

On Tikkunism (Definitive Best Edition)

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Contents

I: The Torah	3
Personal Anecdote I	8
I: The Torah (Continued)	8
Personal Anecdote II	18
II: The Old Testament	19
Personal Anecdote III	23
III: The New Testament	24
Personal Anecdote IV	27
III: The New Testament (Continued)	28
Personal Anecdote V	34
III: The New Testament (Continued)	35
Personal Anecdote VI	42
III: The New Testament (Continued)	43
Conclusion	49

We have to hate with intelligence and love
with intelligence.

—Marge Piercy, *City of Darkness, City of Light*,
1996

I: The Torah

In February of 1999, a journal titled *Tiqqun* appeared in France. Its subtitle was *Organe conscient du Parti Imaginaire* (Conscious Organ of the Imaginary Party), followed by *Exercices de Metaphysique Critique* (Exercises in Critical Metaphysics). It was published by several graduate students in Paris, all of whom included their names in the publication data on the back page of *Tiqqun*.

In an effort to be transparent (or non-opaque), I will now reproduce all of those names. The editorial committee is listed as follows: Julien Boudart, Fulvia Carnevale, Julien Coupat, Junius Frey, Joel Gayraud, Stephan Hottner (who was also Director of Publication), and Remy Ricordeau. Some may claim I am violating security culture, or violating operational security, or something of the like, but in absolutely transparent terms, I am simply reproducing part of a long published document. The authors of *Tiqqun* wanted the public to know who they were, and it is only fair to honor their wishes.

None of the articles in *Tiqqun* have an individual author assigned to them, and all are presumed to be collective texts, although I'll get to that later. The first article in the journal is actually more of a prose poem titled "*Eh bien, la guerre!*" (or, "Great, the war!"), and like most poetry, it's vague and evocative. The Spectacle of the Situationists is immediately equated with the Qlippoth, the Tree of Death in the Jewish mystical tradition, giving the entire text a Gnostic aura which persists from cover to cover.

As they introduce their project, the authors explain, *this world hasn't been adequately described because it hasn't been adequately contested, and vice-versa. We aren't seeking the knowledge that takes account of the state of the facts, but the knowledge that creates them. Critique must fear neither the weight of foundations, nor the grace of consequences. Our era is furiously metaphysical, and it works incessantly to make that forgotten.*

Some of the suggestions are quite clear: *Abandon ship — not because it's sinking, but in order to sink it.* Others are more nebulous: *In a world of lies, the lie cannot be vanquished by its opposite, but only by a world of truth.* The final suggestion is the most important, in my opinion, one it would do well to remember as you read onward: *Intelligence must become a collective affair.* After this, the authors finish

their prose poem with a quote from the mathematician Ludwig Wittgenstein, a line first thought up in the trenches of World War One: *And the rest is silence*. This poem is dated from Venice, Italy on the 15th of January, 1999, followed by the drawing of a war machine in the shape of a dragon.

Once they establish that their war machine will consist of generating *collective intelligence*, the authors launch into a dense philosophical text entitled “What is Critical Metaphysics?” Without opening that can of worms too much, I can safely state that the authors claim capitalism (or domination, or the Spectacle) is in fact metaphysical, given its strength rests largely on the subjective, semi-religious adherence of its subjects, and to challenge this tyranny, the authors introduce Critical Metaphysics.

In one of the clearest definitions, they write: *Critical Metaphysics manifests itself to anyone that decides to live with their eyes open, which only requires a particular stubbornness that people usually just pass off as madness. Because Critical Metaphysics is rage to such degree of accumulation that it becomes a viewpoint.* In a further elaboration of this cosmology, which they are insistent they didn’t invent, the authors write: *commodity metaphysics is not just one more metaphysics among others; it is **the** metaphysics, that denies all metaphysics and above all denies itself as metaphysics. It is also why it is, among all, **the most null** of metaphysics, the one that would sincerely like to pass itself as simple physicality.*

It’s in this same article that the authors include a photographic reproduction of their first graffito, presumably sprayed on the walls by one or several of the collective. It reads *briguez l’éternité!*, or *aspire to eternity!*, and perhaps this has something to do with what they describe as *the coming insurrection of the Mind*. The article is peppered with numerous quotes from European philosophers and appears to be an effort to black-pill fellow graduate students into open rebellion against capitalism. However, despite its absolute density, the article brings up many concepts that will feature prominently in the following articles: Bloom, the Young-Girl, and the Imaginary Party.

For example, the authors boldly declare: *you’re either fighting for the Spectacle, or for the Imaginary Party; there’s nothing in between. All those who could accommodate themselves to a society that accommodates itself so well to inhumanity, all those for whom it already sits well to give the alms of their indifference to their own suffering and that of their peers, all those who speak of disaster as if it were simply another new market with promising prospects – are not our comrades. Rather we would find their **deaths** highly desirable.*

In my opinion, this is the worst article in the journal, but somehow the most unifying. If you’re inclined to actually read this mythical *Tiqqun* journal, it might be best to read “What is Critical Metaphysics?” last, given most of it will make little sense without knowing what a Young-Girl is or who the Imaginary Party are. Despite these drawbacks, the article does feature photographs of the *Tiqqun* collec-

tive's public interventions, such as a sermon at the *Place de la Sorbonne* in Paris on May 15, 1998 and the unfurling of a banner at the Arcachon beach on July 11, 1998, a banner which reads *We are all going to die and there's nothing we can do to stop it*.

Beneath this photograph is the brief description *generalizing disquiet*, connecting to the following passage: *Critical Metaphysics has no vocation for procuring a new and refined type of consolation for humanity. Rather, its watchword is: GENERALIZE DISQUIET. Critical Metaphysics itself is this disquiet, which can no longer be understood as a weakness, or as a vulnerability, but as the origin of all strength.* Bold words, for sure, and it won't be for another 100 pages until the authors explains what any of these photographs directly refer to, given the descriptions of these interventions are in the rear of the journal. In any case, the first pages make clear these authors have actually done things in reality, whether it be graffiti or shock-tactic interventions. The academic world has an incredibly low-bar when it comes to action, so this immediately set the authors apart from their peers, just as it evoked the Situationists circa 1968.

The next article in the journal, "The Theory of Bloom," is basically a description of the neutralized citizen of modern capitalism, filled with more quotes from Western European philosophers and more pictures of graffiti (*Alienation is in your face*). More importantly, it reveals how the authors, in total seriousness, will create an entirely new philosophical concept (Bloom), and graft it onto our lived reality. Bloom is neutralized, a living commodity, and when Bloom snaps they often lash out in all directions, without consciousness. Bloom can transcend their Bloom condition, and by developing a consciousness, they can potentially move into the folds of the Imaginary Party, but I'll get to that later.

The version of "The Theory of Bloom" published in the first volume of *Tiqqun* is different from the version eventually published in book form in 2000, another subject that will be returned to. Links between Bloom, the Imaginary Party, and the Invisible Committee aren't as heavy in the journal version, and the next article, "Phenomenology of the Quotidian Life," is simply a short philosophical reflection of the authors about an interaction in a bakery. The authors are only in the bakery to use currency to commit a financial transaction, and yet they are alive, the authors and bakery clerk, all humans with endless depths, but they do nothing together but exchange currency tokens. This moment is presented as an existential meltdown occurring sometime in the late 1990s, when neo-liberal capitalism was approaching its zenith.

It was in this time period that the authors composed the next article, "Theses on the Imaginary Party," and of all the articles, this one is the most important, and the most ignored. It posits that all anti-state actions, all thefts, all crime, etc., are the work of the Imaginary Party. Not only does this Party not have a central leadership, it can never be led by anyone. It is a writhing unconscious network, undermining the authority of the state at every turn, and within this global underworld network

are *conscious polarities*, partisans of the Imaginary Party who have chosen to give their actions an ethical consistency.

As the authors explain, *all those who, liking truth but certainly not the same truth, agree to ravage the despotism of the derisory metaphysics of the market attach themselves to the Imaginary Party. But the movement in which unity produces itself is also that by which differences pose and solidify themselves. Each specific community in the fight against the empty universality of the commodity knows itself, bit by bit, as specific and raises itself to the consciousness of its specificity, that is to say it diffuses itself by the universal and understands its reflection.*

In my opinion, the bulk of what I value in *Tiqqun* lies within this article, and I am still perplexed at how the alleged *Tiqqunists* have seemingly rejected the ideas contained within it, but that's a subject for the end of this article, when more of the puzzle pieces have been aligned, but for now let it be clear that nothing summarized thus far contains anything claiming to be anarchist, or written from an anarchist perspective, and besides numerous quotations from European philosophers, the figure most often quoted is Marx. Nevertheless, the authors still stood aside from most Marxist demagogues by including an image of their graffiti in the "Theses on the Imaginary Party" article, this one showing an *illiterate* buffing out their piece which read *DESTRUCTION KEEPS YOU YOUNG*.

Speaking of the devil, those confounded anarchists are soon mentioned in the next article, "Silence and Beyond," evoked positively when they respond to a state murder by ransacking Torino and declaring *within one hour, life in this city of death isn't going to be the same anymore, and it's their fault*. What the authors of *Tiqqun* found so promising was the evocative silence of the Turinese anarchists when they proceeded to destroy the *city of death*. In the opinion of the authors, this silence, this detachment, this commitment to destruction, is something to be aspired to, and as they conclude the article, they declare *not a stone upon a stone must be left of this enemy world*.

The next article is extremely academic, but also extremely basic. It's titled "On the Economy Considered as Black Magic: A Metaphysical Critique," and in this lengthy article, the authors use modern anthropological language to state that capitalism is in fact the ultimate *primitive society*, that the rituals in Wall Street are simply black magic, and that the entire system must be destroyed. In a photo depicting another example of their graffiti, the authors declare: *THE MANNA IS ESCAPING, LET'S REINVENT MAGIC*. At the end of the article, there's a graphic I still really appreciate that depicts a Frankfurt stock trader making occult hand signals along with the caption *DOWN WITH BLACK MAGIC!*

And now we come to the dreaded "Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl," perhaps the most controversial, and of all the articles, this next one has suffered the charge of being written by men, and only men. Somehow, the name Fulvia Carnevale escaped the eyes of scrupulous critics, just as they failed to

see the highly visual nature of the article as it was printed in the first volume of *Tiqqun*. Fulvia Carnevale happens to be a visual artist, and it should seem highly unlikely that she had nothing to do with the creation of this highly visual text.

Regardless, the text articulates a biting, ice-cold critique of what we now call neo-liberal feminism, arriving shortly after the end of the first season of *Sex and the City*, a hallmark of that era and a true example of a text written by men. Without question, it has stirred up the most controversy, as well as partially unhinging the mind of its English language translator (alas, another story for later). It has been accused of being anti-feminist, written by men, misogynist, and other adjectives, but the Young-Girl is clearly identified as being of any gender, within the text at least, and similarly to the ridiculous Bloom, the Young-Girl is simply their shorthand for a person internally colonized by the neo-liberal order's sexual economy. So if you're intrigued, please, go ahead and read it for free on the internet.

The next article rounds things out a bit, entitled "Men-machines, Instructions for Use," and puts a masculine lens on themes introduced in "Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl," bringing up things like Viagra in relation to neo-liberalism's sexual economy. Keep in mind, all of this was happening when dating sites on the internet were for old people, young people still met in real life without digital mediation, and the cybernetic instrumentalization of sexuality hadn't reached the epic proportions of the 2020s. In many ways, the themes brought up in these articles are still timely, but the authors soon switch gears with the next article.

In their "The Critical-Metaphysicians Within the Movement of the Unemployed," the authors describes their intervention within an ostensibly left-wing initiative to *put people back to work* and provide a reproduction of some propaganda they handed out. Basically, they critique plugging the unemployed back into the capitalist economy and suggest something else, another option. Instead of getting a job, the unemployed should take what they need and destroy the capitalist economy, etc. Pretty basic, but generally agreed upon by most anarchists.

After this, the authors conclude their journal with "Some Scandalous Actions of the Imaginary Party," a digest of various incidents that reveal eruptions of Blooms within the sea of the Imaginary Party, as well as more conscious efforts, such as the public sermons of the authors, one of which is directed at late 1990s ravers, informing them they have been robotized into a cybernetic control mechanism presided over by capital. After this, they focus on a Bloom who committed a mass-shooting in 1998, meander across various other parties and actors, and ultimately reveal a constellation of violent acts hidden under the alleged peace of the neo-liberal order. After a final trashing of the famous French author Michel Houellebecq, the authors conclude their journal with a picture of three working class girls staring at the camera in a brick neighborhood.

Personal Anecdote I

I suppose you might need a break after all of that religious quotation, just as you might require some idea of who I am before reading any further. In that light, I will now provide a personal anecdote, one of many which will punctuate this biblical timeline and hopefully provide some needed clarity.

One day, I hiked over ten miles into this little village in central France, although I was able to hitch a ride with a few peasants for the remainder. I was literally carrying a walking stick and dressed in a dark hood when I arrived at the general store, where the windows were steamy and a bunch of people were eating. Long story short, the crew put me up in a stone house several hills away, then they put me up in the apartment above the village schoolhouse. I had a pretty good life there, helping with projects, eating really good food, having some interesting conversations, but not once was I asked to join their secret organization. Instead, they gave me a room-mate in the schoolhouse, another random like me who really wanted to donate his labor to their communal mill project.

I'll just say, the guy had major cop vibes. He didn't hitch-hike in like me, he drove. My French was horrible, his English was horrible, and yet he still managed to bring up 9/11 and ask my opinion of the attack. By day, he did help them with the mill, but at night I had to sleep down the hall from this guy, so it sucked for me. The night before he left, I had dinner with him and the future mayor of the village (long story), eating some bland-ass French peasant shit that needed a lot of mustard, of which there was plenty. I kept staring at my host when the cop-dude wasn't looking, trying to communicate, *why the fuck are you doing this to me? Am I asking the questions this guy is asking you? Am I part of your little fucking test?* Then I got a look back, discrete yet visually opaque, as if to say, *maybe he followed you here you fucking moron.*

I thought about this over the rest of my overcooked meat and spice-less potatoes, and then I realized how sound their move had been, and once he was gone, they all asked me about his behavior, of which I told them. It is quite a world we live in, and before returning to my religious narrative, I want to directly address the malicious actors who have read this far. Hopefully you are now comprehending the kind of trap you have just walked into, at least the outlines of its shape. For everyone else who just wants to make sense of what all this *Tiqqunism* means, please read onward for the greatest, most best-tasting clarity your eyes have ever beheld.

