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Between Predicates, War
Theses on Contemporary Struggle
2013

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Between Predicates, War

Theses on Contemporary Struggle

The Institute for Experimental Freedom



2013

ways to be loved beyond romance, and we will know death, madness, and ailment still with fear but without anxiety. Our idle hands will be a virtue and our laborious hands will be free to work with care and play, pleasure and cruelty—to build and destroy. There is no other way. And as soon as the first space is irreversibly made inhabitable for communism, as soon as a new rhythm of anarchy takes hold, the paradigm of *Man, the Governed* will come to a close, and life without predicates will begin on earth.

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As the Greece '08 uprising proves, it does not suffice to merely defeat the police in the streets and devastate the avenues of commerce. As the Arab Spring proves, you can defeat the state, and government will survive. If government is the technological administration of life, then an irreversible rupture can only mean seizing control of the loci of production and distribution— of the infrastructural nodes. Moreover, it means deactivating them: rendering nuclear power plants, oil refineries, electrical power grids inoperable for Empire. Cutting off access to police internal communication, taking over and shutting down TV stations, redirecting electrical power, and seizing the infrastructure of data centers. Opening up all the supermarkets, and transforming every fertile space into a place where things grow—communizing everything. It means having access to the basics that feed and nourish the insurrection, but also it means gaining access to everything that makes us want to keep living and keep fighting.

Spreading insurrection, building a revolutionary movement in the most inhospitable condition the planet has ever known, is a difficult and dangerous task. Faced with the threats inherent to this project— the history of counter-insurgency, political assassinations, deportations and torture, and the present threats of indefinite incarceration or elimination via flying drones—it is understandable why most people opt for the security of obedient survival. Our task is to make living possible. Penetrating deeper than the intelligence agencies into the fractured heart of the everyday, we will develop the necessary means to outmaneuver, outmode, and disarm counter-insurgency. We will build—piece by piece, moment by moment—a *radically open* ungovernable position across rivers, mountains, oceans, identities, and languages. Of course we will have to take time, flags will be tarnished with blood, and we will become more terrible than the worst nightmares of government. But in this time that we take—that we make ours—we will discover, construct, and remix all the mundane practices we've taken for granted; we will become enchanted with living. We will find deeper

across the metropolitan network is a vital contribution. Just as the workers' movement's proletarian community provided for itself in the event of a strike, we should collectively prepare and share resources, as an act of force. We need a new strike fund now, to materially anticipate the crisis we want—in order to act from a position of strength.

A revolutionary movement is composed of an asymmetrical rhythm, a chopped up beat, and a droning bass line. The rhythm creates the possibilities of encounter; the beat (intensity) accentuates the force of the rhythm, and the droning bass line supposes a frequency. Each advance or offensive we set off should attempt to tie these components together, and this happens as struggles meet and overcome new limits. When we approach a port intent on blockading it, we are approaching a new question regarding the viscosity of the struggle. Will this given struggle flow over its political limits and contribute to the formation of a revolutionary movement? The ports, the food depots, the water plants, the energy plants and refineries all pose this question. Just as all the apparatuses at work in transporting bodies, goods, and arms, or in mobilizing identities, desires, and affects beg a certain question, so does every apparatus that constitutes the infrastructure of modern civilization.

The tension of this narrative consists of joining together these elements in such a way that rhythm doesn't give way to new subjectivities content with themselves, that the beat or intensity doesn't give way to aesthetic fetishes of violence and negation, and that frequency doesn't give way to confrontation without force. Every successful occupation— blockade, strike, or riot—that collectively and contagiously requisitions an apparatus, or node of the economy, sets an example of how insurgency grows into revolution not by the mere tactic or target, but by *the content* of the entire operation. *How to make these things work for us, against them?,* first and foremost assumes hostility and then enmity.

Since the Argentinian '01 economic collapse, this age of tumult has failed to move beyond the modern locus of power and faculty.

WHAT WE ARE BEARING WITNESS TO IS NOT A SEQUENCE OF DIFFERENTIATED MOMENTS OF REVOLT, BUT A SINGULAR SITUATION IN WHICH EVENTS CONSTANTLY IRRUPT AGAINST GOVERNMENT

This text is dedicated to my friends—without which none of this is possible. More than muses in these last treacherous years, Bijou, maximillion, and the third day after god, your critiques and discussions have formed the real content and substance of these theses. Your care and love is stronger than any force of displacement or anxiety. those who've donned the mask—who've helped it mutate—when possible you have given your feedback, and when the events have called, you have been inspiring. the lovers of sandy, partisans of living as such, this text owes as much to your hammer as I to your support and friendship. biofilo, your insight and nagging questions continue to challenge and strengthen our taste for strategic thought. Even critically, you've helped to construct this assemblage. it's charming enough to speak from the position of i, but we all know *I did not write this text.*

Introduction

The following text came to life in late spring, 2011. Inspired by the upheavals in Greece, Egypt, London, and Wisconsin, it originated as a collectively compiled set of analyses intended for discussion. Its current manifestation grew from this dialogue, and prior to the first week of Occupy Wall Street, "Theses on Contemporary Struggle" was born: a fragmented collection describing the conditions and characteristics of revolt in our time. After Zuccotti seized hold of our era's pulse, Occupy spread across the US and confirmed some of our initial hypotheses: something genuinely different was taking place— something with a fucking hashtag.

The theses became a larger analysis of our tumultuous times, and continued into the early months of 2013.

"Contemporary struggle" is our way to conceptualize what links the events of our epoch—events that cannot be defined as social movements or categorized within leftist conceptions of reform and revolution. *Events* are the common form that struggles take after the collapse of the historical subject and the zone of the social. We define contemporary struggle as a vast set of heterogeneous practices of revolt that appear to have *everything* as their object; that is to say, events whose antagonisms are not directed against the state or capitalism per se but against techniques of government, against the productive power of government. Perhaps we will be reproached for reducing the specificity of all the movements of the past decade. However, the velocity with which struggles since the Greek uprising of '08 have moved from intelligible anger over a collectively perceived injustice to celebratory or revolutionary

becomes looting and everyone learn how their force was the real power that opened up the doors, that fed their friends.

Giving ourselves the pleasure of a slothful insurgency also gives us the time to encounter other insurrections, other times, and other forms of life to which we have been forcibly desensitized.

