

The War Over My Life

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The battery feels cold against my fingertips. I stop grubbing about in the desk drawer. Slowly the filter of the cigarette pastes itself onto my lips. The thread of steel wool from the workshop is diligently prepared with the eyes and the fit for the battery. Solemnly I construct the smouldering gear. First at the positive pole. Important that the smouldering point, the eye, is proper. And so the other end follows at the negative pole. The smouldering appears quickly. Hurriedly the tobacco filled mouth of the cigarette meets the glowing eye. Puff. Puff. The cigarette is litten. The smell of burned metal, battery acid and tobacco smoke. It is past lockup. I'm really not the smoker type, I'm doing the snuff but then again the forbidden smoking ritual... A heretic ritual. A spit in the face of the correctional institution...a manifestation of a fervent need within me, to refuse that uniform that they are trying to impose on me. It raises the life quality...

I light a cigarette that I sloppily rolled myself. I stand in front of the house where I live in an European metropole. A catholic church faces me in defiance from the opposite side of the street. The cigarette no longer raises the life quality, it is now as much a part of my everyday life as was the strip-searches in prison.

I can never speak for anyone else without committing a most horrific crime to myself, I can always only speak from my own experiences, my contradicting interests and desires.

The prison that I was defying when I was lighting a cigarette with a battery and a piece of steel wool, is the same prison that I defy when I today choose to act for myself, for my liberation and to be able to live together with other free individuals. This is not a prison with a given name or a specific place to find for confrontation. It is a prison that I see us all living in.

The shapes it takes are so many and its guises are so different but what they all have in common is that they are substantialized as soon as you try to approach the spontaneous, the wordless, the immediate, the unmediated – that, which is your life. There are many different names for this prison – shame, justification, obligation, duty, obedience - that all are deriving from the same source, which is, to be ruled by someone else's interests.

The prison walls most simple to aim ones arsenal at, are of course the ones right in front of us. Whether it be a local cop station, a company or one of the state institutions that so innocently, through hard paper work, administrate our life circumstances.

But what is then a demolished wall when you later finance its reconstruction with the taxes you pay from the work you have been more or less imposed to do? When, after all, there is yet another wall and yet another still...behind the first one?

Attack is a splendid act but is so easily institutionalized into becoming yet another unreflected part of ones administrated everyday life's constitution. The attack is indeed an act of self-defense when it is aimed from a slave to a ruler but how long are we gonna act like slaves, how long are we gonna defend ourselves? How long are we gonna let our ideas – our passions and wills – give in to the fear of *really* becoming a threat to the ruling interests? When do we quit our roles as submitted and start acting with the self-confidence of one who lacks of masters? When do we stop believing in change and start to destroy the foundation of this prison, that surrounds us all from first breath to the last?

We can only be ruled so far as we allow ourselves to be. It might sound cynical but it is at the same time a statement hard to disarm. Ultimately: The one who rather chooses to die than to bow before a master, is in no way better or worse than any other individual – disgusting moralist values don't belong here – but what we can say is that it dies as itself. It chooses to die of and for itself, for its will to live completely in accordance to its own passions, needs and desires. It chooses to die rather than to serve someone else's interests.

Most people continue, however, barely living, to kill themselves for someone else's interests. Few are of course the ones who *wish* to die but, confronted with the possibility to really live, will they dear to take the chance?

What does it really mean to live in *constant hostility* with the existent, with the state, with the interests that tries to rule me? Put aside the rather exciting taste it gives as the words roll out of the mouth, it is of course something that recieves a new answer every time a comrade asks herself that question.

For me, this means to never become comfortable in the circumstances that the rulers create for us – circumstances they create in an illusory exchange for our submission. I enjoy life as much as I can but I never sink so far into the sofa, that I can't get up again.

This means that my everyday life does not only consist of pure survival, or to "take care of myself" according to the latest fashion, or to achieve something that does not correspond with my passions, dreams, needs and wishes, may they be social or societal expectations or obligations.

For me this means a *constant conflictuality* with my current existence, which is to say, with the interests that try to rule my life. This means the active search for the materialization of my anti-authoritarian rage and opportunities for confrontation with all the structures that maintain this society.

This means to *never compromise* with these structures. To never fall for the promises of change,accommodation, negotiation or improvement. For my basic survival I do of course need to make practical compromises but to mix them up with the place that what my heart desires has, that my passions and ideas has, is just one big self-delusion. To mix them up means in this case to hand over to the State my arms, in one self-loathing weapons amnesty. To put the gloves on the shelf and be pleased with the existence this society offers me. This means to not feed myself with the lie that I can live a life on my own terms within this society.

To *never compromise* means to never stop fighting as long as my freedom and my life is being restricted and ruled by someone else.

The gate opens slowly. The sun makes me peer. On the parking lot the hacks' cars are reflecting the sun in their shiny paint. The air above the asphalt is rippling. It smells of freshly mowed lawn and elder. My clothes are so last Fall's fashion and way to warm. The sweat is pushing through the eyelids. They say that if you turn around, you will come back. I turn around in defiance, smile and reach out a long finger. I think a bit about the time that has passed. A tear appears in my eye but soon disappears into the sweat. The smile expands. I turn back again, let go of what I have in my hands and cartwheel over the baking- hot asphalt. Soon my ride arrives with loud music through the downrolled windows...

Constantly enriched of experiences in the struggle against the existent, from one prison to another, I throw myself with a fighting spirit in to the war over my life!

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