I: The Torah (Continued)

Some of you may be wondering why the alleged *Tiqqunists* of 2023 aren't constantly talking about the Imaginary Party and committing a string of endless crimes in

order to be closer to their people, meeting the partisans of the great war on the battlefield and communicating through the unstoppable cipher of *the lived example*. Apparently, the alleged *Tiqqunists* aren't concerned with these matters, they instead toured the USA promoting an upcoming non-violent direct action, which currently goes by the acronym NVDA. If you are starting to grasp the royal scam at play, just wait until I summarize the contents of *Tiqqun II*. After that, the distance between the alleged *Tiqqunists* and their source material should become abundantly clear.

Before I can do that, I have to remind you that the first *Tiqqun* journal was published in the winter of 1999, already five years into the global insurgency that was inaugurated by the Zapatista insurrection of January 1, 1994. From the jungle of Chiapas, a giant wave spread across the earth, reinvigorating the old networks of rebellion and bringing a new generation (Gen-X) into the fold. After the publication of *Tiqqun*, the world saw mass-riots in London, followed by the infamous Seattle anti-WTO riots of November 1999. The wave spread further and further, including the anti-IMF riots in Washington, DC and the mass-rioting in Prague at the IMF conference in 2000, the year the first tech-bubble burst, signaling the end of a very short dream where the internet wasn't controlled by a few capitalist giants.

Then as now, the tech-world was being presented as the great hope for the capitalist citizen, or Bloom, as *Tiqqun* would say. With the collapse of the first tech-bubble, many hopes were dashed, especially at the very apex of the neo-liberal order, and it appeared to many that a global uprising was imminent. In this potent time, numerous people converged on Genoa, Italy for the anti-G7 protests in July 2001. Among them were one or several of the authors of *Tiqqun*, and what they saw scarred them, as it did many others. Under the dark reign of Silvio Berlusconi, the Italian state caused absolute chaos, simultaneously joining the liberals in condemning the violence of the black-clad anarchists while at the same time mercilessly attacking them on the street.

There is no doubt that the state sent a minority of infiltrators into the mix, but the goal was to discredit the anarchists and force the liberals back into the arms of the state. Carlo Giuliani was murdered by the police on the street, dozens were violated and tortured when the police raided the Indymedia center, and those who managed to walk away unscathed formed some very dark conclusions. Two months later, two planes were flown into the World Trade Center in New York City on September 11, 2001. A month after that, *Tiqqun II* was published, bearing the subtitle *Organ of Liaison with the Imaginary Party*.

It can be safely assumed most of the articles in *Tiqqun II* were written well-before October 2001, and the first is titled "Introduction to Civil War." On the first page, the authors provide a still from the film *M* by Fritz Lang, released in 1931. This still depicts the entire criminal underworld of Berlin assembled illegally to try and condemn a captured serial killer, one whose murders triggered a police crack-down that cut deeply into their illicit profits. Working against the will of the state, the

underworld reveals itself to be far more effective in capturing this child-killer, and were it up to them, he would be dead.

In plain words, “Introduction to Civil War” describes the state as a suppressor of differences, and if the authors had their way, differences would be allowed to express themselves freely, with all that this entails, such as the summary execution of child-killers. To back up their assertion that the state suppresses differences in favor of state-imposed homogeneity, the authors quote a Nazi legal-scholar named Carl Schmitt, because after all, who better to cite on this matter than a boot-licking, state-worshipping Nazi? In the swine’s own words, *the history of the state formation in Europe is a history of the neutralization of differences—denominational, social, and otherwise—within the state.*

In case it isn’t obvious, Schmitt liked state formation, it was kind of his thing, and when the authors of *Tiqqun II* quote this Nazi, it’s in order to show how the state sees itself. Why anyone would latch onto Schmitt beyond this context is strange, given he was certainly a Nazi, but let me assure you, “Introduction to Civil War” can be quite boring, written in heavy academic jargon like the rest of *Tiqqun*, but it is fully anti-state in its conclusions.

This wasn’t the first time the authors quoted Carl Schmitt, for he appeared in “Theses on the Imaginary Party,” this time used to show how boot-licking swine view the actions of the Imaginary Party: *disappearing in the shadow, but transforming the shadow into a strategic space from whence come the attacks which destroy the place where until now imperium manifested itself, which dismantle the vast background of official public life, that a technocratic intelligence would not know to organize.*

I only dwell on Schmitt because apparently the alleged *Tiqqunists* are naming their books after this Nazi’s work. If that seems strange, I can only encourage you to keep reading, because I’ll eventually get to all that. To conclude, “Introduction to Civil War” is also filled with pictures of riots, another example of the author’s graffiti (*DEATH TO BLOOM!*), and even one of the World Trade Center exploding. This is then followed by “The Cybernetic Hypothesis,” a thorough and uncompromising dissection of the digital shackles spreading across the world in 2001.

The authors take a while to get to the point, although in this case I should say author, since it is written in the first person. After some paragraphs, they make themselves clear with this simple statement: *Even if the origins of the Internet device are today well known, it is not uncalled for to highlight once again their **political meaning**. The Internet is a war machine invented to be like the highway system, which was also designed by the American Army as a decentralized internal mobilization tool. The American military wanted a device which would preserve the command structure in case of a nuclear attack.*

Once again, the text is sprinkled with philosophical quotations, including from Martin Heidegger, the Nazi philosopher who had a romantic relationship with Han-

nah Arendt, the Jewish philosopher famous for coining the term *banality of evil*. In regards to *Tiqqun II*, Heidegger is used to illustrate the ultra-western viewpoint that cybernetics would inevitably become an all-knowing world-system that saw most organic human behavior as a disturbance.

All the architects of the reigning cybernetic dystopia were also convinced in the inevitability of what they were building, and according to *Tiqqun*, in their system *each person was to become a fleshless envelope, the best possible conductor of social communication, the locus of an infinite feedback loop which is made to have no nodes. The cyberneticization process thus completes the "process of civilization," to where bodies and their emotions are abstracted within the system of symbols. To make this more concrete, the authors explain how, by rethinking mental problems and social pathologies in terms of informatics, cybernetics gave rise to a new politics of subjects, resting on communication and transparency to oneself and to others.*

Keep in mind that it was in the year of our lord 2001 that the authors of *Tiqqun II* explained that *the Internet simultaneously permits one to know consumer preferences and to condition them with advertising. On another level, all information regarding the behavior of economic agents circulates in the form of headings managed by financial markets.* Pretty spot on, in my opinion.

To be perfectly clear, the authors of *Tiqqun II* weren't the first to write about cybernetics. As far back as 1971, the Black Panther prisoner George Jackson wrote from San Quentin Prison, *their cybernetics cannot overcome the fact that men, especially of the pig class, are cyclic. They think, function and live in cycles. This is more to their detriment than ours...simple pig types can only learn to function by rote and in cycles. Procedure must be drilled into them and only seldom if ever changed...for the soldiers of the people, the guerrillas, though they also must operate with the tightest structure and in complete harmony with their political branch, cycles are not a factor in their operations.*

This understanding of cybernetics is central to the methods of guerrilla warfare George Jackson expounded from his prison cell, for if the reigning cybernetics is cyclical, so the guerrilla must never move in cycles and should use the system's nature against it. All of this was published after George Jackson was murdered by the state in a volume called *Blood in my Eye*, and within a decade of his murder, an anarchist named Alfredo Bonnano was furthering this type of analysis, zeroing in on cybernetics and informing his anarchist readers of the growing threat.

Back in the 1980s, Bonnano and his friend Jean Weir published how-to guides on destroying computer complexes. In the days when computers took up the space of a modern data-center, Bonnano informed his readers it would be best to simply use a drill to bore a hole into the roof of the computer complex, pour in a good amount of accelerant, light a match, and run. Bonnano had once been in the university and wrote a giant academic work on Max Stirner, putting him closer to the authors of *Tiqqun*, as far as an education goes, although Bonnano was a thousand times more

awesome.

In January 1993, during a lecture in Thessaloniki, Greece, old Bonnano told a crowded university classroom: *this is what Capitalism is building: an automaton in flesh and bone, constructed in the laboratories of power. Today's world, based on information technology, knows perfectly well that it will never be able to take the machine to the level of the human, because no machine will ever be able to do what a human can. So they are lowering humans to the level of machines. They are reducing their capacity to understand, gradually leveling their cultural heritage to the absolute minimum, and creating uniform desires in them.*

Bonnano tried to be real clear that day in Thessaloniki, so here it is: *the new technology is not abstract, it is something concrete. For instance, the international communication system is a concrete fact. In order to build abstract images in our heads it needs to spread itself throughout the country. This is the way the new materials are being used, let us say in the construction of cables for data transmission. And it is here that it is important to know technology, not how it works in the productive aspect, but how it is spread throughout the country. That is to say, where the directing centres (which are multiple) are to be found and where the communication channels are. These, comrades, are not abstract ideas but physical things, objects that occupy space and guarantee control. It is quite simple to intervene with sabotage in this instance. What is difficult is finding out where the cables are.*

And then Bonnano dropped the warning no one listened to except those fucking anarchists, some of them: *the old revolutionary dream, let us say of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism, was that of attacking and defeating power so that the working class could take over the instruments of production and use them in the future society in a way that was more just and free. Now it would be impossible to make a fairer and more free use of these new technologies, because they do not stand passively before us like the old technologies of yesterday, but are dynamic. They move, penetrate deep inside us, have already penetrated us. If we do not hurry to attack, we will no longer be able to understand what we need in order to do so, and rather than us taking the technologies over, it will be the technologies that take us over.*

Over a year after this lecture, Bonnano's friend Jean Weir was arrested along with several other anarchists for the crime of robbing a bank in Rovereto on September 4, 1994. This set off a long sequence of events known as the Marini Trials, and in July of 1997, the Italian state raided numerous anarchists spaces and arrested dozens of anarchists. Using the texts of Bonnano as proof of an organized conspiracy, the state tried to claim all of these anarchists belonged to a singular organization. Let me say that again, because it will be quite important later: THE STATE TRIED TO CLAIM ALL OF THESE ANARCHISTS BELONGED TO A SINGULAR ORGANIZATION. At the risk of stating the obvious, I'm bound to inform you that these anarchists did not in fact belong to a singular organization, Bonnano was not their leader, and his fucking academic lectures from Thessaloniki were not their unifying

organizational document. That is a police fiction. Full stop.

While these Marini trials were raging, the state hammered the Turinese anarchist scene hard, and after arresting three anarchists for sabotaging train lines, the state killed two of them in their cells: Edoardo Massari and Maria Soledad Rosa. That was in the winter of 1998, and the response to those murders was described above in *Tiqqun I*. By the time *Tiqqun II* came out in October of 2001, the main anarchist text dealing with cybernetics was being used in a conspiracy trial, and it's within this exact context that "The Cybernetic Hypothesis" was published.

For many years, up to the present date, anarchists have been reading Bonnano's take on cybernetics in a zine titled *The Insurrectional Project*, which every stinky anarchist punk house in the USA has hosted in their bathroom at least once. You know, the one with the pistol, dynamite, and dagger on the cover? The first edition was published in English in London in 2000, then in San Francisco in 2001, ensuring it became part-and-parcel of the Anglophone anti-civ current. Thanks to these zines, anarchists of the new millennium were thinking about cybernetics well-before the authors of *Tiqqun II* dropped their thorough and clear history of the development of cybernetics and some suggestions for attacking its reign.

Anyway, just as the authors of *Tiqqun II* quote Schmitt and Heidegger, they also quote the communist Toni Negri in "The Cybernetic Hypothesis," not because they agree with him on anything, but to show how the cybernetic cosmology has crept into communism and the left, a huge leap from the anti-cybernetic guerrilla communism of George Jackson. Closer to the end, they basically describe what the smartphone would do six years later: *for a physical, biological, or social system to have enough energy to ensure its reproduction, its control devices must carve into the mass of the unknown, and slice into the ensemble of possibilities between what is characterized by pure chance, and has nothing to do with control, and what can enter into control as hazard risks, immediately susceptible to a probability calculation.*

And now we come to the dreaded word **OPACITY**, and here is it's most relevant definition, in regards to fighting the cybernetic dystopia we currently live in: *the important thing for us is to have opacity zones, opening cavities, empty intervals, black blocs within the cybernetic matrix of power. The irregular war waged against the Empire, on the level of a given place, a fight, a riot, from now on will start with the construction of opaque and offensive zones. Each of these zones shall be simultaneously a small group/nucleus starting from which one might experiment without being perceptible, a panic-propagating cloud within the ensemble of the imperial system, a coordinated war machine, a spontaneous subversion at all levels. The proliferation of these zones of offensive opacity (ZOO), and the intensification of their interrelations, will give rise to an irreversible disequilibrium.*

I forgot to mention that the second subtitle of *Tiqqun II* was *Zone of Offensive Opacity*, and this idea seems very important to the entire journal. So the next time one of the alleged *Tiqqunists* hits you up on one of your 106 threads on Signal,

the next time they host a Zoom call, the next time they hold any kind of public gathering where possessing a smartphone is allowed, you hereby have my blessing to smash any and all of their digital surveillance devices, for such things do not render opacity, and opacity is central to the holy dogma of *Tiqqun*. I'll have a lot more to say on this subject, but I hope it's getting obvious that the alleged *Tiqqunists* aren't really that into *Tiqqun*.

Getting back to the point, "The Cybernetic Hypothesis" is really long, it's even a book now, in English, and it does stand the test of time, treading ground Adam Curtis would later walk with his documentary series *All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace*. Feel free to read it, there's a lot of good stuff there, but to be abundantly clear, the text ends with a call for communism, not anarchism. After that, the authors slide in a crummy looking copy of one of my favorite texts, another prose poem titled "The Conquerors Had Won Easily" where one first encounters the term Invisible Committee:

These conquerors were certainly not mistaken as they hastily denounced the conspiracy of a certain Invisible Committee. They even spoke of a major peril for civilization, for democracy, for order and the economy. But in the interiors of their chateaux, the conquerors became afraid. They felt themselves more and more alone with their victory. A world that, even yesterday, appeared to them entirely captured, incomprehensibly escaped them, piece by piece.