We can take time. The same friendship that fills the content of riots and occupations is the basis for any collective operation. If we find no satisfaction in the mere drama of movements and their inevitable demise, then we need not accept the false alarm of critical issues nor that of hopeful social reconciliation through protest movements. We are in a situation—a situation that can grow to become a revolutionary situation. There are no subjects or objects, only forces at play. *Everything as it is* conspires against us; we have to understand the initial barriers of struggles as the result of the normal functioning of order—in which we are intimately embedded. In the US, struggles are limited by both the expansive geography that constitutes a collapsing social fabric and the architectural reality of exclusive and private space. Zuccotti Park was one of the most inhospitable environments for an occupation, Oscar Grant Plaza was not much better, and while many Americans heard some murmurs about Occupy Wall Street, many more live in a different world. The occupations becoming an event, getting messy, are what causes them to effect others beyond the immediate sphere of the event, and beyond the comfort zone of various milieus. Active insurrectionary patience means giving ourselves the time to make a world that is inhabitable. Whether or not it's Zuccotti Park or Oscar Grant Plaza, it means taking the time to get access, by knowledge, wealth, or cunning, to real resources that feed struggles and make them stronger—that make a return to normality seem more absurd than the initial conspiracy to sleep in a park together.

While our project is total, and international, the insurrection's growth and density depends on nothing beyond its own resonance and capacity to interrupt the complex flows of normality. When something really happens, having spaces, known and lesser known,

XIV. Life Without Predicates

As insurrection becomes the common situation, time will begin to contract. there is today increasingly less time between the normal and predictable flow of things and the interruptions—natural disaster, terrorist act, or social egression. When there is an event, it feels as though we are living in revolutionary times. Afterwards it feels like it was all a dream. Crisis management as a technique of government imposes a certain regime of urgency as a way to cope with the signs of our era. When something happens, they are quick to document it, explain away its content as contingencies of possibility, allow everyone to have their stupid opinion in comment threads, and allow everyone to *like* or *not- like* it in order to neutralize its contagious affect. The policeman's baton no longer extends merely to the academic's pen, but also to your ipad. Counter-insurgency means preventing the affects of an event. While everything, even our own theory—optimistic or skeptical—conspires against an irreversible break with the present, the establishment of time and space attuned to the chaos in play is paramount to the coming into being of a real revolutionary movement. The slow time of discussions, shared meals, erotic gestures, and friendship displaces the urgency of false crisis, and opens up a second time where knowledge and communication spread with incredible velocity. It's like a moment that feels like a lifetime.

When rooftop discussions give way to a demonstration of thousands, fall into a riot when the police show up, and you immediately learn how everything you're surrounded by is a weapon, the crowd's ingeniousness finds some way into a closed grocery store,

situations, reveals that they are irreducibly revolts against the paradigm of government.

Government no longer sits in a closed chamber of educated men; it acts through each of us and through every apparatus that orients us and amplifies our senses in a particular direction. Government doesn't just repress, it produces a distributed multiplication of governable subjectivities. Contemporary struggle resists, flees, and attacks being produced as a subject, appearing in the space between one coherent subjectivity and another.

Because it appears in the space between subjectivities, contemporary struggle—consciously or not—contests the meaning of autonomy. Capitalism has done away with the social as a foundation to human life, leaving the individual as self-entrepreneur to develop solutions to the crises of baseless existence. If social media appears on the theater of culture and politics, this is because economic life demands that individuals collaborate on problem-solving. In order to develop itself in harmony with the economy, the individual is allocated the self, as the vehicle and instrument of freedom. It is given the space to think freely, go against the rules, and open doors of creativity—if only to eliminate flaws in the flows of the economy. Government needs subjects to self-govern because principles no longer reign with any authority; the economy needs subjects to self-manage because technology and ecology present fatal limits to its rhythm of expansion. However, when struggles originate in an open field devoid of authoritative principles, the desired affects of self-management sometimes fail to materialize, and in turn the space between coherency, contingency, and predicates can appear more hospitable than the generalized hostilities of economic life. Contemporary struggle locates the space of autonomy as a potential for a different way of living, and holds on for as long as it can.

Contemporary struggle reveals the limits of language. The grammar of justice, democracy, and equality could limit past movements because these terms were situated in a meaningful

discourse—that of the enemy. Today, these words and their institutions are empty. What is perceived as logical in consistency by political pundits is precisely the plane of consistency where a new language is being constructed. The parodic, ironic, and absurd character of today's movements' discursive promiscuity, irrational application of language, and use of memes reveal a new language coming into being.

Contemporary struggle loves/ hates technology. It's no surprise that the same mobile apparatuses we are required to buy to integrate our lives into the flows of the economy—smart phones, laptops, and tablets—are the media protagonists of the turbulent present. However, the use of technology by today's uprisings is no mere affirmation, even in the "Free Information" movement. From hacking to instagram flashmobs, from social networking an occupation to manipulating attention spans, contemporary struggle renders technological apparatuses inoperative in their proper form.

Contemporary struggle will produce the basis for either generalized ungovernability or a more horrific form of government. Social movements from the '60s to the late '90s created the conditions for general self-management; the most radical horizon they could perceive was a world democratically administrated and without work as production. The social movements anticipated the distribution of racial, gender, and sexual subjectivities, freedom as choice, and cybernetics. Today their demands reflect back at us in so many commodities, so many techniques of government, so many empty environments affectively managed by food and retail attendants. Today's revolt could give way to our dreams or our nightmares.

With this text, we hope to achieve a deeper understanding of the situation we are in. We have no illusions that a single text will lead the masses to revolution. We didn't expect that in '07 when *Politics is not a Banana* interrupted the discursive dead ends of US anarchism, or in '09 when *The Coming Insurrection* made its English debut, and we don't expect *Between Predicates, War* to ignite the

of living and fighting. Each will be increasingly indistinguishable from the last, save only the accent mark. An anonymous and terrible force, manifesting as swarms, our movements will always be rapid, albeit chopped and screwed.

It has been said that the riots of today are nothing new. There were far more violent irruptions in past movements and historical moments of trauma. However, our time is unique in so far as no crime escapes the subjectivation of terrorism or placement within its corresponding arena of anxieties. If crime is the only position that enables us to view a horizon beyond law and economy, terrorism is the fantastical mirror reflecting this society's shameful fears of the unknown. Alongside the strategic function of the media stupidity that conflates black blocs with terrorism, there is also a historical truth. Contemporary social conflict reveals the origin of politics— terrorism—to society. Get organized as a force, and they will call that terrorism. We must not be blackmailed by their ridiculous dramatization of the political—but we must be *intelligent.*

"Riot" replaces "protest" because the content of contemporary struggle does not contest the meaning of the social but rejects it. This ethical line connects the single-issue terrorists, the suicidal youth gunmen, the rioters, the violent flashmobs, the strikers, the health-conscious gardeners, and the student occupiers. Whether we demand democracy or chaos, contemporary struggle edges toward a total unraveling of the particular anthropology of "Man" as *The Governed.* Riots are the contemporary figure of politics because, unlike social movements, they pose a practice that refuses the recuperative operation of legitimate representation. If they are to be more than a pressure release, though, riots must be stretched out and remixed tactically in order to test their potential. The movements of occupations revealed how riots can be of use to take space, to advance the sphere of the occupation's influence, and to create habits that defend against police. Riots must begin to make entire zones of the metropolis uninhabitable for capital—to make it impossible to extract value from life. We must next learn how to stretch out the time that instantly takes hold during the riots, to become accustomed to an environment of chaos—to make it last. In these environments, through discussion, tactical promiscuity, endurance, and mutation, new specters of force will arise, new experiments

strategic imaginations of all the lost children who are now playing at being adults. But we can't shy away from our task. Insurrection is made by a multiplicity of instruments and composers, each accentuating rhythm and tonalities. If it is captured by one of the very lacking languages at our disposal, it won't ever be intelligible or resonate.

