Mystical Anarchism

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The return to religion has become perhaps the dominant cliché of contemporary theory. Of course, theory often offers nothing more than an exaggerated echo of what is happening in reality, a political reality dominated by the fact of religious war. Somehow we seem to have passed from a secular age, which we were ceaselessly told was post-metaphysical, to a new situation where political action seems to flow directly from metaphysical conflict. This situation can be triangulated around the often fatal entanglement of politics and religion, where the third vertex of the triangle is violence. Politics, religion and violence appear to define the present through which we are all too precipitously moving, the phenomenon of sacred political violence, where religiously justified violence is the means to a political end. The question of community, of human being together, has to be framed—for good or ill—in terms of this triangulation of politics, religion and violence. In this essay, I want to look at one way—admittedly a highly peculiar and contentious way—in which the question of community was posed historically and might still be posed. This is what I want to call "mystical anarchism." However, I want to begin somewhere else, with two political theories at the very antipodes of anarchism.

Carl Schmitt–The Political, Dictatorship and the Belief in Original Sin

Let's return to that return to religion. Perhaps no thinker has enjoyed more popularity in the last years and seemed more germane than Carl Schmitt. The reasons for this are complex, and I have tried to address them elsewhere.[1] In his *Political Theology,* he famously writes, "All significant concepts in the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts."[2] This is not just true historically, Schmitt insists, but systematically and conceptually. But such an argument does not exonerate so-called liberal democracy. On the contrary, Schmitt views the triumph of the liberal-constitutional state as the triumph of deism, a theological vision that unifies reason and nature by identifying the latter with divinity. Schmitt's problem with liberalism is that it is anti-political. What this means is that for the liberal, every political decision must be rooted in a norm whose ultimate justification flows from the constitution. Within liberalism, political decisions are derived from constitutional norms; higher than the state stands the law and the interpretation of the law. This is why the highest political authority in a liberal state rests with the Supreme Court or its equivalent. Political action is subordinated to juridical interpretation. For Schmitt, a truly political decision is what breaks with any norm, frees itself from any normative ties and becomes absolute. This is why the question of the state of exception is of such importance to Schmitt. The state of exception is that moment of radical decision where the operation of the law is suspended. This is what the Romans call *iusticium*, and which Agamben has written about compellingly.[3] What the decision on the state of exception reveals is the true subject of political sovereignty. Schmitt famously writes that, "Sovereign is who decides on the state of exception" (*"Souverän ist, wer über den Ausnahmezustand entscheidet"*).[4] That is, the sovereign is the person who is exhibited by the decision on the state of exception. The question "who?" is answered by the decision itself. That is, the decision on the state of exception, the moment of the suspension of the operation of law, brings the subject "who?" into being. To put it into a slogan, *the subject is the consequence of a decision*. The subject that is revealed by the decision on the state of

exception is the *state* and the core of Schmitt's theory of the political is to show that the true subject of the political is the state and that the state must always stand higher than the law.

It is not difficult to see why Schmitt's existential politics of passion and concrete life and his critique of liberal democracy should have won him many friends on the left, like Chantal Mouffe. Sadly perhaps, they are not friends that Schmitt would have chosen. He was much happier in the company of Catholic counter-revolutionaries like Joseph de Maistre and Juan Donoso Cortés. What has to be grasped is that Schmitt's argument for the state of exception as exemplifying the operation of the political is also an argument for dictatorship. If the subject of sovereignty is revealed in the decision on the state of exception, then this decision is the act where the constitution is suspended and dictatorship is introduced. Dictatorship, then, is justified when there is an actual or imagined danger to the existence of the state. Roman republicanism explicitly allowed for this possibility, and one might ponder as to the conceivability of republicanism as a political form without the possibility of recourse to dictatorship. The condition of possibility for legality and legitimacy is the political act that suspends it.

The political theology of liberalism is the pervasiveness of a weak deistic God. The liberal, like Obama, wants God, but one that is not active in the world. He wants a God that permits no enthusiasm and who never contradicts or overrides the rule of reason and law. That way, it is assumed, leads to the prophetic radicalism of Jeremiah Wright. In short, liberals want a God that cannot perform miracles. Against this, Schmitt wants to revivify the political by restoring the state of exception and the possibility of the miracle. But, as Schmitt makes crystal clear, this requires a belief in original sin.

For Schmitt, every conception of the political takes a position on human nature. It requires some sort of anthropological commitment: human beings are either naturally good or evil. Schmitt thinks—and I agree—that this leads to the two most pervasive political alternatives to liberalism: authoritarianism and anarchism. Anarchists believe in the essential goodness of the human being. Their progenitor is Rousseau and his belief that wickedness is the historical outcome of the development of society towards greater levels of inequality.[5] Although this is a caricature of Rousseau (he could in no way be described as an anarchist), this view is more accurately developed by Bakunin: namely that if human beings are essentially good, then it is the mechanisms of the state, religion, law and the police that make them bad. Once these mechanisms have been removed and replaced with autonomous self-governing communes in a federative structure, then we will truly have heaven on earth. We will come back to this view below, but it is worth noting that arguments for anarchism always turn on the idea that if human beings are allowed to express what comes naturally to them, if the force of life itself is not repressed by the deathly force of the state, then it will be possible to organize society on the basis of mutual aid and cooperation.

By contrast, authoritarians believe that human nature is essentially wicked. This is why the concept of original sin is so important politically. For Donoso Cortés and de Maistre, human beings were naturally depraved and essentially vile. There is something essentially defective in human nature that requires a corrective at the political and theological level. It requires the authority of the state and the church. Thus, because the human being is defined by original sin, authoritarianism, in the form of dictatorship say, becomes necessary as the only

means that might save human beings from themselves. Human beings require the hard rule of authority because they are essentially defective. Against this, anarchism is the political expression of freedom from original sin, that a sinless union with others in the form of community is the realization of the highest human possibility.

The idea of original sin is not some outdated relic from the religious past. It is the conceptual expression of a fundamental experience of ontological defectiveness or lack that explains the human propensity towards error, malice, wickedness, violence and extreme cruelty. Furthermore, this defect is not something we can put right, which is why authoritarians think that human beings require the yoke of the state, God, law and the police. Politics becomes the means for protecting human beings from themselves, that is, from their worst inclinations towards lust, cruelty and violence. As Hobbes shows, any return to a state of nature is an argument in favour of the war of all against all. With numerous post-Christian attempts to rethink the concept of original sin,[6] the concept of original sin is still very much with us.