This is followed by the picture of a black woman in a white mask strolling down a country road, wrapped in a quilt, with three children following behind her. After that, the authors of *Tiqqun II* launch into their timeless take down of every political/radical/social scene you've even been part of. Entitled "Theses of the Terrible Community," it's as brutal as it sounds, and in certain contexts, this text can act as a bomb, with sentences that never get old: *The terrible community is a sum of solitudes that watch over each other without protecting each other. This one is my absolute favorite though, forever: One enters the terrible community because anyone who goes looking in the desert finds nothing else.*

I mean, I don't know how an alleged *Tiqqunist* can read this and not puke all over their knees: *In order to renew itself, it must thus gradually destroy those who are part of it, on pain of complete stagnation. It lives off sacrifice, since sacrifice is the condition for belonging to it. That alone, after all, is the basis for its members' ephemeral and reciprocal trust in each other. If it were otherwise, would it have such a great need for action? Would it deserve such a dedication to its renewal through such frenetic agitation?*

It's strange, I know, but the alleged *Tiqqunists* seem to have used this text as their model for building community, especially in regards to quotes like this one: *all terrible communities have a defensive conspiracy relationship with events and conceive of their relationship with their possibilities in terms of production or exclusion.* Before you get too excited, I have to remind you that this is *Tiqqun*, so all of this is

enveloped in thick academic jargon, but it still hits, which I suppose is its true, lasting power. Despite its unbearable academic jargon, which the alleged *Tiqqunists* certainly ape well enough (as do most of their critics, tbh), something unbearably true is contained within the “Theses on the Terrible Community.” I dare you to read it.

The next article is called “The Problem of the Head,” and it’s basically a critique of the vanguard party, or the avant-garde, equated with the head of a body, and the article concludes with these cryptic sentences: *a certain relation must be able to be established with the Invisible Committee; be it only in the sense of a generalization of insinuation. It must be said in passing: there is not a problem of the head, there is but a paralysis of the body, of the act.* Someone should certainly alert any alleged *Tiqqunist* that their primary organizational text is categorically against vanguards, even opaque ones. Again, risking the obvious, I would say that if a group has been identified as a coherent vanguard, they are twenty-thousand leagues from anything resembling opacity. But perhaps I’m just dumb.

Moving onward in my religious summation of *Tiqqun II*, we now come to a very interesting text, “A Critical Metaphysics Could Emerge as a Science of Apparatuses.” As the authors explain, *this text was the document written for the foundation of the SASC, the Society for the Advancement of Criminal Science. The SASC is a non-profit dedicated to the anonymous collection, classification, and diffusion of all knowledge-powers useful to anti-imperial war machines.*

Before launching into a philosophical rant, the authors narrate a scene of modern horror, one that has unfortunately become quite common. At an exposition in the MoMA of NYC, the authors witnessed *enthusiastic cyberneticians, freshly converted to making artistic excuses, had resolved to present to the public all their apparatuses for neutralization and normalization via work that they’d come up with for the future. The exposition was called Workspheres: they were demonstrating how an iMac can transform work, which itself had become as superfluous as it was intolerable, into leisure; how a “convivial” environment can make the average Bloom more disposed towards coping with the most desolate existence and can maximize his social output.* Again, this was written in 2001.

After philosophically meandering for many pages, the authors finally get to the heart of the matter: *crime, contrary to what Justice insinuates, is never an act, a deed, but a condition of existence, a modality of presence common to all the agents of the Imaginary Party.* As the authors remind the reader, *the majority of apparatuses are vulnerable to just about any kind of collective resistance, having not learned how to resist it.* After advocating once again for what they call “the coming insurrection,” the authors then state that, *outside of zones of opacity and the insurrection, all that spreads out before us is the reign of apparatuses, devices, the sorry empire of **meaning machines; machines that assign meaning** to everything that happens within them, according to whatever system of representations is in force locally.*

This insanely dense article is followed by the much more lively “Report from the SASC Concerning an Imperial Apparatus,” which is an extremely fancy way of describing a detailed description of a new British mega-mall, as well as tips for stealing from it and avoiding its modern surveillance. The article is filled with pictures of this bizarre capitalist temple, and in many ways it is evocative of another text from 2001, the canonical *Evasion* published by Crimethinc in the U\$A. It was sure nice to have some glossy, high-quality publications advocating crime back in those days, and while neither *Tiqqun II* or *Evasion* had a huge print run (at first), their impact is still being felt today, clearly, given I’m being forced to write this religious chronology of our holy works.

The next text in the journal is a piece titled “Notes on the Local,” something which was also wheat-pasted by the authors across various French cities. In this text, they state that *the virtual is the place where possibilities never become real, but remain indefinitely in the virtual state. Here, prevention has won over intervention: if everything is possible in the virtual it’s because the mechanism ensures that everything remains unchanged in our real life. It ends by advocating a concentration on the local environment, for it is the **place of the present confrontation.***

After this we come to the pretty boring “The Little Game of the Man of the Ancient Regime,” a critique and analysis of the still-reigning bourgeois men of France, which isn’t uninteresting, it’s just pretty occult stuff for anyone who doesn’t live in their cheese-smelling, wine-drenched country. This thrilling article is followed by “Sonogram of a Potential,” a feminist text running through the triumphs and pitfalls of the Italian autonomists in the 1970s.

At this point, I should state that *Tiqqun II* deals much more with the the subject of women than *Tiqqun I*, which only offered “Preliminary Material for a Theory of the Young-Girl.” The feminist current is much thicker in *Tiqqun II*, and it is here that the authors begin to speak of something called a *human strike*, what they call *a strike of gestures, dialogue, a radical skepticism in the face of all forms of oppression that are taken for granted, including the most unquestioned of emotional blackmail or social conventions, such as the need to get up and go to work. As they make clear, the human strike puts forth no demands.*

In a passage that resonates today in 2023, the authors claims that *what once was only women’s economic oppression is now unisex, and the human strike appears to be the only possible solution for the situation. Because “preferring not to” is now equal to preferring **not to be** an accountant, a telecommuter, a woman, and that’s something that has to be done by a number of people together. As they state further on, it’s time to go on a good long strike. a human strike, which will be so radically destructive that it will, in its movement, destroy the enemy that’s inside of us. And only then will we realize how much space it took up and how much indulgence it required of us.*

This text is followed by “This is Not a Program,” and true to their word, the authors do not provide a program, but a commentary and analysis of the anti-imperial

struggle of the 1970s and how it was crushed, as well as recommendations for not getting crushed again. It is filled with photos of riots, seemingly in France, as well as featuring a prominent squatting symbol, along with more images of the author's graffiti (CITIZEN, GO HOME!). This all gears the reader up for the epic conclusion to *Tiqqun II*, the jargon heavy prose-poem "How Is It To Be Done?"

This text is a grand synthesis of all the reader has presumably read, presenting the conclusions of the authors and serving as a manifesto for their *human strike*. It's one of the most widely reproduced of the old *Tiqqun* texts, and likely needs no introduction, although it's hard to imagine how so many people read it without having access to the preceding [checks notes] two-hundred and seventy pages of *Tiqqun II*. It brings up the dreaded *whatever singularity*, mentions *opacity* several times, and says nothing about anarchism. It does strongly advocate anonymity, though, and makes compelling statements like this: *human strike, today, means refusing to play the role of the victim. Attacking it. Reappropriating violence. Arrogating impunity to ourselves. Making the paralyzed citizen understand that whether or not they go to war, they are at war anyway.*

That's about it for the twin holy books of *Tiqqun*. I don't know about you, but I don't see very much in these texts that aligns with any of the behaviors of the alleged *Tiqqunists*. All of them are hyper visible, identifiable, non-opaque, and they are not following any lines of flight out of their situation, they are instead clinging to the Qlippoth, the Tree of Death. I don't doubt for a second that an authoritarian communist current has emerged which now goes by the designation *Tiqqunist*, at least in the radical underworld of the USA.

However, it is a great mistake to refer to them as *Tiqqunist*, because being a *Tiqqunist* is impossible, at least according to the authors of *Tiqqun*, and if one were to follow the suggestions presented in *Tiqqun*, anyone calling themselves a *Tiqqunist* should be seen as highly suspect, a Bloom, a Young-Girl, an agent of the Spectacle, or a variety of other denigrations. Let us please think of another name for this authoritarian sect, and if you don't yet agree with me, if you insist, *fine, the Tiqqunists don't exist, but there are definitely Appelists*, I guess you should keep reading.

In an effort at transparency, I will anonymously identify myself as someone who could very rightly be accused of being a *Tiqqunist*. After all, I helped spread the English translations far and wide across the USA, and I will eventually explain why. I've never identified myself as a *Tiqqunist*, I have remained a committed anarchist, not a communist, and I have neither been hypnotized or inducted into any fantastical Invisible Committee. So if you think I sound pretty sketchy, wait till I tell you about the prime *Tiqqunist* you never heard of, a person who ensured some creeps in the USA had access to the full English translation of *Tiqqun*. Wait until I tell you about Aragorn.

Personal Anecdote II

One day, in a small village in central France, I helped build the foundation for a house in what was called a commune. It was way up the hill, I spent all morning pouring concrete foundation columns, and eventually it was lunch, the best time of the day. I went down to the general store with everyone else to eat the worker's lunch, which cost 5 euro.

When I got there, one table held a conglomeration of commune freaks, while another held a crew of local workers who pulled up in their work van for the cheapest meal in town. These two groups mingled at the bar but otherwise sat apart, and as I wolfed down my *boeuf bourguignon*, I tried to imagine what an equivalent of this rural bar/restaurant would look like in the toxic U\$A. The general store wasn't a money-maker (I was eating for free, for example), but it did provide the only other option for a prepared lunch besides the nearby hotel restaurant, which was owned and frequented by the few dozen National Front supporters. At the hotel, lunch cost 10 euro, so only swine ate there.

I figured someone could move to a tiny, depopulated town in any part of the U\$A, provide the cheapest meal in town, and meanwhile mill a bunch of wood, build their own houses, grow their own food, and try to live outside of the system with no other explicit agenda other than to do exactly that. There didn't need to be some coordinating body, some Invisible Committee, in order for people to leave the meat grinder of metropolitan capitalism and pay attention to where they lived, strengthening their geographical region rather than obey some unified, coordinated plan dreamed up in the citadel.

I finished off my *boeuf bourguignon* and took my time sipping on wine, pretending I understood what people were saying to me in French. In my boredom, I reached for a local pamphlet, this one memorializing the death of a local figure, a Spanish anarchist from the old days, a man who had literally fought Franco, hated Stalin, hated communism, and decided to spend his last days in this isolated village of 300 souls.

I looked up after reading this article, and suddenly I realized where I was, a place where a grumpy anarchist who hiked over the Pyrenees with the Spanish guerrillas, a man who fought every day of his life against capitalism and fascism, this man felt comfortable with these freaks, he liked what they were doing, he felt comfortable, at peace, much like I was starting to, although I was still confused. Anarchists weren't doing this type of thing, moving to rural villages and setting up shop, and I was beginning to think it might be a good idea, given how shitty U\$A cities were becoming. I think we're getting closer, maybe, but before returning to my religious narrative, I just want to say one thing.

That little village in central France, please, for the love of Jesus, don't associate it with any of the *Tiqqunists*. Please don't fall into the trap of believing that anyone

who wants to build real autonomy outside of the state is part of an authoritarian communist conspiracy with its headquarters in the rural hamlet of Tarnac. Please, please, for the love of sweet Mary, don't believe narratives the cops write. Stick to the primary texts, look at people's behavior, not what they say. Because I really liked that little bar with the unpretentious, non-hipster worker's lunch, and if some losers in the USA also happen to open a hipster bar or start some yuppie business, don't associate them with that other bar in the middle of nowhere. As you will see later in this massive text, it's just not appropriate. People who want to get the fuck out of capitalism's meat grinder have nothing to do with *Tiqqunism*. Nothing.

II: The Old Testament

As I mentioned, the authors of *Tiqqun* experienced the meat grinder of Genoa in 2001. After returning from that bloodbath, some of the authors released a video called *And The War Has Only Just Begun*. Make of it what you will, but it recommends building a Party. This doesn't sound very good, but here is how they put it:

There is this old notion, Bolshevik and a little chilly for sure: building the Party. I believe that our present war is about building the Party, or rather; it's about giving this deserted fiction a new content. We talk, we lick each other, we make a film, a party, a riot, we meet a friend, we share a meal, a bed, we love, in other words, we build the Party. Fictions are serious things; we need fiction to believe in the reality we're living. The Party is the central fiction, the one that tells the war of our time.

They also talk a lot about orgies in this 2001 film, the subject taking up over a third of this Situationist inspired montage, and they include footage of themselves editing *Tiqqun II* on a computer. There is also a long sequence showing the World Trade Center on fire before its collapse. This would be the last the public would ever hear from *Tiqqun*. According to legend, some of the authors moved with their friends to an isolated village in central France, while others did not. According to legend, there was an epic break-up between two authors of *Tiqqun*, and according to legend, one of the authors of *Tiqqun* who did not go to the isolated village in central France was Fulvia Carnevale, who will appear intermittently throughout the rest of this text.

Regardless, some of the authors of *Tiqqun* are said to have gone to an isolated village in central France where the youngest person was 40, the next youngest 61. Some of the reasons for moving to this remote place are chronicled in the 2003 film *Get Rid Of Yourself* by the Bernadette Corporation film collective. In this strange Situationist inspired video, we find Hollywood actress Chloe Sevigny reading "How Is It To Be Done?" in a kitchen, as well as images from the G7 summit protests in Genoa, along with some ephemeral imagery of retreating into the rural countryside

after the chaos.

The rest is silence, at least until 2004 when a sudden announcement appeared in the latest edition of *Theorie du Bloom* by La Fabrique Editions. Not only did the authors of *Tiqqun* get some money from this publication, the preface to the Italian edition included mention of a forthcoming *Appel* that would further elaborate on the themes in Bloom.

At this point, it would be wise to point out that this is the moment the collective author of *Tiqqun* begins to transition into something else, perhaps even changing its composition. However, as I've shown, there is a documented cross-over between *Tiqqun* and the authors of *Appel*, which finally appeared in France towards the end of 2004.