A revolution against government at an ontological and anthropological level is a pretty insane wager and the cards are stacked against us. No movement has been able to refuse to manage the world, no struggle has ignited class war at the level of flexible and superfluous labor, no anti-colonialism has developed a society against the state, and no revolt has been totalitarian enough to abolish the individual. And yet today, we feel strangely optimistic. In the last decade, there is increasingly less time between an event and the normal flow of things.

It's less absurd to anticipate an irreversible break with the present than it is to imagine this dying civilization lasting a few more decades. What we are bearing witness to may not be the singular event that abolishes the paradigm of government, but we are party to the insurrection, nonetheless. The contemporary situation calls on us to take a position. The task of our time is to construct a world, to find what is living in an abyss, and bring together everything it takes to live and fight.

It has been said that the state of exception—that is, the Dictatorship of The Proletariat —is the reef on which all revolutions of our century have been shipwrecked. Upon escaping the camp of Stalinism, revolutionary theorists concluded that attaining a real history of the oppressed would lead to a revolution without the state at its helm. Dictatorship and the party-form became cyphers for a state-forming organization, while experiments at ultra-democratic forms of decision-making and techniques of self-management purported to undermine the state-forming urge within organizations. Anarchist and anti-authoritarian theory is wrong to assume that all organizations of force and coercion entail a practice of govern-

ment, but more importantly it's wrong to focus its critique only at the level of forms. It is not the organization of faculties, capacities, and potencies into a force that ends with another heap of garbage on the history of 'man', but rather its weakness as the real movement that pushes history from one epoch to another, not at the level of forms and structures, but at the level of content and practices.

A real state of exception, an irreversible suspension of the mechanisms of law and economy, must displace everything, not just our forms of decision-making. Practical questions must no longer be delayed until a future that never arrives. *How will we eat? How will we stop being dependent on government? How will we stop policing each other?* Answering the complex questions of how we live is the challenge that can and *must* be taken up immediately, but in practice, and encapsulated in a vision that refuses to separate destruction from creation. Insurrection need not bow to the limits of history; it can dictate the present. Not building a new world in the shell of the old, not attacking from the margins in order to weaken the enemy forces, but becoming ungovernable—everywhere, everything.

XIII. The Gesture of the Ungovernable

One old myth of revolution centered on the strategic position of the industrial working class. a social location in transition, a social class always increasingly dispossessed. THE strategic location was the factory because it was the point of production of the capitalist form of life—the time clock, the extraction of value, the commodity, all the relations that spread through the workers reproducing themselves as such. If such a vital location could be sabotaged, this process of production could be interrupted. The general strike was the gesture that, in one fell swoop, interrupted the point of production of the economy (the factory) and the point of reproduction of the economy (the worker as worker). The worker of industrial capitalism could negate capital and negate itself, canceling out the two forces of capitalism in a sort of pure means.

While much has changed—for one, the place and composition of the class that abolishes class society—other contingencies of this old myth are still useful. By doing in a different way precisely what we are subjectivized to do, we can still negate ourselves and the economy that acts through us. We need a violence, a means, that has no end to justify it. We need gestures that simultaneously interrupt an apparatus's function—rendering it inoperative—and return it to our hands— *making it our weapon.*

For us, establishing the content of friendship is the first step in this process; the riot, occupation, or blockade is simply a possible form. Friendship is conspiracy. To conspire is to breathe together, desire together, live together—to get organized together.

playful cyber-war, that—since Occupy—draws no line between the internetz and IRL. We've seen what can be done with cell phones, YouTube, hacked Facebook accounts of celebrities; now let's see what can be done with entire Data Centers.

I. The Potential For the End of Politics

Contemporary struggle carries with it the potential for the end of politics—its history and its limits. while analogy is powerful in weaving unrest into a tapestry of revolt, we must take every struggle in its singularity in order to understand it as something more dangerous, and thus more interesting, than its predecessors. Anarchist and Marxist theories regarding the revolutionary subject, theories of organization, and categories of contingency are insufficient for contemporary struggles. At each turn, the working class-as-proletariat fails to show up and the anarchist ethical subject collapses into the concerned citizen; every organization that can sustain revolutionary conflict simply extends the life-span of government; and no crisis is out of the ordinary for capital's diffuse and amorphous innovation. The Left is internalized into a far more intelligent system than its telos of hope, waiting, and desire. Revealed at its core, modern revolutionary theory is nothing more than politics and false promises.

But to say that nothing positions itself against the current onslaught of work and governmental techniques is either ideological narrowness or stupidity. Even if counter-attack is weak, and even if there are large portions of every government's population that refuse to join the fray, revolt lives. Contemporary struggle grows from the strike of singularities generating rhythm, not from heaps acting as a whole. A theory of insurrection must begin from an understanding of how people are rebelling—the tangible antagonistic acts with no foreseeable reconciliation; from the real concrete prac-

tices of revolt. Here we become attuned to *the initial rhythm* of a complex composition of war.

Writing a theory of insurrection forces us to be beside ourselves—observing with care, even applying optical pressure on our most favored subjects. Critique may be useless in the contemporary abyss, and the parodic attempt to use a scientific method in conjunction with a feeling of truth should not be mistaken for authority. The Theorist, like the Author, is garbage to us; if the practices we glean from these dead subjects have any purpose, it is in service of a collective intelligence. A theory of insurrection cannot remain neutral, much less "objective." Our task is to draw a line that links the languages at play, and to realize the new language coming into being through our particular crisis.

The relations between us have been the blind spot of the Left, and government has located these spaces as its contemporary site of deployment. What today begins as a hobby is produced tomorrow as a governable subject. The space between beings is the site contested by contemporary struggle.