John Gray–The Naturalization of Original Sin, Political Realism and Passive Nihilism

The most consequent contemporary defense of the idea of original sin can be found in the work of John Gray. What he gives us is a naturalized, Darwinian redescription of original sin.[7] To put it brutally, human beings are killer apes. We are simply animals, and rather nasty aggressive primates at that, what Gray calls *homo rapiens,* rapacious hominids. Sadly, we are also killer apes with metaphysical longing, which explains the ceaseless quest to find some meaning to life that might be underwritten by an experience of the holy or the numinous. Today's dominant metaphysical dogma—and this is Gray's real and rightful target—is liberal humanism, with its faith in progress, improvement and the perfectibility of humankind, beliefs which are held with the same unquestioning assurance that Christianity was held in Europe until the late 18th century. As Gray makes clear, progress in the realm of science is a fact. Furthermore, it is a good. De Quincey famously remarked that a quarter of human misery resulted from toothache. The discovery of anaesthetic dentistry is, thus, an unmixed good. However, although progress is a fact, *faith* in progress is a superstition and the liberal humanist's assurance in the reality of human progress is the barely secularized version of the Christian belief in Providence.

The most extreme expression of human arrogance, for Gray, is the idea that human beings can save the planet from environmental destruction.[8] Because they are killer apes, that is, by virtue of a naturalized version of original sin that tends them towards wickedness and violence, human beings cannot save their planet. Furthermore, the earth doesn't need saving. This is where Gray borrows from James Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis. The earth is suffering from a *disseminated primatemaia,* a plague of people. *Homo rapiens* is ravaging the planet like a filthy pest that has infested a dilapidated but once beautiful mansion. In 1600 the human population was about half a billion. In the 1990s it increased by the same amount. This plague cannot be solved by the very species who are the efficient cause of the problem, but only by a large scale decline in human numbers, back down to manageable levels, say half a billion or so. This is the wonderfully dystopian vision at the heart of Gray's work: when the earth is done with humans, it will recover and human civilization will be

forgotten. Life will go on, but without us. Global warming is simply one of many fevers that the earth has suffered during its history. It will recover, but we won't because we can't.

What most disturbs Gray are utopian political projects based on some apocalyptic faith that concerted human action in the world can allow for the realization of seemingly impossible ends and bring about the perfection of humanity. Action cannot change the world because we are the sort of beings that we are: killer apes who will use violence, force and terror at the service of some longed-for metaphysical project. For Gray, the core belief that drives utopianism, on the right as much as the left, is the false assumption that the world can be transformed by human action and that history itself is progress towards such a transformation. As Gray makes explicit, his critique of utopianism derives in large part from Norman Cohn's hugely influential book, originally published in 1957, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*.[9] It is Cohn's analysis of millenarianism that is so important for Gray. This is the idea that salvation is not just a possibility, but a certainty which will correspond to five criteria: salvation is collective, terrestrial, imminent, total and miraculous. Millenarianism finds expression in certain Jewish sects before finding its most powerful articulation in Christian ideas of the Apocalypse, the Last Days and the Millennium. The key clue to the beginning of the end times—and this is crucial—is the appearance of the Antichrist: the prodigious, evil, arch-enemy of God. The Antichrist is what Ernesto Laclau would call a "floating signifier" in millenarian political theology. He is endlessly substitutable and can be personified as the great Satan, the Pope, the Muslims or the Jews. What is crucial here is the identification of the Antichrist as the incarnation of evil that presages the reappearance of Christ or a similarly messianic figure and leads to a bloody and violent terrestrial combat to build heaven on earth.

What is implied fairly discreetly by Cohn and rather loudly trumpeted by Gray, is that Western civilization might be defined in terms of the central role of millenarian thinking. What takes root with early Christian belief and massively accelerates in medieval Europe finds its modern expression in a sequence of bloody utopian political projects, from Jacobinism to Bolshevism, Stalinism, Nazism and different varieties of Marxist-Leninist, anarchist or Situationist ideology. Much of John Gray's *Black Mass* attempts to show how the energy of such utopian political projects has drifted from the left to the right. The apocalyptic conflict with the axis of evil by the forces of good has been employed by Bush, Blair *et al* as a means to forge the democratic millennium, a new American century of untrammeled personal freedom and free markets. In the past decade, millennial faith has energized the project of what we might call military neo-liberalism, where violence is the means for realizing liberal democratic heaven on Earth. What is essential to such neo-liberal millenarian thinking is the consolidation of the idea of the good through the identification of evil, where the Antichrist keeps putting on different masks: Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, Kim Jong-il, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad etc.

We saw how Schmitt's critique of liberalism led him towards an argument for dictatorship underpinned by a belief in original sin. Where does Gray's naturalization of the concept of original sin leave us? He powerfully identifies the poison within liberal humanism, but what is the antidote? This is what he calls "political realism." We have to accept that the world is in a state of ceaseless conflict never far from a state of war. In the face of such conflict, Gray

counsels that we have to abandon the belief in utopia and try and cope with reality. This means accepting the tragic contingencies of life and the fact that there are simply moral and political dilemmas for which there is no solution. We have to learn to abandon daydreams such as a world of universal human rights, or that history has a teleological purpose that underwrites human action. Against the grotesque distortion of conservatism into the millenarian military neo-liberalism of the neo-conservatives, Gray wants to defend the core belief of traditional Burkean Toryism. The latter begins in a realistic acceptance of human imperfection and frailty, a version of original sin. As such, the best that flawed and potentially wicked human creatures can hope for is a commitment to civilized constraints that will prevent the very worst from happening. Political realism is the politics of the least worst. Gray provides a powerful argument in favour of human wickedness that is consistent with Darwinian naturalism. It leads to the position that I call "passive nihilism."

The passive nihilist looks at the world from a certain highly cultivated detachment and finds it meaningless. Rather than trying to act in the world, which is pointless, the passive nihilist withdraws to a safe contemplative distance and cultivates and refines his aesthetic sensibility by pursuing the pleasures of lyric poetry, bird-watching or botany, as was the case with the aged Rousseau. In a world that is rushing to destroy itself through capitalist exploitation or military crusades (usually two arms of the same killer ape), the passive nihilist withdraws to an island where the mystery of existence can be seen for what it is without distilling it into a meaning. In the face of the coming century which in all likelihood will be defined by the violence of faith and the certainty of environmental devastation, Gray offers a cool but safe temporary refuge. Happily, we will not be alive to witness much of the future that he describes.