From an anarchist viewpoint, the text is quite compelling, resonating with many core anarchist beliefs. *Appel* critiques activism and the left, accurately, and calls for something new: *to get organized means: to get out of the situation and not merely challenge it. To take sides within it. Weaving the necessary material, emotional, and political solidarities. This is what any strike does in any office, in any factory. This is what any gang does. Any underground; any revolutionary or counter-revolutionary party. To get organized means: to give substance to the situation. Making it real, tangible. Reality is not capitalist.*

Rather than drop concepts from *Tiqqun*, the authors introduce new ones like *Existential Liberalism*, which they define as a life which consists in a series of choices, good or bad. *That each person can define herself by an ensemble of qualities, of properties, that make her, through her continual balancing of those properties, a unique and irreplaceable being. That the contract adequately epitomizes relations between individuals, and that respect epitomizes all virtue. That language is nothing but a means of arriving at an agreement. That, in reality, the world is composed on one side of things to manage, and on the other of an ocean of self-absorbed individuals, who in turn have a regrettable tendency to turn themselves into things, letting themselves become managed.*

Their main critique of activism takes up the entire third chapter, or *proposition*, and contains gems like this: *we have known, and are still familiar with, the temptation of activism...feeling our power on an ad hoc basis, but at the price of returning each time to an underlying powerlessness. Paying a high price for each campaign. Letting it consume all the energy that we have. Then moving to the next one, each time more out of breath, more exhausted, more saddened.*

More timeless critique is dropped further on, words that the alleged *Appelists* seem happy to ignore: *we have seen our surroundings turn into a milieu and from a milieu into a scene. We have seen the enactment of a moral code replace the elaboration of a strategy. We have seen norms solidify, reputations develop, metaphors begin to function; and everything become so predictable. The collective adventure turned into a gloomy cohabitation...the same sordid liberalism in emotional life, the same spats*

over access and territory, the same split between everyday life and political activity, the same identity paranoia. And for the luckiest, the luxury of periodically fleeing from their local poverty by introducing it elsewhere, someplace still exotic.

Unlike in *Tiqqun*, the authors make concrete strategic suggestions. As they explain, *our strategy is therefore the following: to establish and maintain a series of centers of desertion, of poles of secession, of rallying points. For runaways. For those who leave. A series of places where we can escape from the influence of a civilization that is headed for the abyss...we need locations. Places where we can organize ourselves, where we can share and develop the required techniques. Where we can learn to handle all that may prove necessary. Where we can co-operate.*

This text also features the words *communize* and *communization*, and in the sixth proposition they explain that *the process of instituting communism can only take the form of a collection of acts of communization, of making common such-and-such space, such-and-such contraption, such and-such knowledge. That is to say, the elaboration of the mode of sharing that attaches to them. Insurrection itself is merely an accelerator, a decisive moment in this process. As we intend it, the Party is not an organization — where everything becomes insubstantial by dint of transparency, and it is not a family — where everything smells like a con by dint of opacity. The Party is a collection of places, infrastructures, communized methods, and the dreams, bodies, murmurs, thoughts, desires that circulate among those places; the use of those methods, the sharing of those infrastructures.*

The part that made certain anarchists interested in this text was when they state that *the communism we are talking about is the exact opposite of what has been historically termed “communism,” which was mostly nothing but socialism, a form of monopolist state capitalism. Communism is not made through the expansion of **new relations of production, but rather in their abolition** .*

Echoing the desire for collective intelligence in *Tiqqun*, the authors state, *the construction of the Party, in its most visible aspect, consists of the sharing or communization of what we have at our disposal. Communizing a place means this: setting free its use, and on the basis of this liberation, experimenting with refined, intensified, and complexified relations. If private property is essentially the discretionary power of depriving any person of the use of the possessed thing, communization can only mean depriving the agents of Empire of that possession.*

To back it up a bit, when the authors of *Appel* write the word *we*, they mean this: *the We that speaks here is not a definable, isolated We, the We of a group. It is the We of a position. This position is asserted currently as a double secession: first a secession from the process of capitalist valorization, then secession from all the sterility imposed by a mere opposition to empire (extra-parliamentary or otherwise); a secession therefore from the Left. Here secession means less a practical refusal to communicate than a disposition to forms of communication so intense that, when put into practice, they snatch from the enemy most of its power. If that’s vague and weird, they try and*

sum it by writing that, *for us there is no longer any friendship that is not political.*

Towards the end of the text, the authors conclude that *all we can do is elaborate a strategy. Share an analysis of the situation and elaborate a strategy within it. This is the only possible revolutionary We: a practical We, open and diffuse, of whoever acts along the same lines.* Aside from their instructions to get organized and build the party, the authors offer these final suggestions: *In this context we are allied with all those who feel the tactical necessity of these three campaigns: 1. To prevent, by any and all means, the recomposition of the Left. 2. To advance, from natural disaster to social movement, the process of communization, the construction of the Party. 3. To bring secession right into the vital sectors of the Imperial machine.* The final pages are spent fleshing out these suggestions, after which the authors leave these final, cryptic words:

Alliances are possible everywhere. In order to become effective, the perspective of breaking the capitalist circuits requires that secessions multiply, and that they consolidate. We will be told: you are caught in an alternative which will condemn you in one way or another: either you manage to constitute a threat to Empire, in which case you will be quickly eliminated, or you will not manage to constitute such a threat, and you will have once again destroyed yourselves. There remains only to gamble on the existence of another outcome, a thin ridge, just wide enough for us to walk on, just enough for all those who can hear to walk on it and live.

But more than any lines in this sacred, holy booklet, the following had the most impact on the minds of anarchists: *on the one hand, we want to live communism; on the other, to spread anarchy.* However, there were different lines that caused some serious waves, shifting the consciousness of an entire generation of anarchists, and they are as follows:

To any moral preoccupation, to any concern for purity, we substitute the collective elaboration of a strategy. Only that which impedes the increase of our strength is bad. It follows from this resolution that economics and politics are no longer distinguishable. We are not afraid of forming gangs; and can only laugh at those who will decry us as a mafia.

Appel had no author listed in the text, not *Tiqqun*, not the Invisible Committee. It spread across France, into Canada, and eventually made it to that rotten shithole called New York City sometime around 2005, I'd say. That's when *L'Appel* was transformed into *The Call* and began its long journey to the present date, when we are still discussing it.

The most compelling part was the critique of activism, given it dropped right when the USA was dumping white phosphorous all over Fallujah, Iraq while the left in the USA enacted a bunch of dumb symbolic posturing that did nothing to stop the war. It's hard to say how far the first translations of *The Call* spread across the USA in 2005, but those words were given even more of a raging aura that fall when an insurrection broke out in the suburbs of Paris and then spread across France.

It began when the police chased three youths into an electrical substation in the suburb of Clichy-sous-Bois. It was here that two of them were electrocuted to death. Their names were Zyed Benna and Bouna Traoré, and after their deaths on October 27, 2005, riots spread across the north-eastern suburbs, moving to closer to the city center day by day. The riots quickly spread across France as the month turned to November, and cities across the nation saw thousands of burning cars, burning buildings, rioting, looting, and attacks on the police. A state of emergency was declared on November 8, only that wasn't enough to stop the insurrection, not for another week at least.

On November 16, the state of emergency was extended for another three months, just in case, and when the smoke cleared, a few people thought of the words in *The Call* and couldn't help notice that this massive insurrection had nothing to do with the left, and despite the racist, inflammatory propaganda of the French right wing, there were certainly gangs involved in the insurrection, informal or otherwise. In no way were the authors of *The Call* responsible for this insurrection, but it certainly confirmed some of their points. Neither the left, activists, or established groups were behind the nationwide uprising, and while not many people in the USA were paying attention to France, it was inspiring to those who were.

And then something terrible happened in the USA. That December, the FBI swooped down on several former members of an ELF group from the Pacific Northwest, and within days one of them committed suicide in their prison cell. More raids came in January 2006, this time hitting the anarchist hotbed of Olympia, Washington, and it would be fair to say that no anarchist was thinking of *The Call* or the authors of *Tiqqun* when these raids happened. For many dark months, the Green Scare was all anyone could think of, but towards the end of 2006, an early version of a text called *The Coming Insurrection* began to circulate across the USA, and more than a few of us anarchists read it.

Personal Anecdote III

Many years after I left that remote village in central France, I happened to be in Oakland when a release party was held for the new English translation of the latest Invisible Committee text: *To Our Friends*. It was pretty crowded, and much to my confusion, I didn't recognize a single one of the release party's organizers. It was 2015, shortly after the definitive end of Oakland's uprising in 2014, and I was feeling very dark that day in the Omni social center.

I went upstairs to the balcony for the reading of the text, and up there I found a friend from the old days, a person who remembered reading the stapled photocopies of the first draft of *The Coming Insurrection*, a person who had truly ridden

the great insurrectionary wave alongside me, and we were both still anarchists, as it turned out. *Tiqqun*, *The Call*, and the Invisible Committee books were just some of the many helpful texts along the way, but as we sat there on the balcony, both of us became disturbed by what unfolded that night.

Like myself, this friend of mine also couldn't recognize the organizers of this release party, and we whispered to each other during the rather dull reading of *To Our Friends*. We asked ourselves, *where the fuck did these people come from? Why do they look like restaurant owners? Look at how fancy their clothes are. Did they hire some Brooks Brothers models for the reading?* Both of us had already read *To Our Friends* by this point, and one or both of us was even pictured in the book, but still we sat in the rafters talking shit, because something seemed weird about this reading.

It got even weirder when the read-aloud story-time ended without a question and answer, and both of us watched the organizers immediately clique up as if they were the Invisible Committee themselves, ready to soak up all the attention and absorb it into their social-capital coin-purse. My friend and I just sat there watching, wishing we had opera glasses, but in the end it was just scary, because while we might not have known anything about these organizers, both of us were certain they weren't down in the grime like us, the only place where things actually happen.

III: The New Testament

Before I launch into my juicy gossip about the late Aragorn, *Tiqqunist par excellence*, I need to remind the reader that there is great precedent for anarchists not only reading communist or Marxist texts, but also enjoying and republishing them. The best example is *The Society of the Spectacle* by Guy Debord, and his Situationist International was certainly communist, ultimately descending into an authoritarian embarrassment of infighting and petty-ass purges. Anarchists knew about all of this, and still they read and republished *The Society of the Spectacle*, mostly because it contained some true statements and accurate observations, although it was often jargon heavy and boring, much like *Tiqqun*. Some of the anarchists who were into the Situationists were also part of the Post-Left tendency, and two of them were named Aragorn and Lawrence Jarach

Once upon a time, there was a magazine called *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed*, which will hereafter be referred to by the alphabet soup of AJODA. Both Aragorn and Jarach were involved to greater or lesser degrees in AJODA and its corresponding scenes, both being made up of primarily Gen-X anarchists who came up in the prime-time DIY era. So it was no surprise when Jarach took his Situationist fetish and applied it to the latest French phenomenon, in this case *Appel*, and it was

with some anger that he encountered the first translation of this hallowed text. He then retranslated it into its most well known English format, even corresponding with the authors while doing so, and not once did he declare his allegiance to the Party, remaining an anarchist throughout and beyond his translation efforts. Little did Jarach know what he had unleashed on the miserable and braindead U\$A.

Back in those days, whenever one might hang out with Aragorn, he would ask, *have you read **The Call?***, and in this regard Aragorn can be seen as the second most important *Appelist* in the U\$A, the first being the holy figure Lawrence Jarach. They both certainly helped spread these texts even further through the course of 2006 and into 2007, and their efforts were aided by the continued uprisings in France, a series of events which immediately followed the 2005 insurrection.

Once the state of emergency expired in France, the ghouls in government decided to push through their latest neo-liberal measure, this one called the CPE, and it would have given bosses more power to fire their workers and chipped away at France's fabled *job security*. This bill was touted by the politicians as an answer to the insurrection, claiming it would provide more jobs and therefore less unrest.

Protests started immediately, with dozens of schools going on strike and hundreds of thousands hitting the streets. By mid-March of 2006, the protests had escalated into riots, mostly in Paris, and dozens of schools were barricaded by their students. The unions went on strike at the end of March, paralyzing the country, and the authorities were so afraid of suburban youth flooding into central Paris that they stopped the trains from running. In the first weeks of April, the CPE bill was scrapped, the movement subsided, and everything returned to normal, or, as the authors of *Tiqqun* would say, *the Empire is everywhere nothing was happening*, and nothing was definitely happening in 2006.

In the U\$A, as I mentioned, the repression of the Green Scare had left its mark, and situated within the totalitarian war years of the Bush era, there wasn't a lot of positive vibrations to share. However, in good old Olympia, one the cities hit hard by the Green Scare, there had been active resistance to the Iraq War since 2004, but all of it started when Rachel Corrie was murdered in Palestine on March 16, 2003.

Rachel was a hometown girl from Olympia and her loss left a deep hole filled with fire, one that erupted on November 18, 2004, when the U\$A military tried to move its war equipment through the Port of Olympia. People cut a hole in the fence around the port, they tried to tear it down but they got pepper-sprayed and beaten. It was inspiring, to say the least, the most direct challenge of its kind in the entire U\$A, and it escalated in just a few years.

In the final week of May 2006, the military tried to move a brigade of Stryker armored vehicles into the port but were met by human blockades of the WTO variety, with lock-boxes and chants of peace, etc. The tanks got through these types of barricades, but they were forced to turn around at the one defended by Jeff "The Snowman" Monson, an insanely buff cage fighter who the Olympia PD refused to

even go near, which is amazing. He ran a local gym, and I encourage you to lodge this Jeff Monson in your brain, as he will appear again soon in this narrative.

The protest escalated that May, with the fence breached multiple times, and in one instance, Jeff The Snowman helped rip the main gate off its hinges before people flooded in for a WTO style human barricade that was brutalized and arrested. Despite all of these efforts, the armored vehicles were able to be loaded onto their boat and were soon shipped directly to Iraq where they would be used to massacre civilians, as they had been since 2003.

According to legend, one or several northwest anarchists were reading *The Call* in this time period, but they were also reading more local journals like *A Murder of Crows* or texts from the Insurrectionary Anarchists of the Coast Salish Territories. Allegedly, all of these texts were being read and circulated in Tacoma, Washington when the military decided to move more war materials through that city's gnarly industrial port, having found Olympia too much trouble.

Protests started against those shipments in March of 2007, and after escalating day by day with attempted human blockades, events came to a dramatic and historical head on the night of March 9, when the Tacoma PD opened up on peaceful protesters sitting on the ground with tear gas shells, pepper balls, and pepper spray.

This triggered a battle that dramatically escalated tensions in the region, providing images of riots not seen since WTO in Seattle. As I mentioned, the anarchists of the region were reading and circulating *The Call*, as well as the first draft of *The Coming Insurrection*, and as far as I can discern, none of them publicly declared their allegiance to the Party.

This militant anti-war movement continued that May when the military tried to ship tanks out of the Port of Aberdeen, Washington, former home of Kurt Cobain, and the repression that followed was immense. In those pre-smartphone days, the local police were using federal surveillance technology to triangulate protester's positions, as well as activating their microphones. In one instance, the cops repeated back part of a private conversation over the megaphone, flaunting the powers that George Bush Jr. had given them.

Beyond this, after anti-war organizers planned a local punk show at a local punk venue, the police threatened the owner with eviction, canceling the show. The funniest part of this effort were some anarchists giving a rousing speech to the local Democratic Party, leading to them officially condemn the war shipments and joining the crazies on the streets. I can't imagine this ever happening again, and to this day, the Gray's Harbor Democratic Party branch remains one of the few to take a concrete stance against the Iraq War, something the military certainly noticed.