Our era is marked by technological integration in the most intimate spheres of life; with this comes the consolidation of repressive forces, new practices of self-management, and an ever more diffuse police. Severed from the broken family structure and without any people or home to call its own, revolt comes with an iphone in its mouth. The concrete practices of contemporary struggles are strange, to say the least, but only a hipster cop could be blind to the powerful signs that say, "let's be done with it."

could be organized, and all of this communication now indistinguishable from the nightmarish fantasy of this society's youth—whether they be isolated or a group. The assault on apparatuses ebbs and flows between ignorant-ass shit, like videotaping your friends shooting pellet guns at strangers, and intelligent gestures from which a new common understanding can be extracted. While the former remains to be fully developed, the latter has been very instructive. When the so-called "scum" of the Banlieus who spent a month burning and looting in France '05 organized their attacks with cellphones and social networking sites, they showed precisely the limits and potential of the cellphone apparatus— and the future of social networking. Fast forward half a decade, and the potential school shooters of 4chan use their smartphones' twitter application as *to-the-second* media outlets during the various raids on Occupy encampments, while London, Oakland, and Milwaukee are trolled IRL by nihilistic youth who want to get what they've been denied. The same thing that creates the potential for mobile government, and a more precise application of judgment and discipline creates the potential for a more advanced and informed chaos. In these experiments we begin to see how an apparatus might be deactivated, and in doing so opened up to a field of free play. How curious that the very apparatuses concerned with the economy of information—that tiny snitch that I carry in my pocket, which is convinced that everything and everyone might be conspiring against its regime—might also be put to use to obliterate that economy.

Anonymous began to establish its strength and political sensibility during the '10 Iranian Uprising. Providing online forums for on-the-ground rebels alongside speculative and somewhat absurd instructions manuals by ex-military and infantile anarchists alike, it opened the doors to a new radical discourse. Distributed-denial-of-service (DDOS) attacks during the Tunisian and Egyptian uprising were a growth of this power. The assaults by the Anonymous mutations Anti-Sec and Lulz Sec on credit card companies and private prison corporations are the deepening of this

will be effective only insofar as it reveals an intelligence to those in struggle. A nuanced understanding of how this world functions peels away the layers of techniques of government, police measures, and flows of capital to reveal not an ideology of domination based on an original fear of death—as was a prominent conclusion of primitivism—but instead a tiny beetle at the lever, a diffuse operator: the apparatus. Engaging this vast integrated network becomes less of a Sunday chore, a courageous labor of guilt, and more a series of experiments aimed at answering the perverse question *how to make these apparatuses stop working?* Here, our literary predecessor is not the glorious Spartacus, but Americana's Huck Finn. To assume such "child" figures is never to assume a naive innocence, but rather, a mischievous cruelty. The child engages everything as a toy, often first completely dismantling it, then finding some new disturbing use for it. As such, there's nothing gained by hating apparatuses, per se. We must reorient ourselves to the fact that apparatuses are really just toys, waiting to be freed from their proper use. We should fuck with them, cause them to malfunction, and use them in new disturbing ways. "Pepper spray Cop", an Internet meme, initiated by repression of students at UC Davis, is one example of how some apparatuses can be made to malfunction. However, we can assume that just as the troublesome child tends to reduce every toy to something ingestible, to engage apparatuses strategically is going to involve a fair bit of *teeth.*

In our time, lies give birth to truth. The terror of the Internet was believed to have caused the anti-globalization movement and its accompanying riots—a ridiculous claim—but today this insane delusion actually becomes real with the incredible power of Spectacle. Youtube and Redtube collapse into a single pornographic virtual reality game, where we score points in real time and judge the merits within our online communities—who also exist IRL. Sex and violence, not as a pleasure, but as a fatal strategy. One imagines that there are online forums preparing for the next rampage shooting, social networking sites where the next violent flash mob

II. A Revolt Against Everything

Capitalism is not life, but it does dominate and predicate life. in such conditions, all the practices, disciplines, and relations that constitute social life come to enunciate little more than the cycles of exploitation and despair. Each social practice appears to those in revolt as an axis upon which everyday misery turns. Thus the insurrection has literally everything as its object. *Destroy everything; especially what you love,* was the evil intelligence of the black bloc and the occupations of '09. This crystallized in 2011 through a series of strikes at the dispersed heart of the metropolis. The fire ignited in Tunisia resounds with 10,000 arsons. In the US, flashmob attacks prove to be one of the most advanced and terrible examples of this contemporary political phenomenon. In Egypt the so-called "non-violent" revolution saw fire stations set ablaze; its moments of glory were not the siege of the palace, but the nights of low-intensity combat between civilians. In London, like France in '05, when the burning and looting began, the student movement that led the first response to the government's austerity measures was disarticulated, and its subject was rendered obsolete. What is currently underway is an unraveling of the deep anxieties bestowed on all populations by a century of productive repression and pacification. However, contemporary struggle is not marked by popular unity, common demands, or shared conditions, but by significant difference in people's sense of oppression, exploitation, and misery. What these struggles have in common is a diffusion of tactics that attack any production of subjects. From lawful consumption to social media to innocent bystander, the insurrection abolishes

neutrality by attacking the closest thing that speaks "capital" and "police."

XII. How to Make Apparatuses Stop Working

Technology has not only spelled disaster for the romantics' fantasy of nature, it has driven all being into crisis. as the modern state grew with its religious co-pilot, the economy, technique outmoded belief, giving birth to a real language and science of the technique. It was this particular science that gained increasing popularity as the modern state began to concern itself with the government of populations rather than territories, and it was this language that gave political-economy a voice, or perhaps we should say, a song. Here, with the disappearance of the State, through the language of techniques, government can be applied economically with the increased diffusing of apparatuses to watch over, judge, and manage the coming into presence of beings.

The *practical* critique of the ontological essence of technology must deepen. A new, substantially different Luddism will give the insurrection the vitality to engage an environment that is totally foreign and totally designed for control. Radical environmentalism saw the sabotage of genetically engineered crops, attacks on research labs, and the arsons of the Earth Liberation Front—beautiful gestures, but essentially a moral critique of the conditions wrought by progress. As with all moral critiques, a solution lay dormant, just waiting to be conjured up by an ambitious ethical marketing student or green developer. If technology is not just machines, though, but a certain way of controlling the coming into presence of being, then an effective attack should focus on the point at which control is administered. Like the strikes, blockades, and riots, this

ical, rather than political or social in the conventional sense. At the center of contemporary struggle is the question "What does it mean to live a life?" It is the boundaries of human life that are at stake in the government of Man.

Unfortunately, biotechnology, nanotechnology, and cybernetic-logic couldn't agree more.