I have looked at two interrelated responses to the thought that modern concepts of politics are secularized theological concepts. Schmitt's critique of constitutional liberalism as anti-political leads him to a concept of the political that finds its expression in state sovereignty, authoritarianism and dictatorship. Gray's critique of liberal humanism and the ideas of progress and Providence that it embodies leads him to a political realism of a traditional Tory variety. He fuses this, in an extremely compelling way, with what I have called passive nihilism. Both conceptions of the political are underpinned by ideas of original sin, whether the traditional Catholic teaching or Gray's Darwinian naturalization of the concept. The refutation of any and all forms of utopianism follows from this concept of original sin. It is because we are killer apes that our metaphysical longing for a conflict-free perfection of humanity can only be pursued with the millennial means of violence and terror.

Millenarianism

Is the utopian impulse in political thinking simply the residue of a dangerous political theology that we are much better off without? Are the only live options in political thinking either Schmitt's authoritarianism, Gray's political realism or business as usual liberalism; that is, a politics of state sovereignty, an incremental, traditionalist conservatism or varieties of more or less enthusiastic Obamaism? In order to approach these questions I would like to

present the form of politics that Schmitt and Gray explicitly reject, namely anarchism. Now, I have sought to outline and defend a version of anarchism in some of my recent work. This is what I call an ethical neo-anarchism where anarchist practices of political organization are coupled with an infinitely demanding subjective ethics of responsibility.[10] However, for reasons that will hopefully become clear, I want to present a very different version of anarchism, perhaps the most radical that can be conceived, namely "mystical anarchism." The key issue here is what happens to our thinking of politics and community once the fact of original sin has been overcome.

Revolutionary millenarianism desires a boundless social transformation that attempts to recover an egalitarian state of nature, a kind of golden age of primitive communism. This required the abolition of private property and the establishment of a commonality of ownership. There was a perfectly obvious reason why such forms of revolutionary millenarian belief should arise amongst the poor: they owned nothing and therefore had nothing to lose. Thus, by destroying private property, they had everything to gain. However, it is not simply that millenarian belief arises amongst the poor, but specifically amongst those groups whose traditional ways of life have broken down. Millenarian belief arises amongst the socially *dislocated,* recently urbanized, poor who had moved from the country to the city for economic reasons. Medieval revolutionary millenarianism drew its strength and found its energy amongst the marginal and the dispossessed. It often arose against a background of disaster, plague and famine. It was amongst the lowest social strata that millenarian enthusiasm lasted longest and expressed itself most violently. The centerpiece of Cohn's book is the description and analysis of the dominant form of revolutionary millenarianism: the so-called heresy of the Free Spirit. It is to this that I would now like to turn.

The Movement of the Free Spirit

We know very little about the movement of the Free Spirit. Everything turns on the interpretation of Paul's words, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Lord's Spirit is, there is freedom."[11] There are two possibilities here: either the Lord's Spirit is outside the self or within it. If the Lord's Spirit is outside the self, because the soul languishes in sin and perdition, then freedom can only come through submitting oneself to divine will and awaiting the saving activity of grace. Such is the standard Christian teaching, which explains the necessity for the authority of the Church as that terrestrial location or, better, portal to the Lord's Spirit. But if—and here is the key to the heresy—the Lord's Spirit in within the self, then the soul is free and has no need of the mediation of the Church. Indeed, and we will come back to this presently, if the Lord's Spirit is within the self, then essentially there is no difference between the soul and God. The heretical Adamites, who moved to Bohemia after being expelled from Picardy in the early fifteenth century, are reported as beginning the Lord's Prayer with the words, "Our Father, who art within us..." If a community participates in the Spirit of God, then it is free and has no need of the agencies of the Church, state, law or police. These are the institutions of the unfree world that a community based on the Free Spirit rejects. It is not difficult to grasp the anarchistic consequences of such a belief.

The apparently abundant and widespread doctrinal literature of the movement of the Free Spirit was repeatedly seized and destroyed by the Inquisition. Very few texts remain, and I'd like to focus on Marguerite Porete's extraordinary *The Mirror of Simple and Annihilated Souls and Who Remain Only in Wanting and Desire of Love,* to give the text its full and indeed ambiguous title.[12] The text was only discovered in 1946. *The Mirror* is an instruction manual of sorts that details the seven stages that the soul must pass through in order to overcome original sin and recover the perfection that belonged to human beings prior to their corruption by the Fall.[13] The core movement of the Free Spirit recounted within the seven stages of what Porete calls "the devout soul" outlined in Chapter 118 (the book contains 139 Chapters) describes nothing other than the process of self-deification, of becoming God.

1. The first state occurs when the Soul is touched by God's grace and assumes the intention of following all God's commandments, of being obedient to divine law.

2. The second state mounts yet higher and Soul becomes a lover of God over and above commandments and laws. Regardless of any command, the Soul wants to do all it can to please its beloved. In this second state, and one thinks of St. Paul's argument in *Romans* here, the external becomes internal and law is overcome by love.

3. In the third state, consumed by love for divine perfection, the Soul attaches itself to making "works of goodness."These can be images, representations, projects and objects that give us delight in glorifying God. But Porete insists, the Soul "...renounces those works in which she has this delight, and puts to death the will which had its life from this..."[14] The Soul no longer wills, but undergoes a detachment from the will by obeying the will of another, namely God. The Soul must become a "martyr"; that is, a witness and victim to God by abstaining from works and destroying the will. Porete's language here is extremely violent, writing that, "One must crush oneself, hacking and hewing away at oneself to widen the place in which Love will want to be."[15] This is the beginning of the painful process of the annihilation of the Soul, where suffering is necessary in order to bore open a space that is wide enough for love to enter.[16]

4. In the fourth state, when I have renounced my will and hewn away at myself, when I have begun to decreate and annihilate myself, I am filled with God's love and exalted "into delight." Porete's wording here is extraordinary; the Soul, "...does not believe that God has any greater gift to bestow on any soul here below than this love which Love for love has poured forth within her."[17] In the fourth state, the Soul is in love with love as such and becomes intoxicated, "Gracious Love makes her wholly *drunken*" [emphasis mine].[18]