Nothing got rowdy in Aberdeen, it was too isolated and easy to repress, but the repression left its mark on the local population as well. In addition to the canceled punk show, an anti-war organizer from Olympia was pulled over on the way to Aberdeen. In their car were four other organizers, and when the driver got out of

the car, the state trooper immediately said they were drunk and arrested them. This person was not drunk, they blew a 0 on the breath-meter, and the county judge was so disgusted he dismissed the case *with prejudice*, meaning it could never be retried. In total, the impoverished City of Aberdeen spent nearly \$200,000 on security, a bill not covered by the military, so there were no further shipments through there during the Iraq War. A victory, of sorts, although it's still used occasionally by the military.

2007 was anarchy time along the shores of the Salish Sea, and after many months of organizing, the local anarchists staged a giant demo against the ICE detention center in Tacoma, for which they suffered greatly, as you will soon learn about. For now, know that the Tacoma anarchists were labeled a Homeland Security threat for the day, literally, despite the fact they were just a bunch of emo hardcore kids. Their days of action against ICE took place on the 9th and 10th of November, coinciding with the military taking this moment to ship more weapons through the Port of Olympia, thinking it wouldn't get as rowdy as it did in Tacoma, that the anarchists would be distracted.

It's truly a testament to the capacity of the local anarchists that both the ICE demos and the blockade of the Port of Olympia occurred simultaneously, but it is also apparent that this was a calculated decision by the US military, who sincerely believed the Tacoma anarchists were responsible for everything, and I mean that. If you don't believe me, how about I take this moment to introduce John Towery, the infamous Pentagon infiltrator who crept into the Tacoma anarchist scene in the summer of 2007.

He wouldn't be the only infiltrator creeping around that fateful year, for the vile and infamous Mark Kennedy had just been dispatched by his handlers to spy on Julian Coupat, one of the public authors of *Tiqqun* who was said to live in the remote rural village of Tarnac in central France. However, before I can start tying this all up for you, before I can make the malevolent actors perspire even more, I believe it would be appropriate to drop another personal anecdote.

Personal Anecdote IV

Once upon a time, I was in a park on a summer day in the fart smelling industrial town of Tacoma. I was sitting with a friend, and together we were reading the book version of *Introduction to Civil War* by Tiqqun. It was the summer of 2010, the English edition had been freshly pirated, and we sat there in the grass reading this text, doing our best to understand what all this academic jargon was trying to say. There was something there, we kept reading the sentences slowly, a word at a time, and eventually we allowed it to make some sense. My friend and I learned some big words that day, and I would be lying if it didn't make us feel smarter, somehow,

on some superficial level.

My friend had passed with me through several anarchist reading groups, and if you hadn't guessed, those groups are filled with people who maybe finished high-school, but that feeling of being *smart* was there too, when a group of ten spent two hours reading a Bonanno pamphlet out loud, pausing to unpack that former professor's sometimes confusing language. Those reading groups were honestly pretty beautiful for how they allowed us broke losers to get an education by studying together, and I can assure you that no one was thinking about an academic career. People were just thrilled to be able to read good and talk pretty from some shitty little zines.

Inevitably, these reading groups included *The Call*, and as more Tiqqun translations hit the English language world, more anarchists were exposed to this weird French word vomit. The main feedback from old-time anarchists was that *The Call* said nothing new, anarchists were already doing what this Party was supposed to do, they already distrusted the left, and the rest was just philosophical trash written to sound smart. This was semi-accurate, but back in 2006, most anarchists in the USA were of the activist variety, constantly riding the coat-tails of the left, and for better or worse, *The Call* remained the best written critique of activism, even in the English world.

Anyway, when I was sitting in that park, reading *Introduction to Civil War* on the grass, I didn't consider myself a *Tiqqunist*, which is still the case. I was not loyal to any Party, I did not take direction from a shadowy leader in France, I simply found the text thought-provoking, which is saying something, given it's hardly legible. All I can say now is that maybe there was a bit of *feeling smart* with those texts, but what do you expect? Poor people are made to feel stupid all the time, from every direction, and I can't help but warmly recall all those stinky poor kids actually opening a dictionary before they could do so on their smartphones. However, this *feeling smart* had some disastrous consequences for those who chose to interact with these texts, and if you already know where I'm going with this, feel free to get really annoyed right now, because I'm going to change the subject.

III: The New Testament (Continued)

As I was saying, the military tried to slip some Stryker armored vehicles through the Port of Olympia at the beginning of November 2007. Like before, they were quickly met with human blockades, and night after night people tried to block the streets, eventually erecting two static barricades with found material. The OPD moved in after a while, brutalizing everyone they could, but this spread the protests away from the port and into downtown Olympia, where people tried to stop the tanks block by block, even the freeway onramps. Some people also cemented the train

tracks leading out of the port, keeping the Abrams tanks stuck behind the fence while protests raged outside.

The blockades continued despite the repression, and on the night of November 13, a soldier got out of his tank and refused to fight in the war. This never made the news, there is no plaque to this man, and I am hard pressed to find his name, but as the night went on, the military ignored a human barricade at the main gate and sped their tanks out of the secondary gate, recently cleared of the static barricade. In a flash, hundreds of people sprinted towards the tank, and a small uprising occurred on the streets that night, with people throwing rocks at the tanks, dragging boats into the street, fighting the police, breaking their cruiser windows, smashing out bank windows, spray-painting everything, and all the assorted like. All of this was organic, and none of it had anything to do with *Tiqqun*, *L'Appel*, or the Invisible Committee, who published their *L'Insurrection qui vient* just months before.

What happened in Olympia was the height of the alleged anti-war movement, its potent resistance hindered at every moment by the trappings of activism, and in the months ahead, the message in *The Call* became much more relevant. In those pacified days, people truly looked to the Pacific Northwest as a source of hope, especially Olympia, because this shitty little town demonstrated what was needed to truly oppose the war, not just march in circles with the ANSWER coalition. Unfortunately this all came way too late, for the war itself had mutated under the command of General Petraeus, who implemented his counter-insurgency doctrine across Iraq, and month by month, the population of the USA was encouraged to forget there was an Iraq War, that it already ended, that it was over years ago, that everyone could move on. To this day, few people can accurately say when the war ended, given there are still numerous USA military bases in Iraq, as well as USA soldiers guarding the oil fields.

2008 was a very intense year, and as the alleged anti-war movement disintegrated into nothing, the great insurrectionary wave spread across the USA, bringing with it a tide of texts, among them *The Call* and *Tiqqun*. However, also in the mix was the work of Claire Fontaine, which consists of Fulvia Carnevale and her partner James Thornhill, the guy she got with after her epic break-up with one of the alleged members of the *Invisible Committee*. Their 2007 pamphlet *This Is Not The Black Bloc* certainly made the rounds in the USA, riling people up with statements like these: *4 February 2007, on the 8 o'clock news, I see what appears to be a male figure... throwing stones in a night lit by flames. He is wearing a very elegant Dolce & Gabbana bomber-jacket with a big silver D&G on the back and an immaculate white ski-mask.*

I'm trying to be as tabloid-paparazzi as possible when it comes to everyone who signed their names to the first *Tiqqun* in 1999, so I might as well say Fulvia Carnevale and Julian Coupat broke up sometime before *Appel* was published, and Fulvia walked away from the divorce with her *human strike*, a concept she would

continue to write about with her current partner as Claire Fontaine. To be clear, I fucking hate the contemporary capitalist art world from the depths of my blackened soul, but I truly do like a lot of Claire Fonatine's visual art, and I suppose I should tell you why.

I'm skipping ahead a bit, but in 2009 the Claire Fontaine duo created an art installation called *Recession Sculpture*, and this entire piece was simply an electric pump hooked to a European style gas-meter, and if one stared at this long enough, one could learn how to steal gas. Not that many people in the art gallery would need to steal gas, but I appreciated it, just as I appreciated their piece *Amerika* from 2007, which is simply a bunch of neon tubes spelling out the word AMERIKA.

That same year, back in old Amerika, a military spy controlled by the Pentagon insinuated himself into the anarchist and radical scenes of Olympia and Tacoma, and by spring 2007, he was feeding his handlers detailed information about people's movements, which was then trickled down to the Department of Homeland Security, the Joint Terrorism Task Force, the FBI, and many other of the swine flavored alphabet soups in the USA. At the exact same time, the spy Mark Kennedy was told to keep tabs on Julian Coupat, infamous ex of Fulvia Carnevale and known author of *Tiqqun*.

The new French text of *L'Insurrection qui vient* was selling like hot-cakes, although it had yet to be translated into English, and unfortunately for Julian Coupat, this might have been why Mark Kennedy was sent to spy on him and his friends, the authorization going through in 2007. In January of 2008, he found Julian Coupat and his friend Yildune Lévy at a meeting in New York City, and he contacted the FBI regarding their whereabouts. It turned out that Julian and Yildune had snuck into the USA illegally from Canada, and after they snuck back out of the USA, their friend's car was stopped at the Canadian border, and in this car were Julian and Yildune's belongings. What would later catch the attention of the authorities was a picture in Julian's bag of the Times Square Army recruitment center in NYC.

Approximately three months later, on March 6, 2008, the infamous and widely-beloved *Bicycle Bomber* struck their third target. After tossing hand-made grenades at the British consulate in 2005 and the Mexican consulate in 2007, this same brazen bicyclist left a larger explosive device outside the Times Square Army recruitment office. Like the previous attacks, no one was injured when the device went off, but the brain-dead morons of the international police forces collated their data and began concocting conspiracy theories that Julian Coupat and Yildune Lévy had planned the bombing, given they attempted to transport a picture of the Times Square recruitment center into Canada.

At the same time all of this was happening, something else was transpiring on the opposite coast of the USA. After the fever-pitch of the November 2007 anti-war protests in Olympia, anarchist attacks began to generalize across the region, but creeping around the edges of this activity was the spy John Towery, sent to crush

the Tacoma anarchists. I say crush, but what he attempted to do in 2008 was groom a crew of anarchists into a *terror cell*, which he insisted should be organized like a fascist cell. As he wormed his way into people's confidences, the information he secreted to his masters led to multiple arrests, including an attempted frame-up of two anarchists in San Francisco. Few involved knew what kind of deep shit they were in, but according to legend, some anarchists began playing *funny games*.

For example, according to Pacific Northwest lore, certain individuals knew John Towery was a spy, even if they had no proof, for how could he not be? Regardless, some people began to feed him false leads, gibberish, confusing nonsense, bewildering assertions, and general garbage intelligence, which he then transmitted to his handlers, leading to some bewildering events. In one instance, during the winter of 2008, whatever John Towery told the Pentagon led them to issue an advisory order to its soldiers, ordering them to avoid the Tacoma Mall during a tame anti-war demonstration.

On the day this demo was to occur, the Tacoma Mall was flooded with heavily armed riot cops, and beyond anyone's belief, a local right-wing shock-jock organized his followers to hold a counter-demo where they waved American flags and chanted *you're with the terrorists*. All of these things happened together, thanks to John Towery and the garbage he was fed, and it forced the state to reveal all of its cards. To top it off, while the high-state (or *deep state*, lol) was thoroughly distracted by this Tacoma Mall bullshit, some fascinating people claiming to be the Earth Liberation Front went and torched a bunch of McMansions north of Seattle in a place called Woodinville. This was certainly the highest profile attack in the Pacific Northwest, and it drove the USA police-state into a frenzy.

2008 was a crazy year in the old PNW, and while the piggy-pigs went blind looking for the source of all this unrest, attack after attack befell bank after bank, recruitment center after recruitment center, and it didn't stop no matter who they arrested. Again, it is truly a testament to the anarchists of the region that a spy could have been in their midst during all of this, but I in no way wish to convey the sense that everyone got out of this pickle unscathed. A lot of people's lives were fucked up because of this, and many of them still are, with the only comfort being the undeniable fact that the government not only lost this particular battle, they made themselves look like total fucking idiots to everyone who happened to be observing this minor anti-war uprising in the Pacific Northwest.

Meanwhile, half a world away in a village in central France, the international spy Mark Kennedy decided to go on a little visit to Tarnac in the summer of 2008, and during this visit he met with Julian Coupat. Given everything that follows, it would seem some *funny games* start here, but that's only if one analyzes the public documents. From what I can glean after a lazy Google search, it appears that Mark Kennedy was fed some utter bullshit in Tarnac, designed to make a cop's head spin like a propeller. The point being, no one in Tarnac was involved with

what happened next.

In late-October 2008, anonymous people placed curved iron rods on high-speed TGV train lines across northern France, and then they did so again during the late night of November 7 and into the morning of November 8. Over 160 trains were stopped cold because of these actions, which was claimed by an anti-nuclear group when they sent a statement of responsibility to a German newspaper, written in German, claiming the sabotage was done to stop the transportation of nuclear waste out of France.

According to public documents, the French police were surveilling Julian Coupat and Yildune Lévy on the night of November 7, stalking them by car as the couple drove around the rural region northeast of Paris. It appears that Coupat and Lévy knew they were being stalked, given they led the police on a wild goose chase which culminated in the couple fucking in their car while the police watched. LOL. The only problem was that their 20 minute love-making session took place near a TGV train line, and in the deranged imaginations of the police, Coupat and Lévy clearly generated an orgone-based egregore, which became autonomous, invisible, and sabotaged the nearby train lines. Needless to say, Coupat and Lévy did not get out of the car, nor did they place an iron device on the TGV lines, and they simply drove home, eventually returning to Tarnac. By then it was November 8, 2008.

Sometime between November 8 and November 11, the international spy Mark Kennedy assured his handlers that the TGV sabotage was the work Coupat and his friends, and he was so confident in this belief that the French state didn't hesitate to act. On November 11, the *gendarme's* (ie: feds) anti-terrorist wing raided the village of Tarnac, completely surrounding this village of 300 souls and even dispatching a helicopter. At the same time, raids took place in Paris and Rouen, resulting in twenty total arrests. Eleven of these poor souls were quickly released for lack of evidence, but the French state kept nine in their custody. Their names are: Mathieu Burnel, Julien Coupat, Bertrand Deveaux, Manon Glibert, Gabrielle Hallez, Elsa Hauck, Yildune Lévy, Benjamin Rosoux, and Aria Thomas.

