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"So turn to yourselves rather than to your gods or idols: discover what is hidden within you, bring it to the light; reveal yourself!"

Because everyone that searches his inner being and draws out what is mysteriously hidden there, is a shadow eclipsing every form of Society that exists beneath the rays of the Sun!

All societies tremble when the scornful aristocracy of Vagabonds, Unique ones, Unapproachable ones, rulers over the ideal, and Conquerors of Nothing advance without inhibitions. So, come on, Iconoclasts, forward!

"Already the foreboding sky grows dark and silent!"

Arcola, January 1920

It is an absolute and urgent need of mine to launch into the darkness the stormy and sinister light of my thoughts and the incredulous and mocking sneer of my rare ideas that want to freely wander, proud and magnificent, displaying their vigorous and uninhibited nakedness, going through the world in search of virile embraces. No one could be more revolutionary than I am, but this is precisely why I want to throw the corroding mercury of my thoughts into the midst of the senile impotence of the eunuchs of Human Thought. One cannot be half a revolutionary and one cannot half-think. It is necessary to be like Ibsen, revolutionary in the most complete and radical sense of the word. And I feel that I am such!

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History, materialism, monism, positivism and all the other isms of this world are old and rusty swords which are of no use to me and don't concern me. My principle is life and my end is death. I want to live my life intensely so that I can embrace my death tragically.

You are waiting for the revolution! Very well! My own began along time ago! When you are ready — God, what an endless wait! — it won't nauseate me to go along the road awhile with you!

But when you stop, I will continue on my mad and triumphant march toward the great and sublime conquest of Nothing!

Every society you build will have its fringes, and on the fringes of every society, heroic and restless vagabonds will wander, with their wild and virgin thoughts, only able to live by preparing ever new and terrible outbreaks of rebellion!

I shall be among them!

And after me, as before me, there will always be those who tell human beings:

I have left the life of the plain forever. — Henrik Ibsen

1

Even the purest springs of Life and Thought that gush fresh and laughing among the rocks of the highest mountains to quench the thirst of Nature's chosen ones, when discovered by the demagogic shepherds of the hybrid bourgeois and proletarian flocks, quickly become fetid, filthy, slimy pools. Now it is individualism's turn! From the vulgar scab to the idiotic and repulsive cop, from the miserable sell-out to the despicable spy, from the cowardly slave afraid to fight to the repugnant and tyrannical authority, all speak of individualism.

It is in fashion!

Scrawny pseudo-intellectuals of tubercular liberal conservatism, like the chronic democratic syphilitics, and even the eunuchs of socialism and the anemics of communism, all speak and pose as Individualists!

I understand that since Individualism is neither a school nor a party, it cannot be "unique", but it is truer still that Unique ones are individualists. And I leap as a unique one onto the battlefield, draw my sword and defend my personal ideas as an extreme individualist, as an indisputable Unique one, since we can be as skeptical and indifferent, ironic and sardonic as we desire and are able to be. But when we are condemned to hear socialists more or less theorizing in order to impudently and ignorantly state that there is no incompatibility between Individualist and collectivist ideas, when we hear someone stupidly try to make a titanic poet of heroic strength, a dominator of human, moral and divine phantoms, who quivers and throbs, rejoices and expands himself beyond the good and evil of Church and State, Peoples and Humanity, in the strange flickering of a new blaze of unacknowledged love, like Zarathustra's lyrical creator, pass as a poor and vulgar prophet of socialism, when we hear someone try to make an invincible and unsurpassable iconoclast like Max Stirner out to be some tool for the use of frantic proponents of communism, then we may certainly have an ironic smirk on our lips. But then it is necessary to resolutely rise up to defend ourselves and to attack, since anyone who feels that he is truly individualist in principle, means and ends cannot tolerate being at all confused with the unconscious mobs of a morbid, bleating flock.