5. The dismay and dereliction of the fifth state arises from the following sober consideration: on the one hand, the Soul considers God as the source of things that are, that is, of all goodness. But, on the other hand, the Soul then turns to consider itself, from which all things are not. The free will that God put into the Soul has been corrupted by the Fall. Insofar as the Soul

wills anything, that thing is evil for it is nothing but the expression of original sin and the separation from the divine source of goodness. The fifth state, Porete writes, "...has subdued her (i.e. the Soul) in showing to the Soul her own self."[19] It is here that we face what Porete repeatedly calls an "abyss," "deep beyond all depths," "without compass or end." This abyss is the gap between the willful and errant nature of the Soul and divine goodness. It cannot be bridged by any action. In the fifth state, two natures are at war within me: the divine goodness that I love and the evil that I am by virtue of original sin. Faced with this abyss, in the fifth state, I become a paradox. The Soul wants to annihilate itself and unify with God. But how? How can an abyss become a bypass?

6. This is the work of the sixth state, which is the highest that can be attained during terrestrial life. Having gone through the ordeal of the fifth state, the Soul finds repose and rest. The reasoning here is delicate: the abyss that separates the Soul from God cannot be bypassed or bridged through an act of will. On the contrary, it is only through the extinction of the will and the annihilation of the Soul that the sixth state can be attained. That is, the Soul itself becomes an abyss, that is, it becomes emptied and excoriated, entering a condition of absolute poverty. It is only in such poverty that the wealth of God can be poured into the Soul. But what happens in the sixth state is even more extraordinary than glory. Let me quote at length the key passage:

> ...this Soul, thus pure and illumined, sees neither God nor herself, but God sees himself of himself in her, for her, without her, who— that is, God— shows to her that there is nothing except him. And therefore this Soul knows nothing except him, and loves nothing except him, and praises nothing except him, for there is nothing but he.[20]

Which means the following: the annihilated Soul becomes the place for God's infinite self-reflection. The logic here is impeccable: if the Soul has become nothing, then it can obviously see neither itself nor God. On the contrary, God enters into the place that I created by hewing and hacking away at myself. But that place is no longer my self. What the Soul has created is the space of its own nihilation. This nihil is the "place," or better what Augustine might call the "no- place," where God reflects on himself, where "God sees himself of himself in her."[21] God's love fills the annihilated Soul in a movement of reflection which is at once both, "for her" and "without her." The only way in which the Soul can become for God is by becoming without itself. In its annihilation, the no-place of the Soul becomes the place of God's reflection on himself, in himself and for himself. It is through the act of annihilation that the Soul knows nothing but God, "and loves nothing except him."[22] Once the Soul is not, God is the only being that is.

7. As I already indicated, the seventh state is only attained after our death. It is the condition of "everlasting glory" of which we shall have no knowledge until our souls have left our bodies.

Communistic Consequences

It is time to draw the significant consequences from Porete's sinuous argumentation. Why was *The Mirror* condemned as heresy? For the simple reason that once the Soul is annihilated, there is nothing to prevent its identity with God. By following the itinerary of the seven states described in *The Mirror*, the Soul is annihilated and I become nothing. In becoming nothing, God enters the place where my Soul was. At that point, *I*—whatever sense the first person pronoun might still have—*become God*. When I become nothing, I become God.

The consequence of such a process of self-deification is to overcome the condition of original sin and to return to the freedom that human beings enjoyed before the Fall. As the founder of the Quakers, George Fox, has it, "I was come up to the state of Adam in which he was before he fell."[23] It is not difficult to see why the Movement of the Free Spirit posed such a profound threat to the authority of the Catholic Church and the governmental and legislative authority of various states in which it manifested itself. If it was possible to overcome original sin and regain the Edenic state of intimacy with the divine, then what possible function might be served by the Catholic Church, whose authority as a mediator between the human and the divine is only justified insofar as human beings live and travail in the wake of original sin. As we have seen in our discussion of Schmitt, all forms of ecclesiastical and governmental authoritarianism require a belief in original sin. It is only because human beings are defective and imperfect that church and state become necessary. If human beings become free, that is, perfected by overcoming the sin and death that define the post-Lapsarian human condition, then this has dramatic political consequences.

To begin with, if the spirit is free then all conceptions of mine and thine vanish. In the annihilation of the Soul, mine becomes thine, I becomes thou, and the no-place of the Soul becomes the space of divine self-reflection. Such an experience of divinity, of course, is not my individual private property, but is the commonwealth of those who are free in spirit. Private property is just the consequence of our fallen state. The Soul's recovery of its natural freedom entails commonality of ownership. The only true owner of property is God and his wealth is held in common by all creatures without hierarchy or distinctions of class and hereditary privilege. The political form of the Movement of the Free Spirit is communism.

Furthermore, it is a communism whose social bond is love. We have seen how Porete describes the work of love as the audacity of the Soul's annihilation. Clearly, there can be no higher authority than divine love, which entails that communism would be a political form higher than law (Marx repeats many of these ideas, imagining communism as a society without law). We might say that law is the juridical form that structures a social order. As such, it is based on the repression of the moment of community. Law is the external constraint on society that allows authority to be exercised, all the way to its dictatorial suspension. From the perspective of the communism of the Free Spirit, law loses its legitimacy because it is a form of heteronomous authority as opposed to autonomously chosen work of love. Furthermore, and perhaps this is what was most dangerous in the Movement of the Free Spirit, if human beings are free of original sin, where God is manifested as the spirit of commonality, then there is no longer any legitimacy to moral constraints on human behaviour that do not directly flow from our freedom. The demands

of the state and the church can simply be ignored if they are not consistent with the experience of freedom. To be clear, this is not at all to say that the Movement of the Free Spirit implies immoralism. On the contrary, it is to claim that morality has flow from freedom by being consistent with a principle that is located not in the individual but in its divine source, the Free Spirit that is held in common.