III. Attacks Being Produced as Governable

Contemporary struggle resists, flees, and attacks being produced as governable. we are bearing witness NOT TO a sequence of differentiated moments of revolt, but to a singular situation in which events constantly irrupt against techniques of government. A boorish evaluation of the past decade might draw a distinction between, say, occupations and riots— between affirmative struggles that tend to produce false alternatives and struggles animated by an aesthetic of pure negation—but this perspective still suffers from a certain emotional illiteracy. These senseless critics see the occupations as an essentially *social* phenomenon in contrast to their *anti-social* counterpart. However, contemporary struggle is like a sea, where rivers collide with the ocean: sometimes calm, sometimes very violent—and full of many different forms of life. Contemporary struggle is neither social nor anti-social, passive nor violent. It is precisely its incoherent character that gives it strength and singularity. Occupations, riots, the internet, random violence, growing and fermenting food, studying scripture, knitting, making messenger bags, collecting crap, making music, stealing from work, making parties—contemporary struggle has a lot characteristics. While struggles that define themselves as purely affirmative or negative are limited, they still emerge from a common pang and a need for something else.

Contemporary struggle contests the meaning of autonomy. Autonomy is invoked at the threshold— in crisis, between this failing governing principle and the next. Because what exceeds the law is

precisely what mobilizes it, autonomy—self-law—is the hinge upon which any future rests. In the business world, this is the practice of the lone entrepreneur or team of innovators finding a creative solution to the limits of the market. From the perspective of government, autonomy connotes self-management, innovation, and living with regard to the economy. From the perspective of struggle, autonomy connotes self-organizing, ethics, living without regard to the economy.

The situation we are in is not simply a crisis of the economy, but a crisis at the foundations of what we have called life. The crack that runs across every subject is currently opening up, and in this moment there is an opportunity to escape. Government was founded not merely on the consent to be subject to the modern state, but also on practices that could be massaged into the shapes of identity and subjectivity. The crisis of these practices, which contemporary struggles reveal, calls into question human life as Man the Governed. Autonomy, even in something as banal as an occupation protesting wealth disparity, carries with it a radically different human life. Thus, at the core of contemporary struggle lies the question, "What does it mean to live a life?" From our perspective, this is the real historical conflict taking place. How can life be broken away from the affects of law and economy? How can we stop being creatures of government? If the popular assemblies and occupations are put to work for a mythic alter- native—the development of self-managing communities to do the work of government, the exclusion of antagonisms in search of a pure peaceful politics—then these forms will end up strengthening the anthropology of Man as a passive being, removed from nature, with a penchant for safety. The challenge for us is to develop practices that break the link between struggles and this narrative. If we succeed, the "social" forms that make up contemporary struggles will be indistinguishable from the "anti-social" content of our contemporary political moment. This is the life-long vocation: an experimental method-

pations heeded the call announced in Greece (extend the occupation!), opened up by the self-immolating singularities in Tunisia, and remixed with low intensity combat in Egypt. Its most notable accomplishments lay less in whether or not it actually occupied Wall Street, than in how it tore a hole in the capitalist space-time continuum. Now, whether it's called Occupy or something else, whether it begins with some embarrassing critique of "corporate greed" or pure hatred of citizenship, the festering abscess on society's pretty face is *growing*. In this process, social movements fold over and reveal the ethical forms of life coming into being, forming into war machines.

In many ways, the first phase—in which a rupture opened up the space to ask questions concerning ethics, autonomy, and violence—is complete. How ever, contemporary struggle must keep learning how an uprising can avoid ending in a democratic junta. The spread of blockades, occupations, riots, and communes is not just the only ethical position for us (since such tactics attack government and economy in each of us); it is the only *effective strategy* because these operations result in an interruption and breakdown of the circulation of value. While these tactics are taken up in so-called extreme cases, an examination of how they are effective shows why they should be the first of many last resorts. *These tactics reveal what exactly we are fighting*. Government no longer sits upon a throne or in a closed circle of educated men; it acts through every citizen and oversees every relation between us. It functions through a circulation of flows within networks. The fact that your smartphone can not only record every utterance but also map who you've encountered is no small coincidence. Government is technological.

The State as that original mover and shaker of all things political has disappeared. Still waiting for the funeral is its loyal opposition, modern revolution—sad and very lonely. What remains is pure governance. Here it is really possible to speak of a government of the earth, whose only real opposition is anthropological and ontolog-

XI. Government is Technological

In 2011 governments fall across the Arab world, and as in every other revolutionary tragicomedy, the governments are replaced. Revolution still clings to the State. In the spirit of radical obscenity, the US explodes in a series of occupations inspired by the images of the revolutions that concluded in conserving the government in North Africa. Here, the movement of squares' incredible false consciousness—one of its more charming virtues— drives it from the position of angry isolated weirdos to the position of utter madness. While there is no lack of preposterous "revolutionary" ideas haunting the camps, madness and crime—what we would call determination and intelligence—continues to exceed the limits of revolutionary discourse in practice. With the force of their duration the occupations build a sense of connection to their space, to the world of "mic checks," general assemblies, and dangerous determination that they collectively inhabit. When the police come, the occupations come out swinging. From *V for Vendetta* enthusiasts to port blockades and a general strike; from "strategic non-violence" to slashing cops and pouring mysterious itchy and burning liquids on them; from a centralized occupation sequestered away from most people, to an explosion of mobile blockades of thousands at the critical sites of New York City's economic flows.

While pundits claim Occupy as the American extension of the Arab Spring, the sequence unfolding is actually the acceleration of an insurrectional process that first announced its singularity and difference on the eve of Dec 6, 2008. The US wave of occu-

ology that refuses to separate the material, martial, and spiritual spheres of living and fighting.

IV. No Democratic Strategy

There is a lot of talk of democracy, but there is no democratic strategy that contemporary struggles can apply to achieve their goals. struggles do not cohere socially, much less democratically. Today's antagonisms do not stem from a need to be included. On the contrary, movements appear in, and contest, the spaces not yet integrated. Even the hallmarks of the information age with its "democratization of technology" stem from the need for an outside of private existence. That these practices—social networking, ironic communities, and information sharing—would be remixed and administered only reveals the intelligence of our enemies. An ever more molecular surveillance apparatus, with its electrodes connecting YouTube to the police, works to apprehend, calculate, and predict these movements. The technical and existential spread of work/ self-management, with its conduits running through the schools, malls, and other market places all the way to your smart phone, functions to manage desire into subjectivity. Whether at work, home, or places of leisure, our different qualities and tastes are represented and administered as subjectivities. Got a desire? *There's an App for that.* Democracy can't confront this because diffuse representation is simply its consequence at a social level.

Democracy is a government of absence and attenuated presence. Democratic government functions insofar as every decision is deferred to someone, or rather something, else. Here the true character of representation is revealed. Even in Athens, before democracy was contaminated (as some idiots would say), democracy required first that the life of all living beings (Zoe) be subordinated to the life of a particular being (Bios). This is

but couldn't persist past the day of action. Students and radicals joined the fray for a short while, but the hypothesis that a small group could fabricate an event was wrong. Events are not the act of subjects. Singularities spring forth from the complex affects of a multitude—not merely the conspiracy of an army of one or ten. The insurrectional trajectory of these riots and occupations was predicated on the correct ethical and theoretical hypotheses: contemporary life is pain, and any small displacement might set off an insurrectional situation. However, the strategy and vision of this thread was altogether lacking. If in certain parts of the US this trajectory continues to hold sway as an experiment in developing dangerous territories, this is only because insurrectionaries have been fortunate enough to encounter new struggles at hubs of antagonisms. If we don't wish to relive the isolated suicide of the avant garde, then insurrectional strategy must be rethought.