2

Individualism, as I feel, understand and mean it, has neither socialism, nor communism, nor humanity for an end. Individualism is its own end. Minds atrophied by Spencer's positivism still go on believing that they are individualists without noticing that their venerated teacher is the ultimate anti-individualist, since he is nothing more than a radical monist, and, as such, the passionate lover of unity and the sworn enemy of particularity. Like all more or less monistic scientists and philosophers, he denies all distinctions, all differences. And he sacrifices reality to affirm illusion. He strives to show reality as illusion and illusion as reality. Since he isn't able to understand the varied, the particular, he sacrifices the one or the other on the altar of the universal. Sure, he fights the state in the name of the individual, but like every sociologist in this world, he comes back to sacrifice under the tyranny of another free and perfect society, since it is true that he fights against the state, but he fights against it only because the state as it is doesn't function as he would like.

But not because he has understood the anti-collectivist, anti-social singularities capable of higher activities of the spirit, of emotion and of heroic and uninhibited strength. He hates the

intimate and delinquent thoughts into the light of the sun. It is an old and stupid story! I am twenty-eight years old, for fifteen years I have been active in the libertarian camp and I live anarchistically, and I am told the same things, the very same things all the time:

"For the love of harmony…"

"For the love of getting the word out…"

"For the next redemptive Social Revolution…"

"For…" but why go on!

Enough! I cannot remain silent!

"If I were to keep a still unpublished manuscript locked up in my drawer, the manuscript of a most beautiful work that would give the reader thrills of unknown pleasure and would uncover unknown worlds; if I were certain that men would grow pale with fear over these pages, and then slowly wander through deserted pathways with eyes fiercely dilated in the void, and later would cynically seek death when madness didn't run to meet them with its sinister laughter like the roaring of winds and its grim drumming of invisible fingers on their devastated brains; if I were certain that women would smile obscenely and lie down with skirts lifted on the edge of footpaths, awaiting any male, and that males would suddenly throw themselves upon them lacerating vulva and throat with their teeth; if intoxicated, hungry mobs were to chase down the few elusive men with knives and there was death between being and being perpetuating their deep hatred; if the peace of an hour, tranquility of the spirit, love, loyalty, friendship would have to disappear from the face of the earth, and turbulence, restlessness, hatred, deception, hostility, madness, darkness and death would have to reign in their place forever; if a most beautiful book that I wrote, still unpublished and locked in my drawer, would have to do all this, I would publish that book and have no peace until it was published."

So Persio Falchi wrote in Forca a couple of years ago to express his concept of the Freedom of Art, and so I repeat now in Iconoclasta! to express my conception of Freedom of Thought.

of society would only be able to recognize one of its more or less active, more or less esteemed members in me. I can never be as worthy through communism as I will be as myself, fully my own, as a Unique one and, therefore, incomprehensible to the collectivity. But that within me which is most incomprehensible, most mysterious and enigmatic to the collectivity is precisely my most precious treasure, my dearest good, since it is my deepest intimacy which I alone can explain and love, since I alone understand it.

It would be enough, for example, if I said to communism: “it is to do nothing that the elect exist” as Oscar Wilde said, to see me driven out from the holy supper of the new Gods like a leprous Siberian! And yet one who had the urgent need to live his life in the highly and sublimely intellectual and spiritual atmosphere of Thought and contemplation could not give anything materially or morally useful and good to the community, because what he could give would be incomprehensible, and therefore noxious and unacceptable, since he could only give a strange doctrine supporting the joy of living in contemplative laziness. But in a communist society — as in any other society where it would be even worse — such a doctrine could have the effect of corruption among the phalanx of those that must produce for collective and social maintenance and balance. No! Every form of society is the product of the majority. For great Geniuses and for great lawbreakers, there is no place within the triumphant mediocrity that dominates and commands.

6

Someone will raise the objection to me that in this vermillion Dawn, this noble eve of armies and war, where the vibrant and fateful notes of the great twilight of the old Gods already echoes resoundingly, while on the horizon, the golden rays of a smiling future are already rising, it is not good to bring certain

state, but does not penetrate or understand the mysterious, aristocratic, vagabond, rebel individual!