The Movement of the Free Spirit has habitually been seen as encouraging both moral and sexual libertinage. One cannot exaggerate the extent to which the alleged sexual excesses of the adepts of the Free Spirit obsessed the Inquisition that investigated and condemned the Movement, destroying its literature and executing or incarcerating its members. Most of what we know of the Movement is mediated through the agency of the Church that outlawed it. Such evidence is clearly difficult to trust. In particular, the various inquisitors seem obsessed with cataloguing instances of nakedness, as if that were evidence of the most depraved morals. But what are clothes for, apart from keeping the body warm? They are a consequence of the Fall when we learned for the first time to cover our bodies for shame. If that shame is lifted with the overcoming of original sin, then why wear clothing at all? Furthermore, this tendency to prurience is continued by the Movement's modern inquisitors, like Cohn, who takes great delight in describing the "anarchic eroticism" of the adepts of the Free Spirit. On this view, the Movement of the Free Spirit allows and even encourages sexual licentiousness where adepts throw off the moral prudery of the Church and run amok in some sort of huge orgy. However, to reduce mystical passion to some pent-up sexual energy is to miss the point entirely. It is to mistake sublimation for repression. If anything, what seems to mark texts like *The Mirror* is an experience of passivity and an emphasis on submission. The movement of the Free Spirit is not about doing what you want. On the contrary, it is about the training and submission of free will in order to recover a condition of commonality that overcomes it, namely love.

Do Not Kill Others, Only Yourself

There is no doubt that the Movement of the Free Spirit is deeply antinomian, refusing the metaphysical, moral, legislative and political authority of both church and state. As such, it constituted a clandestine and subversive movement of resistance. Devoted to undermining the power of church and state, abolishing private property and establishing what can only be described as an anarcho-communism based on the annihilation of the self in the experience of the divine, the ruthlessness with which the Movement was repeatedly crushed should come as no surprise.

What kind of assessment can we make of the Movement of the Free Spirit? Cohn sees millenarianism as a constantly recurring and dangerous threat that is still very much with us. What finds expression with the heresy of the Free Spirit is, he writes, "...an affirmation of freedom so reckless and unqualified that it amounted to a total denial of every kind of restraint and limitation."[24] As such, the Free Spirit is a precursor of what Cohn calls "that bohemian intelligentsia" that has plagued the 20th Century and which has been living from the ideas expressed by Bakunin and Nietzsche "in their wilder moments."[25] The Free Spirit was "the most ambitious essay in total social revolution," which finds its continuation on the extreme left and right alike:

> Nietzsche's Superman...certainly obsessed the imagination of many of the "armed bohemians" who made the National-Socialist revolution; and many a present-day exponent of world revolution owes more to Bakunin than to Marx.[26]

This is not the place to show either the erroneousness of such readings of Nietzsche and Bakunin or the chronic limitation of such arguments by insinuation that allegedly connects the Free Spirit to Nazism via Nietzsche. Let's just note that, as we saw with Porete, the Free Spirit is not a "reckless and unqualified" assertion of freedom that denies all "restraint and limitation." On the contrary, Porete is arguing for a rigorous and demanding discipline of the self where individual acts of arbitrary freedom are directed outside themselves to a divine source, which is the basis for commonality. To say it once again, the Free Spirit is not about doing what you want. Neither is it amoralistic; rather, it is a stringent and demanding ethical disciplining of the self.

As we saw above, John Gray makes explicit what is implicit in Cohn's approach. He extends the condemnation of groups like the Free Spirit to any and all utopian movements. The burden of a book like *Black Mass* is to show the continued malign presence of millenarian, apocalyptic politics in the contemporary world. What is particularly powerful in Gray's approach is the manner in which he extends Cohn's diagnosis to the neo-conservative millenarianism of the Bush administration, gleefully embraced by Blair, for whom "the clichés of the hour have always been eternal verities."[27] However, the critique of utopianism does not vindicate Gray's call for political realism, which draws on his naturalization of the concept of original sin. Similarly, it is something of an understatement to suggest that Carl Schmitt would have been out of sympathy with both the theology and politics of mystical anarchism. I'm sure Schmitt would have happily served as Porete's inquisitor and probably personally lit the fire that consumed her and her books.

A very different take on these matters can be found in Raoul Vaneigem's *The Movement of the Free Spirit* from 1986.[28] In many ways, Vaneigem unwittingly confirms all of Cohn's worst fears: he offers a vigorous defense of the Movement of the Free Spirit as a precursor to the insurrectional movements of the 1960s such as the Situationist International, in which Vaneigem's writings played such a hugely influential role. He writes of the Free Spirit: "The spring has never dried up; it gushes from the fissures of history, bursting through the earth at the slightest shift of the mercantile terrain."[29] In Debord's dystopian vision of the society of the spectacle where all human relations are governed by exchange—the dictatorship of a commodity system that Vaneigem always compares to the negativity of death—the Free Spirit is an emancipatory movement that operates in the name of life, bodily pleasures and untrammeled freedom. Vaneigem reinterprets the Free Spirit's insistence on poverty of spirit as the basis for a critique of the market system where life is reduced to purposeless productivity and life-denying work. As such, the most radical element in the Movement of the Free Spirit, for Vaneigem, was "an alchemy of individual fulfillment" where the cultivation of a state of perfection allowed the creation of a space where the "economy's hold over individuals" was relinquished.[30] Thus, the Free Spirit's emphasis on love is "the sole alternative to market society."[31] Wrapped around a compelling and extended documentation of the Movement of the Free Spirit, Vaneigem argues for what he calls an "alchemy of the self" based on unfettered enjoyment and bodily pleasures, citing the proposition of

Hippolytus of Rome, "The promiscuity of men and women, that is the true communion."[32] Vaneigem advances an opposition between the Free Spirit and the Holy Spirit, where the latter is identified with God and the former with his denial. Vaneigem is therefore sceptical of Porete's position in *The Mirror,* arguing that self-deification is too dependant on a repressive, authoritarian idea of God. Although Vaneigem borrows Porete's idea of the refinement of love, which is allegedly the title of one of her lost books, he finds her approach too ascetic and intellectualized. Vaneigem defends an individualistic hedonism based not on intellect but "a flux of passions."[33] It has a stronger affinity with Fourier's utopianism of passionate attraction filled with *phalansteries* of free love and leisure than the sort of self-annihilation found in Porete.