Meanwhile, back in the U\$A, the anarchists of this country had just survived the repression associated with the protests at the Republican National Convention in Saint Paul, Minnesota. This summer 2008 event also featured an anti-terrorist raid against the main public organizers of the protests, with the media center besieged by gun-wielding sheriffs and three young men entrapped by the FBI into making molotov cocktails. All this and more happened in connection with the RNC protests, but the anarchist movement only grew stronger beyond this repression, and it was in this context that anarchists in the U\$A learned of the arrests in Tarnac.

Up in the Pacific Northwest, the Pentagon spy John Towerly was still creeping around, having taken a crew of anarchists to a shooting range and a gun-show, all constitutionally protected activities in the State of Washington. In his mind, he was on his way to grooming a terror cell, although this was hardly the case. Through

the course of 2008, the poor and stinky Pitch-Pipe Infoshop in Tacoma, an anarchist bastion, found itself surveilled by a hidden camera disguised as an electrical box affixed to a telephone pole. Beyond this, two FBI informants had attended an RNC protest event at the Pitch-Pipe, likely in coordination with John Towery, and their efforts led to a separate arrest that involved smuggling guns to the EZLN in Chiapas. As the year turned to 2009, the repression in Tarnac and the repression in Tacoma was starting to feel startlingly similar.

However, to make things extra spicy, Jeff “The Snowman” Monson, professional cage-fighter, took an ESPN crew up to the Capitol building in Olympia and spray-painted a circle-A anarchist symbol on one of the columns. This action eventually led to Jeff Monson being arrested for completely trashing an Army recruitment center outside Olympia, and as far as anyone could tell, The Snowman might have been responsible for every recruitment center vandalism in 2008, although it’s likely he was simply part of a wave and couldn’t help himself. To make this all even crazier, Monson moved to Russia in 2015, having earned Putin’s respect during a cage-match in 2011. He became a Russian citizen in 2018, supported the invasion of Ukraine, and in the winter of 2023 he renounced his USA citizenship. What a fucking world.

Regardless, back in France, several of the Tarnac prisoners had been released, although Yildune Lévy wasn’t released until January 16, 2009. This left only Julian Coupat in prison, and not only was he accused of being the leader of an *anarchist terror cell*, he was accused of being the sole author of *L’Insurrection qui vient*. For the first time in decades, someone was in prison simply for writing something, and while he denied being the sole author (he was not), the conclusion was inescapable: words were dangerous again. Not only did words still have power, they could even make the state tremble, which it did. As you will soon learn, the French state lost its ever-loving mind trying to prove the stinky peasants of Tarnac were terrorists, responsible for every act of violence and disorder in their great Republic. It was a glory to behold, and just as the clown show was gathering steam, with Julian Coupat still in jail, a crack of light appeared in the gray, rainy, depressing Pacific Northwest.

In the spring of 2009, some anonymous civil bureaucrat forgot to redact a certain email in a Freedom of Information Act Request pertaining to all communications between the City of Olympia and the federal government. Thanks to the fed’s draconian overreach, the dumb fucks in the City of Olympia revealed the identity of the Pentagon spy, and he was eventually outed on the corner of 4th and Washington in front of a well-known cafe. At this point, Obama had replaced Bush as president, the anti-war movement was dead, and more and more anarchists were carrying these portable surveillance/tracking devices called *smartphones*. While the immediate repression quickly lessened, the damage was done, and we all had a digital hellworld awaiting us. At precisely this moment, the English translation of *The*

Coming Insurrection was finally published, and as the freaks of *Tiqqun* would say, *the war had only just begun.*

Personal Anecdote V

Once upon a time, I was in the basement of an ancient stone house, which was itself situated in a remote village in central France. In this basement, a small presentation was being held with a few speakers and a projector. It was a public event and mostly filled with old villagers, as well as a dozen or so young freaks like me. The subject of the presentation was the occupation of multiple hectares in the rural *bocage* north of Nantes, otherwise known as the ZAD.

It was a pretty basic presentation, but what really made me light up were the projections of the modular houses, built outside the ZAD and smuggled in past the police blockades. This was amazing to me, just the idea even, and it resonated with my recently acquired carpentry skills. For real, there was some crazy, stereotypically French carpenter in the village who had tussled salt-and-pepper hair, smoked roughly 60 cigarettes a day, and was designing the most beautiful modular housing I have ever seen, with each corner of the interlocking walls fixed together with nothing but a metal dowel.

What I also really liked about this presentation was that it was for the elderly villagers, just so they could know what was happening at the ZAD. Not just the good stuff, which I appreciated, but also what the French state was doing. To highlight this, one of the speakers was missing a toe and hobbled about on a cane. He was young, and thanks to a police grenade thrown at him at the ZAD, he no longer had a big toe on one foot. This was about a decade ago, before things got crazier at the ZAD, but during that event I heard no talk of the Party (Imaginary or otherwise), the Invisible Committee, nor was I asked to join a terror cell and swear my allegiance to some eccentric French dude.

When I eventually made it to the ZAD, I saw no Party pulling the strings. Instead, I encountered an insane galaxy of multiple tendencies, many of them anarchist. Everyone let everyone do their thing, so long as it didn't harm others, and people ended up living where they wanted to. I'm no authority on what happened in the days leading up to the great betrayal of 2018, when the majority of the assembly voted to open the long barricaded road, paving the way for a massive police assault. What I can say is that no one was in control when I was there. If anyone had an inordinate amount of sway, it was the peasant farmers with their diesel-powered tractors.

A whole section of the ZAD ended up being petroleum-free, filled with a bunch of anti-civ, primie snail shacks, and much of this was in reaction to the diesel-fueled peasants and their mono-cropping. I've read the recent texts about the alleged *Ap-*

pelist influence at the ZAD, but it always boils down to the assembly, the place where voting happens. It was in this holy assembly that the peasants exercised their massive influence, and the army of pick-me's at their backs certainly influenced the decisions leading to the great betrayal, where after stopping the airport cold, the assembly voted to collaborate with the French state, evict the squats, and partition the land into private property that a minority of residents could live on, so long as they ran a legitimate business there, like the peasants.

If the Invisible Committee had truly been pulling the strings behind the assembly, I don't know how they would square the great betrayal with the texts they wrote. As they explained in *To Our Friends*, the neoliberal system thrives off crisis, *creating opportunities, innovation, and entrepreneurs of whom only the best, most highly motivated, and most competitive will survive*. In literal terms, all those allowed by the state to continue living at the ZAD had to become *entrepreneurs*.

In 2014, the Invisible Committee bemoaned how Occupy Wall Street was nothing more than a moment where it was *possible to grasp our shared condition together, our equal reduction to the status of entrepreneurs of the self*, and there were certainly many of these *entrepreneurs of the self* at the ZAD. As late as 2017, in their text *Now*, the authors were still going on about the *self-entrepreneur that this society wants to turn us into who practices the art of "public relations,"* an apt description of some of the people who ended up *entrepreneur*ing themselves for the French state at the ZAD.

In another haunting passage along those lines, the authors describe how *self-entrepreneurs also need an oasis against the neoliberal desert. But the oases are annihilated in their turn: those seeking refuge there bring the desert sands in with them*. This is precisely what happened at the ZAD, and these words were written one year before the great betrayal of 2018. If there was an Invisible Committee pulling the strings behind the ZAD assembly, they certainly didn't follow their own holy commandments. I hope you can clearly see this pattern of the alleged *Appelists* doing precisely what their sacred texts advise against, but if not, that's okay. The pattern will only accelerate.

III: The New Testament (Continued)

You might be wondering why I wove in the thread about Olympia, Washington, but I assure you it's important. If you might remember, a beloved town-girl from Olympia named Rachel Corrie was murdered by Zionists in 2004 while defending a Palestinian home from eviction. In early 2006, the FBI raided some houses and terrorized the Olympia community by arresting three members of a legendary ELF group and putting their friends under presumed federal scrutiny. Olympia suffered many blows, but throughout there was a constant rebellion against the Iraq War,

eventually boiling over in 2007, as I've explained. Rather than suffer in paranoia and defeat, people in Olympia did the opposite, they went ape-shit, and I think this *going ape-shit* might be important for our collective survival, but that's just me.

With the arrests in Tarnac, the new English translation of *The Coming Insurrection* spread like wildfire as its alleged authors were the subject of an anti-terrorism investigation. Just like the anarchists of Tacoma and Olympia, the alleged Invisible Committee were hated by the state and subjected to every manner of vile trickery. Those ensnared by this raid stopped being just those random French weirdos living in a village, they became *hot tamales*, a glowing red target dancing above their heads. None of them were in a position to *lead a movement* or *deliver orders*, but as they say, power abhors a vacuum, and given the power of their words, it was inevitable others would swoop in to claim them.

From 2008 to 2014, anarchists in the U\$A began to grow in strength, with some referring to this as *the great insurrectionary wave*, a period which was influenced by Alfredo Bonanno's old writings as much as *The Coming Insurrection*, although the newer text had a wide resonance among Millennials, which was odd, given most of the book is about France, not the U\$A. Everyone was reading *The Coming Insurrection*, people were stealing it off bookshelves, printing boot-leg copies, and imitating its writing style as often as possible.

Anarchists in the U\$A were popping off through 2009 in cities across the continent, starting with the Oscar Grant riots in Oakland on January 1 and culminating in the grand 2011 anti-police rebellion of Seattle after the police killed John T. Williams, an indigenous wood-carver. Anarchists were at the forefront of the anti-police movement at the start of the 2010s, but at their side, still small, were the *anti-state communists* and the *communizers*, distinct political identities which had finally cohered after the publication of *The Coming Insurrection*. There was a lot of overlap between these hip new communists and anarchists, and this only increased in late 2011 when thousands of anarchists were sucked in to the Occupy movement, injecting it with some much needed ape-shit.

By the end of that seemingly potent moment, the anarchists of the Pacific Northwest were facing down a federal grand jury for the May Day 2012 riots in Seattle, and among those imprisoned in a federal holding facility were people who had helped block tanks in Olympia. It was the largest act of federal repression since the Green Scare, and it certainly caused an immense fracture in *anarchy land*.

Right in the middle of this state crack-down on anarchists, the selfless publishers at Semiotext released the new English translation of *Preliminary Materials for a Theory of the Young-Girl*, and its translator Ariana Reines underwent quite an ordeal while working with the text. As she explains, *translating this book made me sick. I mean it gave me migraines, made me puke; I couldn't sleep at night, regressed into totally out-of-character sexual behavior*.

It's unclear what this means, but most anarchists were preoccupied with a

Grand Jury in the Pacific Northwest at the time this book dropped. It was only after this horrible repression momentarily abated, in 2013, that I became aware of something troubling, and it involves the word *milieu*, which it turns out I still can't spell without digital auto-correct.

In the holy text *The Coming Insurrection*, the authors are quite clear about how they feel regarding *milieus*. As they say in bold type, ***expect nothing from organizations. Beware of all existing social milieus, and above all, don't become one.*** After ripping apart political organizations (or *orgs*), the authors then claim that *far more dreadful are social milieus, with their supple texture, their gossip, and their informal hierarchies. Flee all milieus. Each and every milieu is orientated towards the neutralization of some truth.* In one final, brutal sentence, they declare that *all milieus are counter-revolutionary because they are only concerned with the preservation of their sad comfort.*

Imagine my surprise, in 2013, when suddenly all those people obsessed with *The Coming Insurrection*, all those people who aped its style and mimicked its form, started referring to themselves as *the milieu*. To be fair, I heard less of this in anarchist circles, most of it emanated from the *anti-state communists* or *communizers*, but there was some cross-over, for sure. *The milieu, people in the milieu, influence the milieu, not sure if the milieu is into that, I'll run it by the milieu*, and other abominations were actually falling from people's tongues on the daily. What the fuck was going on? Did you all skip the actual reading part? What is this shit?

Anyway, it was around this time that Fulvia Carnevale makes her next appearance. I happened to be in San Francisco when she and her partner (ie: Claire Fontaine) were doing a residency at one of those art schools, and some friend told me *a bunch of the milieu* were going to be at their talk. I rolled my eyes, but I went because I liked her art, legitimately, I don't give a fuck, and let me tell you why, again.

That night, on the way into the lecture hall, I first had to walk through their latest installation, *Redemptions*. Hanging from the wall were dozens of clear transparent bags containing aluminum cans, and on the floor was a portable propane-powered smelter, the kind which can be bought off the internet today for less than \$200. With each bag of aluminum cans containing roughly \$5 worth of redeemable recyclables, the entire ceiling's haul could cover the cost of this smelter, allowing the bearer to truly redeem the next aluminum can they find. With a smelter, the right molds, and enough aluminum, one can melt down and re-cast this capitalist waste into silverware, pots, plates, and any manner of low-stress tool. All of this might seem pretty cosmic, but I love that it was called *Redemptions*, for I spent much of my youth collecting and *redeeming* cans just so I could have a little money.

I don't remember anything of what happened at the lecture, I just remember Fulvia Carnevale talked a bunch while her partner held their baby. One thing that stood out was the look on some of the crowd's faces. These people of *the milieu*

truly believed they were being lectured to by a Party member in good standing, that simply by attending they were basking in the divine light of *Tiqqun* itself, becoming silent members of the Invisible Committee. What the fuck was going on? Were we in church? I was in over my head clearly, not understanding what this *milieu* even was, and this feeling only increased when I followed the *milieu* to Claire Fontaine's latest art show in the Mission District.

I suppose this was the night of January 22, 2013, over a decade ago, and outside the Queen's Nails art gallery (part of the first late-1990s wave of Mission gentrification) I found a crowd of the same shitty scum-fuck hipsters responsible for the 2013 wave of gentrification. They were all crowded around the closed gallery, only none of them seemed to realize the show was already over. A map of the U\$A and Alaska which Claire Fontaine had constructed out of matchsticks was ignited inside the gallery, leading to its closure by the fire department.

Outside, the hipsters drank and smoked, unsure of what they were doing, but suddenly, by my side, was Fulvia Carnevale, and both of us stared at this madness and laughed maniacally, for the charred map of the U\$A was right in our faces, in all its ugliness, embodied in these hipsters as much as her toasted match-sticks. Fulvia didn't give me a secret hand-shake, induct me into the Party, or really even say very much, and I'm pretty confident she isn't in the PR department of the Invisible Committee. Thing is, I didn't have any luck convincing people of this. In the infernal U\$A, people love their informal hierarchies and star-systems, apparently, and the *milieu* certainly latched onto Claire Fontaine's lectures, using them as a vague signifier of their allegiance to the Party and its fourth-in-command.