While the present revolts continue to signal more revolts, there is no need to force open a window for struggle—the Greek Conspiracy Cells of Fire make this strategic (but not ethical) mistake. The window is already wide open. The task contemporary struggle places on us is not to increase the intensity of attack, but to *extend its territory* in duration and space. An insurrectional strategy has to comprehend the common experiences that constitute contemporary struggle. At the same time, it must bless itself with an ecstatic presence—aware of the complex details and capable of acting with finesse.

X. After the Black Bloc

Contemporary struggle congeals around attacks against subjectivation; practices not predicated on identity; the obscene, at times violent, demand for nothing. If democracy is a politics of absence, then the demand for democracy is a demand for nothing as well.

In many ways, the anarchic forms that grew from anti-globalization anticipated these experiences. In the US, an isolated petri dish of intensities peculiar to the black bloc formed an insurrectional tendency that attempted to force open a window through which every antagonism could enter. Here the practice of convergence was applied to smaller contexts than global trade summits, and tactical sciences were deployed at tensions within the metropolitan fabric. With the practice of public assaults through the use of cultural gathering points, this tendency reverberated flash mob violence at a lower intensity. With the practice of occupation, this party of anarchy tried to cross subcultural divides and ignite conflict over territory. The premise of all of this was: willful acts can inspire struggles that multiply at local and regional levels. While there are lessons to take from these experiments, the line that runs from small riots to university occupations ultimately concludes at the same threshold. For example, rioters at the G20 summit in Pittsburgh '09 could move the territory of the riot across the city—away from concentrated police forces toward more vulnerable spaces—but could never make it generalize. When the opportunity for this moment arrived, the rioters failed to connect the teargassing of students dorms in Pittsburgh with the occupations that had just begun in California. The School occupations produced a moment of conflict,

how "the People," could be separate from "people" or other living beings. Democracy's subject must be absent from all life in order to be present only in the *Polis*. (Politics: the administration of city life.) The People are produced as nothing but citizens of Athens, that is, the stewards of Empire. For those excluded from Athenian citizenship—or the citizenship of democratic government—an imperial logic is already at work. Because the People is always founded on an exclusion, there is always a sphere of bodies from which democracy can draw individuals to include in its framework—to *democratize*. Just as living beings become the People, the citizen becomes a mere vote in the management of government. Democracy's subject retreats from the daily challenges of living into the zen of being one with the flows of perfectitude. (The management of the city and of the home: political economy.)

Democratic order, even in its purest and realest form, assumes the subordination of other presences into the representative, *a priori* as a subject-originating ontologico-political operation. Our political absence reflects our metaphysical absence. Technologies of control, through diffuse apparatuses, take the place of living, deciding, and being present. But in a world composed solely of representations, in both the political and social spheres, opposition must impose its own ontologico-political operation: the raising of ecstatic presence to the highest ethical level. An antagonism arises when *I am not authorized to be* here. We see this intelligence in some of the more antagonistic and violent struggles motivated by boredom, alienation, and exclusion. An ecstatic presence, even marked by anomic violence, calls democracy to the fore, and reveals it to be as empty in affect as it is in meaning.

Presence is the precondition of sense. Being in a world. An ability to be open, affected by the details and movements of a world. To be present is to be *here*. To oppose presence to representation is first and foremost to side with the living against the processes and techniques that administrate the environments of life. Secondly, it is to locate the raw materials from which meaning and sense can

be forged. Meaning need not be relegated to a Good vs Evil matrix, though, where the Good produces meaning and Evil subtracts it. Similarly, sense need not be reduced only to an ethical framework. Sense connotes both meaning and orientation. The ontological operation of government is managing, directing, and amplifying sense in particular trajectories. Contemporary struggle opens up sense to different trajectories.

Morality will fail us. Coming into conflict with the inhuman power of Spectacle requires an asymmetrical arrangement of forces. At the symbolic level, democracy posits itself as the Good, carrying with it all the force of law and the intellectual and political history of the West. Our Good, whether it's dressed in workers' tribunals or anarchist ethics, cannot elude the regime of the law. A head-on collision between hegemony and counter-hegemony is a recipe for defeat. We will have to confront these illusions with cunning, but a new sensuous activity, beyond Good and Evil, is already in embryonic form. Through the ecstatic, anomic, and also radically self-annihilating elements of today's revolts, a new sense—and its accompanying sensation—is beginning to reverberate, outmode, and undermine representation's cynical meaninglessness. This new sense is the outgrowth of decisive strikes, strikes that interrupt both the production of value (or symbolic meaning), and the reproduction of our selves as this or that subjectivity. In such a strike, capitalist being is interrupted by radical presence. And in a world in which the full extent of the law is imposed to govern the slightest deviation from contingent forms of being, *ecstatic presence is criminal.*

of points of encounter. To establish the real material resources and solidarities that equip us to strike.

break with the order of things; the dream of all who rebel and the nightmare of all who govern.

Those who hear the call, the liaisons of the Party, the active minority—those who each day weigh their suicidal despair against their cold optimism—inherit a great deal of responsibility in being-at-war. Ironically our first task is to give up on the narrative of conventional politics. The Party will never be the organization, the union, or the community. The Party may be open, but the discourse in which we are condemned to participate is a closed circuit. It opens only by chance or misfortune. If we are to build the Party, we must first understand that to spread the insurrection—to contribute to the existing events— we have to become anonymous in more ways than a simple black mask can achieve. We must learn the assistant's discreet gesticulation to prepare the earth for anarchy. On the one hand, this necessarily means the delicate labor of clearing a path—a labor that shouldn't hesitate to demolish every apparatus that separates living from being, including our discourse. *Research the details of how it all works, locate fault lines, and strike.* We assist the spread of insurrection by becoming a force that can be assumed by anyone. On the other hand, we are called to construct a plane of consistency antagonistic to Empire. Empire is literally everything, some call it *the Existent,* some call it *the Hostis,* either way we are talking about a self-managing dense network of techniques of government enforced by technology and administrated through the careful selections of apparatuses. To construct an ungovernable world within such an ordered environment requires ruptures, openings, and a reorientation of forces. The current cycle of struggles is developing the real time and space for such a rupture—a space for a new sentimental political education where all the old forms can be laid to rest. The Party founds a spine, a material and ethical foundation for the process of the development of anarchy. To develop belligerent worlds attuned to chaos. To create laboratories of subversion and tactical experimentation. To found a series

