrevi-

vido a sus contradicciones y carencias gracias al acné.

La Internacional insurreccionalista se reunió en Atenas en otoño de 1996, poco antes o poco después de que Bonanno fuera encarcelado por pertenencia a banda armada. La represión también había pasado a la acción con detenciones y montajes judiciales desde 1994. «Anarchismo» había dejado de salir, pero en «Cane nero», editado en Florencia, confluyeron durante un momento las distintas facciones informales de la Internacional. Los insurreccionistas habían sobrestimado las posibilidades revolucionarias de los países mediterráneos y subestimado la capacidad represora de un Estado sobreequipado. La estrategia más elemental hubiera planteado antes que nada la pregunta: ¿podría sobrevivir la práctica insurreccional a la represión que desencadenaría de inmediato? Por supuesto que no. El proceso Marini fue la respuesta del Estado italiano al aguijoneo insurreccionalista. Hubo respuestas similares en Grecia y en España (Bonanno no hizo de Fanelli: el insurreccionismo debutó aquí en 1996 con el fiasco del atraco de Córdoba). Bonanno salió de la cárcel en octubre de 1997. Las divergencias entre los distintos grupos acentuadas por la represión estallaron como era de prever. La Internacional se reunió una segunda vez el 2000 en algún lugar de Italia y dio por terminada su existencia. Cuatro años más tarde acababa el proceso Marini con duras sentencias para la mayoría de los encartados. No obstante de una forma u otra los insurreccionistas siguen en la brecha y no han olvidado a sus presos. «Ofreced flores a los rebeldes que fracasaron», dijo Vanzetti. Nuestras críticas no nos impiden reconocer su coraje y nuestro desacuerdo no supone un obstáculo para que exijamos su liberación.

Escrito a petición de unos compañeros.

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