To my mind, something much more interesting than Vaneigem can be found in Gustav Landauer, the German anarcho-socialist who exerted such influence over Buber, Scholem and the young Benjamin.[34] In his "Anarchic Thoughts on Anarchism" (1901), Landauer is writing in the context of the anarchist politics of assassination that had seen the killing of U.S. President William McKinley in 1901, itself based on the murder of King Umberto I of Italy the previous year. Both perpetrators identified themselves as anarchists. Landauer asks, "...what has the killing of people to do with anarchism, a theory striving for a society without government and authoritarian coercion, a movement against the state and legalized violence?"[35] The answer is clear, "Nothing at all." Landauer argues that all forms of violence are despotic and anarchism entails non-violence. If anarchists resort to violence, then they are no better than the tyrants whom they claim to oppose. Anarchism is not a matter of armed revolt or military attack, "it is a matter of how one lives." Its concern is with, "a new people arising from humble beginnings in small communities that form in the midst of the old." This is what Landauer intriguingly calls "inward colonization."

Yet, how is such an inward colonization possible? Landauer's response is singular and draws us back to the idea of self-annihilation. He writes, "Whoever kills, dies. Those who want to create life must also embrace it and be reborn from within." But how can such a rebirth take place? It can only happen by killing oneself, "...in the mystical sense, in order to be reborn after having descended into the depths of their soul." He goes on, "Only those who have journeyed through their own selves and waded deep in their own blood can help to create the new world without interfering in the lives of others." Landauer insists that such a position does not imply quietism or resignation. On the contrary, he writes that "one acts with others," but he adds that, "none of this will really bring us forward if it is not based on a new spirit won by conquest of one's inner self." He continues:

> It is not enough for us to reject conditions and institutions; we have to reject ourselves. "Do not kill others, only yourself": such will be the maxim of those who accept the challenge to create their own chaos in order to discover their most authentic and precious inner being and to become mystically one with the world.

Although talk of authenticity and "precious inner being" leaves me somewhat cold, what is fascinating here is the connection between the idea of self-annihilation and anarchism. The condition of possibility for a life of cooperation and solidarity with others is a subjective

transformation, a self-killing that renounces the killing of others. For Landauer, it is not a matter of anarchism participating in the usual party politics, systemic violence and cold rationalism of the state. It is rather a question of individuals breaking with the state's authority and uniting together in new forms of life. Talk of inward colonization gives a new twist to Cohn's idea of the Movement of the Free Spirit as an "invisible empire." It is a question of the creation of new forms of life at a distance from the order of the state—which is the order of visibility—and cultivating largely invisible commonalities, what Landauer calls anarchy's "dark deep dream." Perhaps this killing of the self in an ecstatic mystical experience is close to what Bataille called "sovereignty," and which for him was constantly linked with his experimentation with different forms of small-scale, communal group collaborations, particularly in the 1930s and 40s, from *Contre-Attaque,* the *Collège de Sociologie* and the *Collège Socratique,* through to the more mysterious *Acéphale.*

The Risk of Abstraction

We are living through a long anti-1960s. The various experiments in communal living and collective existence that defined that period seem to us either quaintly passé, laughably unrealistic or dangerously misguided. We now know better than to try and bring heaven crashing down to earth and construct concrete utopias. To that extent, despite our occasional and transient enthusiasms, we are all political realists; indeed most of us are passive nihilists and cynics. This is why we still require a belief in something like original sin. Without the conviction that the human condition is essentially flawed and dangerously rapacious, we would have no way of justifying our disappointment.

It is indeed true that those utopian political movements of the 1960s, like the Situationist International, where an echo of the Movement of the Free Spirit could be heard, led to various forms of disillusionment, disintegration and, in extreme cases, disaster. Experiments in the collective ownership of property or in communal living based on sexual freedom without the repressive institution of the family, or indeed R.D. Laing's experimental communal asylums with no distinction between the so-called mad and the sane, seem like distant, whimsical cultural memories captured in dog-eared, yellowed paperbacks and grainy, poor quality film. It is a world that we struggle to understand. Perhaps such communal experiments were too pure and overfull of righteous conviction. Perhaps they were, in a word, too *moralistic* to ever endure. Perhaps such experiments were doomed because of what we might call a politics of abstraction, in the sense of being overly attached to an idea at the expense of a frontal denial of reality.

At their most extreme, say in the activities of the Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction and the Red Brigades in the 1970s, the moral certitude of the closed and pure community becomes fatally linked to redemptive, cleansing violence. Terror becomes the means to bring about the end of virtue. The death of individuals is but a speck on the vast heroic canvas of the class struggle. This culminated in a politics of violence where acts of abduction, kidnapping, hijacking and assassination were justified through an attachment to a set of ideas. As a character in Jean-Luc Godard's *Notre Musique* remarks, "To kill a human being in order to defend an idea is not to defend an idea, it is to kill a human being."[36]

Perhaps such groups were too attached to the idea of immediacy, the propaganda of the violent deed as the impatient attempt to storm the heavens. Perhaps such experiments lacked an understanding of politics as a constant and concrete process of *mediation* between a subjective ethical commitment based on a general principle, for example the equality of all, and the experience of local organization that builds fronts and alliances between disparate groups with often-conflicting sets of interests. By definition, such a process of mediation is never pure.

Perhaps such utopian experiments in community only live on in the institutionally sanctioned spaces of the contemporary art world. One thinks of projects like *L'Association des Temps Libérés* (1995), or *Utopia Station* (2003) and many other examples, somewhat fossilized in a recent show at the Guggenheim in New York, *Theanyspacewhatever.* In the work of artists like Philippe Parreno and Liam Gillick or curators like Hans Ulrich Obrist, there is a deeply-felt Situationist nostalgia for ideas of collectivity, action, self-management, collaboration and indeed the idea of the group as such. In such art practice, which Nicolas Bourriaud has successfully branded as "relational,"[37] art is the acting out of a situation in order to see if, in Obrist's words, "something like a collective intelligence might exist."[38] As Gillick notes, "Maybe it would be better if we worked in groups of three."[39] Of course, the problem with such experiments is twofold: on the one hand, they are only enabled and legitimated through the cultural institutions of the art world and thus utterly enmeshed in the circuits of commodification and spectacle that they seek to subvert; on the other hand, the dominant mode for approaching an experience of the communal is through the strategy of *reenactment*. One doesn't engage in a bank heist, one reenacts Patty Hearst's adventures with the Symbionese Liberation Army in a warehouse in Brooklyn, or whatever. Situationist *détournement* is replayed as obsessively planned reenactment. Fascinating as I find such experiments and the work of the artists involved, one suspects what we might call a "mannerist Situationism," where the old problem of recuperation does not even apply because such art is completely co-opted by the socio-economic system which provides its life-blood.