And from this point of view, I don’t know why that flabby charlatan, that failed anthropologist, bloated more and more with the sociology of Darwin, Comte, Spencer and Marx, who has spread filth over the giants of Art and Thought like Nietzsche, Stirner, Ibsen, Wilde, Zola, Huysman, Verlaine, Mallarmé, etc., that charlatan called Max Nordau; I repeat, I cannot explain to myself why he hasn’t also been called an Individualist… since, like Spencer, Nordau also fights the state…

3

Giovanni Papini said this about Spencer: “As a scientist, he bowed before facts, as a metaphysician, before the unknowable, as moralist, before the immutable fact of natural laws. His philosophy is made up of fear, ignorance and obedience: great virtues in the presence of Christ, but tremendous vices for one who wants the supremacy of the individual. He was neither more nor less than a counterfeiter of individualism.” And though I am not at all a Papinian, in this case, I am in complete agreement with him.

4

E. Zoccoli is an intellectual of the greatest range with a deep knowledge of anarchist thought, but he declares himself to be a pathetic, moral bourgeois. In his colossal study, Anarchy, after railing — though calmly and with some reason — against the greatest agitators of anarchist thought, from Stirner to Tucker, Proudhon to Bakunin, he feels sorry for Kropotkin because he finds that this anarchist was not able to develop a new rigorously scientific and sociological anarchism as he allowed himself to call all the mad delinquents of extreme anarchism, or Individualism, back to the sane currents of a viscous positivistic, scientifically materialist and humanist, semi-Spencerian system, since this famous science is what finally discovered the nullity of the individual "before the limitless immensity…". And for the positivist, humanist, communist, scientific Kropotkin it also seems that man is "a small being with ridiculous pretenses" and amen! Anyone who concentrates on sociology can't be anything but a scientist of collectivity who forgets the individual in order to seek Humanity and raise the Imperial Throne at whose feet the I must renounce itself and kneel down with deep emotion.

And when all anarchists have this sublime concept of life, E. Zoccoli will also be happy and content, since by taking on the seraphic pose of a prophet who tells men: "I have come to offer you the possibility of a new life!", he turns to us and says: "May anarchists return to (legal) right and may right expect them, quick to extend its safeguards to them as well…"

But what is right?

We say with Stirner:

"Right is the spirit of society. If Society has a will, this will is simplt Right: Society exists only through Right. But as it endures only exercising a sovereignty over individuals right is its sovereign will. Aristotle says justice is the fruit of society."

But "all existing right is — foreign law [Right]; some one makes me out to be right, 'does right by me'. But should I therefore be in the right if all the world made me out so? And yet what else is the right that I obtain in the state, in society, but a right of those foreign to me? When a blockhead makes me out in the right, I grow distrustful of my rightness; I don't like to receive it from him. But, even when a wise man makes me out in the right, I nevertheless am not in the right on that account. Whether I am in the right is completely independent of the fool's making out and the wise man's". Now we add to this definition of the Right that this wild, invincible German gave us, the famous aphorism of Protagoras: "The man is the measure of all things", and then we can go to war against all external right, all external justice, since "justice is the fruit of society".

5

I know! I know and understand: my ideas — which are not new — might wound the overly sensitive hearts of modern humanists, who proliferate in great abundance among subversives, and of romantic dreamers of a radiant, redeemed and perfect humanity, dancing in an enchanted realm of general, collective happiness to the music of a magic flute of endless peace and universal brotherhood. But anyone who chases phantoms wanders far from the truth, and then it is known that the first to be burnt in the flames of my corroding thought was my inner being, my true self! Now within the burning blaze of my Ideas, I also become a flame, and I burn, I scorch, I corrode…

Only those who enjoy contemplating seething volcanoes that launch sinister, exploding lava from their fiery wombs toward the stars, later letting them fall into the Void or among Dead Cities of cowardly men, my carrion brothers, making them run in frantic flight out from their moldy wall-papered shacks, hellholes of rancid, old ideals, should approach me.

I think, I know, that as long as there are men, there will be societies, since this putrid civilization with its industries and mechanical progress has already brought us to the point where it is not even possible to turn back to the enviable age of the caves and divine mates who raised and defended those born of their free and instinctive love like tawny, catlike Lionesses, inhabiting magnificent, fragrant, green and wild forests. But still I know and I think with equal certainty that every form of society — precisely because it is a society — will, for its own good, want to humiliate the individual. Even communism that — as its theorists tell us — is the most humanly perfect form