In 2013, a lot of people were still riding the coat-tails of *The Coming Insurrection*, and as *anarchy land* was still reeling from the Grand Jury, that thing called the *milieu* continued to spread. One person who did not like this was Aragorn, who viewed the *milieu* as Bolshevik entryists, or something like that, and while he went way too far with this shit (to say the least), he wasn't wrong. *The Coming Insurrection* allowed a third-position between the hard lines of Communism and Anarchism, and many *former* Stalinists, Tankies, Maoists, Marxists, and Bolsheviks would take bold advantage of this in the days ahead.

Meanwhile, the anarchists of the U\$A continued to push their anti-police movement, and after the killer of Trayvon Martin was found not guilty by a jury in 2013, tensions began to boil across the country, priming what followed in the summer of 2014. However, before all that, we have to return to Lawrence Jarach, *prime Tiqqunist* and translator of *The Call*, for it was he who attended a fateful assembly in Oakland, California and broke the *milieu* in half.

Much buzz was in the air in the build-up to this great 2013 assembly, given the *wider milieu* would be there in all its glory. Much social capital was expended by the *milieu* to facilitate this large assembly, as well as snazzy printed invitations, and when the night arrived, the topic of burning churches was inexplicably broached

by Lawrence Jarach, who mistook this moment for Catalonia in 1936, and when pressed if the *milieu* should burn black churches, legend has it that Jarach ripped the corn-cob pipe from his lips, stood on his chair, and screamed at the top of his lungs, *yes, even the black churches!* This caused the assembly to erupt into chaos, a fight literally broke out, and in the days ahead, the *milieu* was cleaved in half along racial lines, with one or several of the whites yelling about *freedom of speech* and getting real stinky. Among those bitter over how Lawrence Jarach was vilely and cruelly abused by the assembly was Aragorn, and he became increasingly misanthropic in the years to come. Nevertheless, both Aragorn and Jarach had already become *prime Tiqqunists*, with Aragorn having published the first volume of *Tiqqun* and the new translation of *Theory of Bloom*.

After the police killed Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, the tension exploded nation-wide when the police officer was acquitted in late November 2014. There were many texts issued by anarchists after that summer, written from the point of view of participants, but those written by the *anti-state communists*, the *communizers*, and the *milieu* outnumbered the anarchist texts, as if all the factions were vying to claim something that belonged to no one aside the people who risked their lives and freedom to make it happen. Even the stinky trolls orbiting around Aragorn had something to say, though none of them participated in the Bay Area's three weeks of ANARCHY AND CHAOS that followed the verdict, given it was all *identity politics* to them.

Shortly before this epic uprising, the Invisible Committee made a surprise appearance at the 31st Chaos Communications Congress of the Chaos Computer Club in Hamburg, Germany where they released an article titled "Fuck Off, Google!" and they read it in English to a bewildered crowd. The title referred to a banner held in front of a Google bus in late-2013, though the article was mostly about the history of cybernetics. During the Bay Area anti-tech wave, much of the *milieu* participated, hoping to be seen as responsible for the rolling bus blockades, but the movement was far too organic and crazy for that, and by the spring of 2014, the anti-tech uprising had gotten massive international attention, with the servers of Indycamp nearly crashing from all the web-traffic to the anti-tech communiques it was hosting.

It was in this context that the Invisible Committee read "Fuck Off, Google!" to a crowd of hackers at the 31st Chaos Communications Congress, the title of that particular congress being *A New Dawn*. "Fuck Off, Google!" was a chapter from the Invisible Committee's upcoming book, *A Nos Amis*, published that same October of 2014, and it was read widely across Europe, although the English translation wouldn't be published until a week after the outbreak of an anti-police uprising, this one in Baltimore after the murder of Freddie Gray in the spring of 2015. While arson and looting spread across that city for days on end, people were reading these first lines: *the insurrections have come, finally. At such a pace and in so many countries, since 2008, that the whole structure of this world seems to be disintegrating,*

piece by piece.

As the uprising in Baltimore raged, anarchists in Oakland prepared another blockade of the Google busses for May 1, 2015, and on this same day a film dropped on the internet titled *Fuck Off, Google!*, chronicling the last two years of the anti-tech rebellion. Oddly, this appears to be one of (if not the only) pieces claimed as the Invisible Committee by someone in the U\$A, and it would go on to have a long life, including screenings in Berlin during the efforts to stop a Google campus in the traditionally anarchist neighborhood of Kreuzberg (an effort which was successful!). According to legend, two alleged members of the Invisible Committee screened this film in Oakland at the Omni social center to a packed house, and in their promotional wheat-pasting efforts, they managed to flush out the reigning liberals of that hallowed institution.

It was around this time that everything got real bad. Back when people were having boners and getting wet over *The Coming Insurrection*, the word *commune* was on everyone's lips, given it was one of the few concrete suggestions the authors offered: *form communes*. This didn't really take off in the U\$A, no more so than it already had been, and most of those were stinky anarchist communes that didn't call themselves communes. *Land project*, maybe. When the English translation of *To Our Friends* dropped, the final chapters were packed with further recommendations for starting communes, only it didn't read the way some people wanted it to. For example, during the Occupy movement there was a camp set up in downtown Oakland, and this was dubbed the Oakland Commune, and all the Invisible Committee aura around *communes* flowed into this place, scrambling the meaning and making it fit the particular situation, which was in this case temporary and crushed by the police.

This type of *commune* continues to this day in Oakland, and following the events of Occupy Oakland, the city saw a massive proliferation of homeless tent encampments, a trend that spread along the west coast of the U\$A and is now widely attributed to that first giant seizure of space during the Occupy movement, places where the majority of residents were homeless, whether in Zuccotti Park or Oscar Grant Plaza. If you don't believe this, maybe ask some random person on the street when they think all these tents started appearing everywhere. Call it a victory, though it wasn't one the *milieu* seemed very interested in, being more interested in *communizing* things like small businesses subsidized by hereditary wealth.

As I mentioned above, the self-styled *milieu* of the Bay Area held a grand release party for *To Our Friends*, and as I mentioned, few people I knew had any idea who this *milieu* even was anymore. To make it even more confusing, the text of *To Our Friends* saw the re-emergence of the *party*, often referred to as *our party*, and while it is often as vague as the *Party* in *The Call*, it was specified that *our party* would emerge by the circulation between *communes*, and as they make clear, *the territory of the commune is physical because it is existential. Whereas the forces of*

occupation conceive of space as a continuous network of clusters to which different branding operations lend the appearance of diversity, the commune regards itself first of all as a concrete, situated rupture with the overall order of the world.

Sounds interesting, but there weren't any *physical communes* anywhere in the U\$A, people weren't on that wavelength, though many claimed to be, constantly. In fact, people really got into the language of *To Our Friends* in the days ahead, especially after reading this: *the commune inhabits its territory—that is, it shapes it just as much as the territory offers it a dwelling place and a shelter. It forms the necessary ties there, it thrives on its memory, it finds a meaning, a language, in the land.* Again, sounds interesting, but most people were too obsessed with their awesome city life and smartphone drama to ever consider living in a poor immigrant farming community, a white libertarian shithole, or some squatted cabin in the woods built just beyond the border of tribal land, on the logging company side.

Whatever. Forget about all that land shit, especially when I can read sentences like this: *The territory is that by which the commune materializes, finds its voice, comes into presence.* I'll just say fuck it to actually building a squatted village in the woods, I'll just say the *territory* is my group of friends and the bar where we hang out, or maybe our friend's CSA farm. I'll just keep it as narrow as possible to suit my fucking narrow bullshit privileged U\$A baby-brain. Sound good?

Sorry. The point I'm trying to make is no one really liked the idea, they just used the language when it suited their purposes. When the Invisible Committee write that *the commune is not preoccupied with its self-definition: what it means to show by materializing is not its identity, not the idea it has of itself, but the idea it has of life*, what does it make you think? What idea of life is conveyed through informal hierarchies, petty-capitalist businesses, and selective illiteracy? It's much easier to constantly juggle whatever identity is in vogue, to peddle in shifting ideas, to constantly redefine oneself according to the political moment.

Since I'm getting real personal right now, I'm going to abruptly shift to another diverting personal anecdote, but not before I ask you to consider a final quote. I want you to think of all the alleged *Tiqqunists* or *Appelists* or disciples of the Invisible Committee, and imagine them as figures on a janky-ass merry-go-round, spinning round and round. Let the following be the music, and ask yourself if any of these 2014 suggestions played out in their actions:

Not everyone is alike. People are facing the need for money together, they're organizing to have some or do without. And yet, a cooperative wood shop or auto repair shop will be just as irksome as a paying job if they're taken as the aim instead of the means that people have in common. Every economic entity is headed for oblivion, is oblivion already, if the commune doesn't negate its claim to completeness. So the commune is what brings all the economic communities into communication with each other, what runs through and overflows them; it is the link that thwarts their self-centering tendency.

Personal Anecdote VI

Once upon a time, according to legend, I was sitting with Aragorn and Mathieu Burnel, one of the alleged Invisible Committee. We were sitting behind a table in some stripped-out cement building that looked like a factory but was actually a state-funded university, although calling it *funded* would be generous. As one of the art teachers screamed at me, they had *nothing, nothing!* But in Greek.

Regardless, I was allegedly sitting with Aragorn and Mathieu Burnel, talking about trivial, flighty nonsense, and apparently neither I nor Aragorn were hypnotized by Mathieu Burnel into joining the Invisible Committee. Later that day, I went to hear Mathieu Burnel speak to a crowded lecture hall, and in his long extracts from the first draft of *To Our Friends*, previously titled *To The Insurgents*, he spoke of what he called *the warrior, the priest, and the farmer*.

The priest is the force that preserves memory, the warrior is the force that defends and attacks, and the farmer is the force that brings the snack (or builds everything and feeds everyone). Kind of simplistic, but Burnel claimed these forces needed to be in balance, not only in our communities, but in our selves. No single one of these forces should be dominant, for if one of them overwhelms the others, the entire community (or person) will suffer.

All of this weirdness eventually got distilled into its final form in *To Our Friends*, and it goes like this: *Ensuring an increase of power demands that every revolutionary force progress on each of these planes simultaneously. To remain stuck on the offensive plane is eventually to run out of cogent ideas and to make the abundance of means insipid. To stop moving theoretically is a sure way of being caught off guard by the movements of capital and of losing the ability to apprehend life as it's lived where we are. To give up on constructing worlds with our hands is to resign oneself to a ghostly existence.*

Flash forward to 2018. Aragorn has nothing to do with the Invisible Committee and instead has gone balls-deep into some crypto-fascist insanity. The occupation at the ZAD has been betrayed, with many people claiming it was the Invisible Committee that sold everyone out to the state. So there I am, walking down the street, and some fucking U\$A *communizer*-kid waves me down and comes running across the street. All sweaty, he asks if I heard that Julian Coupat and Mathieu Burnel were kicked out of Tarnac, with Julian taking his famous library with him. Over the next months, every other fucking moron repeated this story to me for some reason I couldn't immediately discern.

I didn't listen to a word anyone was saying about any of it. Why would I? However, I knew that all the fucking cops were hearing it, given people were this loose lipped about their French paparazzi drama. Flash forward a bit further, to 2019, and there I am at some shitty little internet cafe in Europe, and when I check my little email, I find that the rumors are true. Julian and Mathieu, the most public

faces of the alleged Invisible Committee, were no longer in Tarnac.

I'd planned to go back to Tarnac, but not after reading that email. Lundi Matin had nothing to do with Tarnac, or *vice versa*. The priests had been kicked out of the village, and I didn't want to navigate what had become a hyper-dimensional battlefield, one where the idea of the Invisible Committee (and it was only ever an idea, an idea of *collective, reliable, accurate intelligence*) had finally collapsed, but not into nothing. It collapsed back into the Imaginary Party, and all the ideas discussed in their collective work have now become part of the global discourse, for better or worse, just as their predictions regarding France come truer day by day.

While the Invisible Committee was being blamed for the collapse of the ZAD, the fabric of French society was being ripped apart, rapidly, especially after the Yellow Vest movement exploded, soon to morph into the current, non-stop madness. No one could gather or create *collective intelligence* fast enough for it be useful to more than small circles, and as of 2023, there have be no new major texts from the Invisible Committee since 2017, just a shorty that I'll happily get to, eventually. Regardless, the collapse of the Invisible Committee came with a very interesting side-effect.

Despite their general implosion, the state was still trying to reference them as some sort of grand cabal, just as many people were accusing them of taking over the ZAD assembly through some sort of grand cabal. With the further silence of the Invisible Committee, all the false critics are laid bare, but more important than these boors are the false disciples, the false prophets, the ones who (wink wink) imply they are part of some sort of grand cabal, but that's the trap I was referring to many pages ago, which I will get to eventually, near the end.

III: The New Testament (Continued)

When the English translation of *To Our Friends* dropped in the USA during the spring of 2015, not every reader knew what the ZAD was. It only comes up a few times, twice actually, and it's in reference to what the authors called *local struggles*.

As they explain, *the power they generate is not something to be mobilized with a view to victory, but victory itself, to the extent that, little by little, the power grows. In this respect, the "Plant your ZAD" movement is well-named. They're in the process of resuming cultivation of the land expropriated by the company contracted to build the Notre-Dame-des-Landes airport, now occupied by inhabitants. An undertaking of this kind immediately places those contemplating it on a long-term basis, longer in any case than that of traditional social movements, and calls for a more general reflection on life at the ZAD and what it can become. A projection that will doubtless include dissemination outside Notre-Dame-des-Landes. In fact, this is already happening in the department of Tarn.*

Aside from this, there is little that can connect the idea of *communes* with the ZAD, at least for the reader. As they put it, *life on the ZAD* became quite amazing, diverse, and crazy between 2012 and 2018, and it was true freedom for many involved, as well as true autonomy. The state had no control. Cops would get molotoved in the woods. Roads were ripped apart. Insane cabins and tree houses spread everywhere. This wasn't tiny, this was 1,650 hectares, or over 4,000 acres, which is bigger than all of central San Francisco, and the French state was powerless to stop it.

Back in the U\$A, the only thing close to the ZAD was the 2016 indigenous occupation of Standing Rock, North Dakota, assembled to stop an oil pipeline. While thousands of supporters were flocking there from across the continent, the police killed Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge, Louisiana on July 5, 2016, triggering a round of protests which were quickly and heavily repressed by the Obama administration, leading to the famous photograph *Taking A Stand In Baton Rouge*, where a deity-like nurse defies some charging riot-cops with a vibe of pure Zen.