Perhaps we are witnessing something related to this in recent events in France surrounding the arrest and detention of the so-called "Tarnac Nine" on November 11th 2008.[40] As part of Sarkozy's reactionary politics of fear (itself based on an overwhelming fear of disorder), a number of activists who had been formerly associated with the group *Tiqqun* were arrested in rural, central France by a force of 150 anti-terrorist police, helicopters and attendant media. They were living communally in the small village of Tarnac in the Corrèze district of the Massif Central. Apparently a number of the group's members had bought a small farmhouse and ran a cooperative grocery store and were engaged in such dangerous activities as running a local film club, planting carrots and delivering food to the elderly. With surprising juridical imagination, they were charged with "pre-terrorism," an accusation linked to acts of sabotage on France's TGV rail system. The basis for this thought-crime was a passage from *L'insurrection qui vient* from 2007, a wonderfully dystopian diagnosis of contemporary society and a compelling strategy to resist it. The final pages of *L'insurrection* advocate acts of sabotage against the transport networks of "the social machine" and ask the question, "How could a TGV line or an electrical network be rendered useless?"[41] Two of the alleged pre-terrorists, Julien Coupat and Yldune Lévy, are still in jail and others have been charged

with "a terrorist undertaking" that carries a prison sentence of 20 years. Such is the repressive and reactionary force of the state, just in case anyone had forgotten. As the authors of *L'insurrection* remind us, "Governing has never been anything but pushing back by a thousand subterfuges the moment when the crowd will hang you."

L'insurrection qui vient has powerful echoes of the Situationist International and some of the other communist heresies we have examined. The authorship of *L'insurrection* is attributed to *La Comité Invisible*, and the insurrectional strategy of the group turns around the question of invisibility. It is a question of "learning how to become imperceptible," of regaining "the taste for anonymity" and not exposing and losing oneself in the order of visibility, which is always controlled by the police and the state. The authors of *L'insurrection* argue for the proliferation of zones of opacity, anonymous spaces where communes might be formed. The book ends with the slogan, "All power to the communes" *("Tout le pouvoir aux communes").* In a nod to Blanchot, these communes are described as "inoperative" or "*désœuvrée,*" as refusing the capitalist tyranny of work. In a related text simply entitled *Call*, they seek to establish "*a series of foci of desertion,* of secession poles, of rallying points. For the runaways. For those who leave. *A set of places to take shelter from the control of a civilization that is headed for the abyss.*" A strategy of sabotage, blockade and what is called "the human strike" is proposed in order to weaken still further our doomed civilization. An opposition between the city and the country is constantly reiterated, and it is clear that construction of zones of opacity is better suited to rural life than the policed space of surveillance of the modern metropolis. *L'insurrection* is compelling, exhilarating, and deeply lyrical text that sets off all sorts of historical echoes with movements like the Free Spirit: the emphases on secrecy, invisibility and itinerancy, on small scale communal experiments in living, on the cultivation of poverty, radical mendicancy and the refusal of work. But the double program of sabotage on the one hand and secession from civilization on the other risks remaining trapped within the politics of abstraction identified above. In this fascinatingly creative reenactment of the Situationist gesture, what is missed is a thinking of political mediation where groups like the Invisible Committee would be able to link up and become concretized in relation to multiple and conflicting sites of struggle. We need a richer political cartography than the opposition between the city and the country. Tempting as it is, sabotage combined with secession from civilization smells of the moralism we detected above.

Conclusion—The Politics of Love

But what follows from this? Are we to conclude with John Gray that the utopian impulse in political thinking is simply the residue of a dangerous political theology that we are much better off without? Is the upshot of the critique of mystical anarchism that we should be resigned in the face of the world's violent inequality and update a belief in original sin with a reassuringly miserable Darwinism? Should we reconcile ourselves to the options of political realism, authoritarianism or liberalism? Should we simply renounce the utopian impulse in our personal and political thinking?

If so, then the consequence is clear: we are stuck with the way things are, or possibly with something even worse than the way things are. To abandon the utopian impulse in

thinking is to imprison ourselves within the world as it is and to give up once and for all the prospect that another world is possible, however small, fleeting and compromised such a world might be. In the political circumstances that presently surround us in the West, to abandon the utopian impulse in political thinking is to resign oneself to liberal democracy which, as we showed above, is the rule of the rule, the reign of law which renders impotent anything that would break with law: the miraculous, the moment of the event, the break with the situation in the name of the common.

Let me return for a last time to mystical anarchism and to the question of self-deification. Defending the idea of becoming God might be seen as going a little far, I agree. To embrace such mysticism would be to fall prey to what Badiou calls in his book on St. Paul the obscurantist discourse of glorification. In terms of the Lacanian schema of the four discourses that he borrows (master, university, hysteric, analyst), the mystic is identified with the discourse of the hysteric and contrasted with the anti-obscurantist Christian position that Badiou identifies with the discourse of the analyst. Badiou draws a line between St Paul's declaration of the Christ-event, what he calls "an ethical dimension of anti-obscurantism," and the mystical discourse of identity with the divine, the ravished subjectivity of someone like Porete. [42]

Yet, to acquiesce in such a conclusion would be to miss something vital about mystical anarchism, what I want to call, in closing, its politics of love. What I find most compelling in Porete is the idea of love as an act of absolute spiritual daring that eviscerates the old self in order that something new can come into being. In Anne Carson's words, "love dares the self to leave itself behind, to enter into poverty" and engage with its own annihilation: to hew and hack away at oneself in order to make a space that is large enough for love to enter. What is being attempted by Porete—and perhaps it is *only* the attempt which matters here, not some theophanic outcome—is an act of absolute daring, not for some nihilistic end, but in order to open what we might call the *immortal* dimension of the subject. The only proof of immortality is the act of love, the daring that attempts to extend beyond oneself by annihilating oneself, to project onto something that exceeds one's powers of projection. To love is to give what one does not have and to receive that over which one has no power. As we saw in Landauer, the point is not to kill others, but to kill oneself in order that a transformed relation to others becomes possible, some new way of conceiving the common and being with others. Anarchism can only begin with an act of inward colonization, the act of love that demands a transformation of the self. Finally—and very simply—anarchism is not a question for the future, it is a matter of how one lives now.