V. The Paradox of Government

Contemporary struggle reveals the paradox of democratic government. even though democracy is precisely the technique of government that works to suppress all contemporary unrest, struggles are often articulated as democratic. Democracy has successfully conquered the terrain of political utterances. Given the formal landscape in which non-governmental organizations—politicians and unions—articulate and represent the People, every struggle will demand "democracy" and simultaneously reach the limit concept of democracy—the indistinction between citizen and police. These facts are not evidence of democracy's heyday, but of its *finale.* Nothing is more sensible to our time than the absurd image of protesters demanding "democracy" against the back drop of democracy's completion—police, the decentralized embodiments of sovereign power. Democracy against Democracy. But when struggles come up against this threshold, they are not contesting the definition of democracy, but the meaning of "the People," the operation that founds government in the West. In this obscene practice, it's as if "citizens" demand meaning be restored to words. But here we find the secret intelligence of our time: *there is no longer any People.*

If there is no People, then who or what rules in democracy? And what are contemporary struggles contesting the meaning of?

Occupy Wall Street and its subsequent infestations were no People's movement. They were the initial battle cries of one hundred freaky, determined, and uncontrollable *war machines.* War machines are the particular form of collective configurations that share a world, and—when their world is crossed, enclosed, or

forcibly detached from them—transform their shared practices and tools into weapons. Almost all events began as predictable protests with all the predictable slogans about the People, Democracy, and Justice, but with dynamic variables— the imperceptible excess of capital. The same force that produced the metropolis as a diverse network of identities and desires went on strike, occupied a space, and attempted to build a gateway for worlds. Sooner or later each imploded, the participants lost themselves in police confrontations, in radical presence within the metropolis, and the husk of the People dissolved as the ethical differences were revealed and took their central role. The People is the subject of government, and thus *counter-insurrection.* Being together and fighting does not produce a People, on the contrary, it produces war machines.

ity of past revolutionary movements and every collectivity possible thus far has been *contingent on its limits*, its predictability, and its fixed movement.

Some theorists believe the Party is like our own Leviathan—our own mechanical collective-politician that we can control with our many tiny puppet strings, and whose strong fist we can direct against the capitalists. But we don't act as subjects on objects—we strike *with* chaos. The Party is a plane of consistency, a world really. It is all the beings, spaces, and deeds that oppose the world of law and economy.

A fault runs through each and every one of us. A crack that grows with time, pressure, and excitement. A sight displacement brings skyscrapers from the heavens back to earth. A small act of sabotage stops trains from delivering grain, arms, or workers. A strike blocks the factories, ports, and refineries. An occupation interrupts the Reproduction of normality, and in its own sweet time bids every government adieu.

At its center, one finds that the Party is really nothing other than the collective imagination of all the singularities of which it consists. In this way the Party is always also an imaginary collectivity. However, once anyone begins to cut the sinew or bypass the boundaries of the individual, there opens a strange fracture in the fields of imaginary and real; and what was once limited to the realm of thought and spirit begins to appear with substance in the material world. The First Internationale and the constitution of global proletarian class struggle is one of the best examples of this magic. The Party forms around world historical conditions, which is to say, because it is this collective imagination becoming real, it forms as a constellation of antagonisms and as the sense that links these antagonisms. The Party is the sense of "We" that can be felt when we experience a need to be there to help fight, to reverberate, or to intensify a struggle. Today the Party is first and foremost the party of insurrection—the party for an immediate and irreversible

IX. Organized, Precise, Cruel — The Party

There is an old fairy tale, perhaps a bit frigid—the fiction of the party. in this fairy tale, things don't just fall apart, we act decisively. we're organized, we're precise, we're cruel. the party is the sense of "WE" that exceeds the struggle. Because of the regime of forgetting, of senselessness, it is paramount to the elaboration of our tactical and sentimental education, to our collective intelligence, that "We" live past the untimely death of struggles. While it is unnecessary for contemporary struggles to be *recognized* as the acts of the Party—the Party has no flag, no symbol, nor any sign beyond the pure evidence of its presence—it is indispensable that we keep telling the story. Because this myth has the tendency to become real.

"Party" is the only word for a collectivity that remains open and yet binds its participants. It is no coincidence that the sense we get from a wild party growing larger and more uncontrollable and then getting busted up by the police is the same sense we get from being drawn into a heated argument where we take this side, and our enemies take that one. Drawing lines is no vice; the growth of friendship is the only path out of the anxiety of general hostilities. However, the party's virtue is less in its power to cut ethical ties, and more in its ability to remain *radically open.* The Party is open to anyone who *takes part.* We need the party because we need a collective force that isn't predicated on ideology or fixed identities. Building the party—constructing, piece by piece, an open position of antagonism—is paramount in our time, because every collectiv-

VI. Social Movements are Limits

The Amorphous force of the present struggle evades inclusion into a people and thus exposes social movements as insufficient. when opposition—and, by extension, revolution—was fundamentally posed in terms of a struggle to contest the definitions and boundaries of society, social movements were reasonable hypotheses. It's easy to trace a collage of images from the workers' movement to social movements—fists, stars, crowds, hammers, and roses—all invoking a unitary social terrain under siege but with reconciliation on the horizon. Always the image of diverse togetherness, the sun, and order. Today, when what is at stake is a point of singularity—the crack that runs through each and every subject—no struggle that subordinates that fissure to dreams of social unity is adequate to the historical task. When struggles don't cohere, but collapse, diffuse, and mutate, a different framework of movement and growth must be imagined.

Social movements are limits that struggles are practically overcoming. The black bloc appears in Egypt. Immigrant youth burn everything—even the mosques, synagogues, and churches. Riots against police transform into celebrations. Students occupy their universities and interrupt an indebted future. At the spaces of intense social decomposition, malls, schools, and movie theaters are riddled in the bullets of painful existence. Individualist sects give birth to urban guerrilla adventures from Greece to Mexico. Managers are kidnapped and workers threaten to blow up their closing factories if they aren't paid pensions. What is repressed returns

with irrationality, ferocity, and daring. Struggles are shaking off the weight of society, the People, and all the baggage of the 20th century. In these events, protracted struggle and intense attack seem to collapse into each other. Through their riots, the young, precarious, and unemployed workers produce the force of solidarity and continuity afforded by the unions to which they have no access; the isolated individuals and small groups find each other in a new sense of partisan dignity; the industrial workers find that the illegalism of the 20th century is the only way to get what they want; and the urban guerrilla figure of the previous decades collapses into the average city dweller who doesn't pay for the subway. Struggles begin to have a certain attention to detail, a certain intelligence that was once reserved only for those fluent in crime. While it's perfectly clear that there's nothing like a society left to the bare lives drifting through workplaces that hire "illegals" or to senseless American youth, rebellions by the least likely subjects show the beginnings of an insurrectionary double secession where the limits of modern revolution can be laid to rest.