Is such a thing conceivable and practicable without the moralism, purism, immediacy, and the righteously self-enclosed certainty of previous experiments? To be honest, I don't know.

ENDNOTES

1 See Simon Critchley, *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of Commitment, Politics of Resistance* (London/New York: Verso, 2007), 133 ff.
2 Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. G. Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).
3 See, for example, Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. trans. D. Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).
4 Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology*, 1.
5 By contrast, on this view, political legitimacy can be achieved by what Rousseau frequently referred to as "a change in nature," from wickedness to goodness, of the kind imagined in *The Social Contract* (See Simon Critchley, "The Catechism of the Citizen, Politics, Law, and Religion In, After, With, and Against Rousseau").
6 For example, Freud advances the Schopenhauerian thesis that there might simply be a disjunction between eros and civilization, between the aggressive, destructive workings of libidinous desire and the achievements of culture. This disjunction is only held in check through the internalized authority of the super-ego. Heidegger's ideas of thrownness, facticity and falling were explicitly elaborated in connection with Luther's conception or original sin and seek to explain the endless human propensity towards evasion and flight from taking responsibility for oneself. Although such a responsibility can be momentarily achieved in authentic resoluteness, it can never arrest the slide back into inauthenticity.
7 See John Gray. *Straw Dogs: Thoughts on Humans and Other Animals* (London: Granta, 2003); *Enlightenment's Wake* (London: Routledge, 2007); *Black Mass: Apocalyptic Religion and the Death of Utopia*. (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2007).
8 See John Gray, *Straw Dogs*, 6-8.
9 See Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957).
10 Simon Critchley, *Infinitely Demanding* (London/New York: Verso, 2007).
11 *The Holy Bible* (New International Version) 2 Cor 3: 17.
12 Marguerite Porete, *The Mirror of Simple Souls* (Classics of Western Spirituality), trans. E. Babinsky (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1993).
13 *The Mirror* seems to have circulated in multiple manuscripts and translations in the Middle Ages and Porete. We know relatively little with certainty about Porete, although there is a surprising amount of documentation related to her trial and execution for heresy. Her book was condemned, seized and publicly burned at Valenciennes, but she refused to retract it. When Porete came to the attention of the Inquisition in Paris, she was imprisoned for eighteen months, but refused to recant or seek absolution. She was burnt at the stake in 1310. The fact that she was treated with relative liberality and not immediately executed seems to suggest that she was from the upper strata of society and she had some powerful friends. Although it is not my topic here, it is truly fascinating how many women were involved with the movement of the Free Spirit and their relatively high social status. Scholars of mysticism like Amy Hollywood and poets like Anne Carson have rightly identified Porete and the Beguine movement as a vital precursor to modern feminism (See Anne Carson, "Decreation: How Women Like Sappho, Marguerite Porete and Simone Weil Tell God" and Amy Hollywood, "'Who Does She Think She Is?' Christian Women's Mysticism"). It is highly revealing that, in the proceeding of her trial, Porete's work is not just referred to as being "filled with errors and heresies," but as a "pseudo-mulier," a fake woman (Quoted in Carson, "Decreation," 203).
14 Marguerite Porete, *The Mirror of Simple Souls*, Chapter 118.
15 Ibid., Chapter 118.

16 Anne Carson rightly compares this process of annihilation with Simone Weil's idea of *decreation*, "To undo the creature in us" (Quoted in Carson, "Decreation," 194).
17 Simone Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, trans. A. Wills (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 81.
18 Porete, *The Mirror of Simple Souls*, Chapter 118. Drunkenness is always followed by a hangover. Such is the condition of what Porete calls "dismay" and which other mystics commonly call distress, dereliction and distance from God. The error of the fourth state—and by implication James's analysis of mysticism—is to believe that the progress of the Soul is complete in its beatific union with God. Such a conception of *unio mystica* is common to many mystics and was tolerated and even encouraged by the Church, when and where it could be controlled. Porete, however, is engaged in a much more radical enterprise, namely the Soul's annihilation.
19 Ibid., Chapter 118.
20 Ibid., Chapter 118.
21 Ibid., Chapter 118.
22 Ibid., Chapter 118.
23 George Fox, *Journal*, quoted in Pink Dandelion, *The Creation of Quaker Theory: Insider Perspectives* (London: Ashgate, 2004), 161.
24 Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, 148.
25 Ibid., 149.
26 Ibid.
27 John Gray, *Black Mass*, 139.
28 Raoul Vaneigem, *The Movement of the Free Spirit*, trans. R. Cherry (New York: Zone Books (1994 [1986]), 94.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid., 254.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid., 195.
34 See Michael Loewy, *Redemption and Utopia: Jewish Libertarian Thought in Central Europe: A Study in Elective Affinity* (London: The Athlone Press, 1992).
35 Gustav Landauer, "Anarchic Thoughts on Anarchism," trans. J. Cohn and G. Kuhn, *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory* 11, no.1 (January 2008): 84-91. All of the following quotations from Landauer are from this text.
36 *Notre Musique*. Dir. Jean-Luc Godard (2004. DVD. Wellspring Media, 2005).
37 Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics* (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2002).
38 Hans Ulrich Obrist, *Theanyspacewhatever* (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2008), 152.
39 Liam Gillick, "Maybe it Would be Better if We Worked in Groups of Three?," *e-flux Journal* #3, February 2009. <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/view/35> (Accessed April 6, 2009).
40 For more information on the "Tarnac 9" see <http://tarnac9.wordpress.com/>. See also the commentary by Alberto Toscano, "The War Against Pre-Terrorism: The Tarnac 9 and the Coming Insurrection," *Radical Philosophy*, March/April 2009. Available online at: <http://www.radicalphilosophy.com/default.asp?channel_id=2187&editorial_id=27700> (Accessed April 9, 2009).
41 Comité invisible, *L'insurrection qui vient* (Paris: La Fabrique editions, 2007). English translation of *The Coming Insurrection* available at: <http://tarnac9.wordpress.com/texts/the-coming-insurrection/>.
42 Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, trans. R. Brassier (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 51-52.