A double negative is a positive power. This double secession comes as a break from society—which is to say, the lineage of progress through hard work, and hard fighting—and a break from the narrative of the left—which is to say, the lineage of the development of the productive forces through the conflict of labor with capital.

"They don't even know what they want," is a common critique of the demandless character of contemporary struggle. But innovation is now the only permitted solution to the market's limits. What's the old individual entrepreneur narrative? "You don't ask for success, you go out there and take it!" The struggles that still attempt to enunciate a demand are unintelligible to those who grant them, because capital—breaking with the limits of society—doesn't speak the language of beggars. The struggles that demand nothing impose their desires as measures, immediately. They take space, they expropriate resources, and they defend their gains. In Madi-

VIII. Communizing Measures

The challenges we face are not problems to be answered with a formula, mostly because ideas are not reserved for the conspiratorial whisper. there is no shortage of loudmouths blabbing out facts and opinions. For every problem that faces society, an answer has already been dreamed up by psychologists, sociologists, and public relations firms. If the war machines currently forming around the most tangible and ridiculous crap are to grow, then the questions of "how" must come to the front. Some comrades have rightly concluded that the immediate next step after a site is occupied is to take what is needed to keep it that way. During the first few days, it would be foolish to turn away the donated sleeping bags and pizza, but is that really a dignified life, and will that last? Despite how much the Left relies on the myth of public space in order to legitimize taking a space, the situation of an occupation is already *out of control.* The question is how to make the situation habitable for us, against whatever acts as a force against us, whether inhospitable weather, the police, or food scarcity. Some would call these techniques *communizing measures.*

ical Islamists, immigrants, and gangs is not that such acts are unjust, prejudiced, or undemocratic in principle. The operation is an attack against friendship. The message is: "be alone or join together in prison."

Every struggle must break what attaches it to the apparatus of law, in order to even feel like anything different. It's no exaggeration: no one cares unless it gets messy. Nothing can change without a population first refusing the affects of care, inclusion, and obedience afforded by government. From anti-globalization to the CPE, from the Banlieu riots to Greece, from the London student movement to the London uprising. From Iran to France to Tunisia to Egypt and back to the US. Indicated by a stumbling and intensifying frequency of uprisings, we are feeling the growing pangs of insurrection. Contemporary struggles prove that everyone wants to fight, precisely because no one knows how. It's going to be messy.

son both the public-sector service workers and the Tea Party's demands were absurd to say the least, and the only way either could make a strike in their own favor would have been to break with the politicians, non-governmental organizations, and unions who work to represent their antagonisms and desires into a social movement. In short, every demand possible (stop the war, abolish the federal reserve bank, stop the cut backs), appears ridiculous; and the only way those struggling achieve anything is by finding the means to impose their objectives themselves.

Someone said, "success lay less in spectacular confrontations with the police, or in damage inflicted, than on the spreading of the practice of confrontation peculiar to the black bloc to all parts of the demonstration." Struggles grow, intensify, and become more robust through a spread of practices; perhaps for those who are everywhere without a People, this is a language. When a practice resonates, it can penetrate the smoke screen of fixed identity. When a practice carries a world with it—when its tactical effect and affect are the minor consequences—it is no longer just a tactic of a strategy but, a *gesture.* Autonomia was a gesture. With it came a world of collective spaces, pirated radio stations, armed demonstrations, and expropriations. If contemporary struggle stumbles into the question "How to stop being creatures of government?" the only meaningful answer is revealed through a gesture.

Today, every struggle has an ungovernable potential—some are composed of it solely. From the position of government this potency can be neutralized by diffusing its intensity and frequency. From their perspective the ungovernable is an element, a risk factor, which can be calculated and internalized with the same methods to contain crime, poverty, a viral outbreak, so-called terror, or an ecological disaster. And, to their credit, these events do have a strange way of signaling each other. They speak of the economic crisis, the terror of falling markets, unemployment, and the dissolution of the middle class myth, but just because they've re-branded the war on terror as a war on surplus value doesn't change their

fundamental strategy in global civil war: neutralize, pacify, and reroute antagonisms; predict and contain contagious collectivities, and, most importantly, *strike first.* Comprehending how this strategy of war plays out economically and politically reveals the underlying paranoid psychoses—and the vulnerabilities—of this sad order of things. Government isn't an invincible force; after all these years, it's still afraid of the dark. The forced distribution of its neuroses is part and parcel of warding off the real and constant threat of ungovernability. Because government knows: *in zones of opacity, gestures are born.*

From our position the Ungovernable is both an event and the world it carries with it. Just as government recognizes a vast array of forces that threaten it, we shouldn't reject the potential of strikes that don't fit within the historical framework of revolutionary movements. Understanding the big picture of social movements and upheaval is useless if our lens is limited to Marxian or anarchist conceptions of how a revolution is made. Nonetheless, while each struggle owes its power to radical difference, there *are* common questions we all face. *How to outmode, outmaneuver, and undermine the forces of restraint and repression* are paramount because government still gains its coherence from a productive administration of anxiety. These questions may magnify on the self, and on active forces at play, but the fissure of our epoch is not limited to each's own. Overcoming the production of fear crosses of the boundaries of individuals, movements, and ideologies. The Ungovernable is whatever gesture that cancels out the force of government.

VII. Friendship and Crime

Friendship and crime have a secret affinity. friendship, either through the affinity groups of anarchists, or the gangs and cliques of the hood, is the primary mode of organization for contemporary struggle—not organizations founded on common interest or ideas. The success of the democratic technique of government also heralds the arrival of *crime* as the primary accent in the language of revolt. Crime comes to the center of the political theater because it is an elusive and amorphous practice with no end in sight. Now that everyone's practice is included in the detailed calculations of capital, only criminal practices position us to see the horizon beyond law and economy. Crime is the remnant of the violence extracted from us by sovereign power. Crime is a particular form of presence that becomes increasingly important once governments begin to concern themselves with power over populations and bodies. Although police can manage the transgression of this or that law, they cannot prevent the way in which crime orients bodies to each other and their environments. It is precisely the limit of the law and economy that reveals crime as another way of being, and it is precisely the limit of crime, law enforcement, that develops the criminal being's intelligence and need for friendship.

This is why governments the world over elaborate and intensify their laws governing conspiracy. The collective arrangement founded on friendship, which emerges in a love that exceeds the criminal danger, is possessed by something—a certain taste— that makes us no longer content with the vulgarity of so many acquaintances and meaningless cowards we are supposed to share time with. The scandal of the roundups of activists, eco-terrorists, rad-