Two days before that famous picture was taken, on July 7, a 25 year-old named Micah Xavier Johnson assassinated five police officers in Dallas, Texas. He did this because on the day after Alton Sterling was killed, the police outside Saint Paul, Minnesota killed a man named Philando Castile on July 6 in front of his partner and daughter. After the assassination of five police officers in Dallas, protests heated up in Saint Paul, with people throwing rocks, fireworks, and molotovs at the police, blocking the interstate, and earning the following quote from President Obama: *any violence directed at police officers is a reprehensible crime. Whenever those of us who are concerned about failures of the criminal justice system attack police, you are doing a disservice to the cause.*

While all of this was happening, the encampment at Standing Rock continued to grow, and the spread of houses and tents was huge when the police executed Sylville Smith in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on August 13, leading to two days of looting and rioting. Beyond this, multiple cops cars were torched, just as multiple people opened up on passing cruisers with their pistols. In many instances, these shots were fired from moving vehicles, and the use of cars was widespread in the Milwaukee uprising of 2016, still an emerging tactic at the time.

Less than a month later, the conflict at Standing Rock kicked up a notch when people stormed some construction equipment being used to desecrate a sacred indigenous site, and over the rest of that fall, the police of the Obama administration tortured, maimed, and violated all those who tried to defend the land. Resistance was fierce, but in the end the oil company got its way, given final permission for the pipeline by the new President, the *Bad President*, the orange monkey-puppet named Donald Trump. Obama did jack shit, obviously, he just got the feds to deny one permit at the end of his term, knowing it would be reversed by Trump.

After this, the U\$A entered a period of extreme political violence, which it's still

in. One of the last moments of the previous period was the Olympia Commune, a blockade of rail lines leading into the Port of Olympia that had stalled a shipment of fracking proppants to North Dakota. It was an inspiring moment, proof that people could act anywhere to help the fighters at Standing Rock, even in tiny Olympia, where the blockade became an anarchist village. After a brief, crazy fight with the cops, the train was eventually able to force its way through downtown and out of the port. Although people in Olympia would block the rail lines again a year later, the rest of the U\$A was absorbed into the seemingly endless onslaught of fascist violence connected with the rise of Trump.

It would be in May 2017 that the Invisible Committee dropped their latest, shortest text, *Maintenant*, and I have to say, few in the U\$A seemed really excited. When it was finally translated to English and published later that October, there was little that spoke to people in this infernal country, given how wrapped up they were in countering the rising fascists, and beyond this, there was little talk of the commune, or how to build one, which no one seemed to care about anyway. Much more important, seemingly, was the word *destitution*, and after mentioning it several times as the new method for neutralizing power, the Invisible Committee dropped this priceless description:

We don't have any program, any solutions to sell. Todestitute, in Latin, also means to disappoint. All expectations will be disappointed. From our singular experience, our encounters, our successes, our failures, we draw a clearly partisan perception of the world, which conversation among friends refines. Anyone who finds a perception to be correct is adult enough to draw the consequences from it, or at least a kind of method. In this strange passage near the end of Now, the authors destitute their readers and disciples, although this apparently was not obvious.

Way back at the beginning, the authors also dropped a reference to Trump: *This world no longer needs explaining, critiquing, denouncing. We live enveloped in a fog of commentaries and commentaries on commentaries, of critiques and critiques of critiques of critiques, of revelations that don't trigger anything, other than revelations about the revelations. And this fog is taking away any purchase we might have on the world. There's nothing to criticize in Donald Trump. As to the worst that can be said about him, he's already absorbed, incorporated it. He embodies it. He displays on a gold chain all the complaints that people have ever lodged against him. He is his own caricature, and he's proud of it.*

All these passages and more are probably why *Now* had little impact in the U\$A, and it makes sense why this was the last major Invisible Committee text, published exactly six years ago. However, as I mentioned, the acolytes and disciples certainly latched onto the word *destitute*, and a whole insular, micro-discourse developed around it, at least for some years. However, I should probably start building up to the great betrayal at the ZAD in 2018, so here I go.

Once the encampment at Standing Rock was crushed and the oil pipeline pushed

through, many in the U\$A turned back towards the ZAD, desperate for a source of inspiration, and for those skimming the pages of *Now*, the Invisible Committee provided these words on the ZAD: The ZAD of Notre-Dame-des-Landes illustrates what the process of fragmentation of the territory can signify. For a territorial state as ancient as the French state, that a portion of ground is torn away from the national continuum and brought into secession on a lasting basis, amply proves that the continuum no longer exists as it did in the past. Such a thing would have been unimaginable under de Gaulle, Clemenceau, or Napoleon. Back then, they would have sent the infantry to settle the matter. Now, a police operation is called “Caesar,” and it beats a retreat in the face of a woodland guerrilla response.

After comparing the violence and lawlessness to the Wild West, the authors describe what is happening inside the ZAD: *In its turn, the wresting away of that piece of land results in its own internal fragmentation, its fractalization, the multiplication of worlds within it and hence of the territories that coexist and are superimposed there. New collective realities, new constructions, new encounters, new thoughts, new customs, new arrivals in every sense, with the confrontations arising necessarily from the rubbing-together of worlds and ways of being. And consequently, a considerable intensification of life, a deepening of perceptions, a proliferation of friendships, enmities, experiences, horizons, contacts, distances—and a great strategic finesse.*

This accounts for most of the Invisible Committee’s public statements about the ZAD, and after that everything pretty much went to shit. In all the recent pieces about *Tiqqunism* and *Appelism*, the only entity named as tiqqunist or appelist is the assembly at the ZAD, or CMDO, although this also now encompasses the *Soulèvements de la Terre*, or SDT. As far as I can tell, nothing concretely links them to the texts of *Tiqqun*, *L’Appel*, and the Invisible Committee, and if these groups are named and known by many, they are not opaque. I hope the previous religious chapters have demonstrated how having a named group or vanguard is antithetical to the sentiments in all of those sacred texts.

To be perfectly frank, I was in a bit of denial when I heard about what was going on in the ZAD in 2018. I wanted to ignore it, pretend it was hostile rumors, but I couldn’t, mostly because I’d seen the place in all its glory, free, severed from the state. I couldn’t ignore it forever, and I watched the most disgusting, shameful spectacle descend on a place I loved, a place that actually changed me. I already described a lot of it, and it’s honestly still pretty painful to remember. As I spelled out, the idea of the Invisible Committee collapsed soon after, for me, and I ultimately listened to my fellow stinky anarchist morons and stopped quoting the Invisible Committee or repping them in the same breath as Alfredo Bonnano, Jean Weir, or the contemporary Italian anarchists. It was anarchy time!

Meanwhile, a whole formation of imitators, long time disciples, and recent Party converts had congealed, publicly, into something known as *Tiqqunist*, or *Appelist*, or somehow linked to the Invisible Committee. So many people were still latched onto

this literary matrix, sucking its blood beyond 2018, and this is when the Invisible Committee became the puppet-master in many people's imagination. As I've tried to point out, certain people left Tarnac, the previously mentioned priests, and they were connected with Lundi Matin, a news and editorial website which continued away from Tarnac, often publishing articles that would then be recirculated and reprinted by the alleged *Tiqqunists* in the U\$A.

As a sort of marker of this religious text being near its end, I will now introduce the final appearance of Fulvia Carnevale and her partner. At the beginning of 2020, the Claire Fontaine duo collaborated with designer fashion label DIOR to design their minimalist, neon-lit cat-walk, replete with feminist slogans. I saw this all from the reaction on the internet, with people owning this *Tiqqunist*, this Invisible Committee member, linking her show with the unfortunate *Tiqqunist* tendencies in the U\$A. As I have mentioned, after leaving *Tiqqun* and her ex-boyfriend, Fulvia Carnevale has never claimed to be part of anything but Claire Fontaine, critique of the DIOR show aside. All I will say is that I thought differently about her feminist cat-walk when I saw the Kanye West-recreation-of-Pasoloni's-Salo-version of a catwalk. Take your pick, I guess.

Fulvia's show had the wild distinction of taking place just before the COVID lockdown, and within a few months, another, grander anti-police uprising engulfed the U\$A. During this one, the looters, the people in cars, the mobile ones, they caused massive chaos all across the map, surpassing anything the left might have organized. It marked the transition into the present moment, where the left was barely involved in the recent uprising in Philadelphia after the police officer who executed Eddie Irizarry Jr. on August 14, 2023 had his murder charge dismissed by one of Biden's judges. That's where we are now, but back then, it was truly a moment, and things have only accelerated. The new wave is not emerging from the left, *Tiqqunism*, or the right. It's emerging all around us.

The U\$A was engulfed in lethal political violence for the rest of the Trump administration, and all the while the alleged *Tiqqunists* started acting real fucking weird. A host of social media zealots started to court the fascists in a variety of ways, better documented in the vast body of *Tiqqunist* discourse. In my opinion, I don't think talking to some average Republican in a red state is the same as openly courting Patriot Prayer, but that's just how I see it. Meanwhile, even dumber shit eventually happened, coinciding with people doing jack shit when Biden won the imperial crown from Trump, as if that wretched dirtbag wouldn't continue everything that was already happening.

Just days after people died in Oakland during a massive, automobile-powered looting spree coinciding with Biden's coronation, the allegedly anarchist Moxie Marlinspike, creator of Signal, former head of Twitter security, and recipient of State Department funding, decided it was a great idea to go bro it up with the bald headed fashoid Joe Rogan, and when he was there, the fucker didn't mention anar-

chism, he just made sick jokes about space communism being awesome. Point being, there were several many figures courting the far-right and fascists, and maybe we all just didn't get the memo.

Maybe we were all supposed to be there on January 6, 2021, helping the *libertarian insurgents* create an *autonomous zone* at the U\$A capitol. Maybe if all us stinky ANTIFA anarchists had been there, one of us would have been caught and paraded around as PROOF that the ready-made ANTIFA DID IT script had some semblance of substance. Anyway, I suppose I just didn't get the memo, but there was plenty happening where I was living, and it didn't involve courting Joe Rogan or Patriot Prayer.

It involved going out into this crazy world where thousands of crews were sweeping the cities, living off the sheer excess which was easy to steal, and all while homeless camps grew beneath luxury housing developments. If the original *Tiqqun* was into anything, it was this Imaginary Party, and this was the true, living, uncontrollable Imaginary Party. The thing was, the alleged *Tiqqunists* have been only mildly interested in this superb development, and apparently the most important thing right now is Block Cop City, from what I hear anyway, and the alleged *Tiqqunists* are said to be trying to control it.

I will now add my final paragraphs to the main body of this text (to be followed by a brief-ish conclusion), and it will include the last known publication of the Invisible Committee, titled "Communique No. 0.", published in winter 2022. In this text, the authors respond to baseless allegations that they wrote a work titled the *Conspiracist Manifesto*, and in their statements, they reveal it as quite useful for outing bad actors. For the 100th time, people came out of the woodwork to claim the Invisible Committee had written a text, but in response the authors wrote the following sentences about the problems they had encountered.

For example, the Invisible Committee explains: *after ten years of painful proceedings, the indictment of the public prosecutor's office eventually came down heavily on the identity of the man accused of sabotage and suspected of having been the "principal author" of **The Coming Insurrection**. The needs of the defense — since when do we owe the truth to our enemies? — led one of the accused, who risked nothing in the event of a trial and who had not written three lines of **The Coming Insurrection**, nor of the subsequent books, to claim authorship of the pamphlet before the judge.*

In an epoch in which mystification reigns, it could be expected that this lie would eventually be passed off as truth, and that the liar would end up almost convincing himself of it, by dint of passing as such. Since he therefore became the spokesperson for the accused, this boy went on to illustrate the structural tendency toward autonomization characteristic of modern communication, which allows one to believe that simply having an account on Twitter, all alone behind one's smartphone, is sufficient to shape reality. Even governing authorities themselves manage to stumble over this carpet of illusion. In any case, spokespersons are generally not expected to have a deep

understanding of what they speak; it can even be detrimental to their task.

There it is, everyone. The Invisible Committee is airing out its own closet, letting its readers know even people they have been close to are taking the aura of the Invisible Committee and running with it, for their own limited ends on Twitter (now X, lol). To make matters clearer for the hapless reader, the authors ask, *how many “members of the Invisible Committee” have we heard about, that we have never met? And how many people we have met who owe their scant aura to the mystery they nourish about the fact that they “might have been” a part of it, or even “might be” again? This risk of usurpation, as well as the entire regime of pretense that the latter authorizes, counts among the few downsides of anonymity in these dark times. In any event, such shams only fool the foolish.*

The allegedly *Tiqqunist* distro outfit Ill Will republished the English translation of this text. It’s unclear why it remains so widely unread, especially among the alleged *Tiqqunists*. I hope I’ve made myself clear. If not, here is the insufferable conclusion.

Conclusion

In a way, the Invisible Committee has made it possible to identify all those people who latched onto their ideas and vampirized them, people who are now referred to as *Tiqqunist*. I have to insist, however, that no one named as a *Tiqqunist* in any of the *Tiqqunist* discourse should have any serious claim to that title. On the one hand, it’s really confusing the shit out of a lot of people. *What’s a Tiqqunist? What’s Tiqqun?* Truly fucking mind-numbing, I promise you, and all for some grad-school student journal published in the late 90s. On the other hand, it’s just not accurate.

I’ll admit that things get weirder with *Appel*, where the Party is open to a thousand cultish interpretations, and it was definitely the most influential of the texts mentioned. Some might claim *The Coming Insurrection* is the most influential, but it really wasn’t, it was just a meditation on the collapse of French society that happened to resonate with the USA, and while the anarchist Jeremy Hammond might have posted the full text of *The Coming Insurrection* when he hacked Strafor, few people made communes. The most it did was confirm that, yes, *everyone agrees. It’s about to explode.* It was true, but obviously the Invisible Committee weren’t the only ones saying this.

Now it is what it do, and I leave you to make the remaining connections. There is a strange, illuminating history behind people who accuse the Invisible Committee of being behind things, just as there’s an equally illuminating history of those who still cling to the mystique of a global conspiracy, something which has always been a police fiction. The Invisible Committee simply offered some *collective intelligence* until it was no longer wise or helpful to do so, and their silence is golden at this

point. At the end of the day, they allowed a third position between the hard lines of Communism and Anarchism, but the anarchist movement is now much richer in its own *collective intelligence*. If anything, the rise and fall of the Invisible Committee provoked the international anarchist movement to compose more piercing analysis, and last I checked, international anarchy is alive and well.

Squats did a lot of what these *communes* did, but the governments of Europe and North America decimated that thriving movement, especially in Greece, where people were even getting old in their long-time squats before the evictions. The main downside to the international anarchist squatting movement was that these squats were in the big cities, the site of capital accumulation, and as capital accumulated, it became harder and harder for the old methods to take root and spread, as they once had. When I became interested in communes, it was within this context, and the cities have only gotten more toxic and expensive.

We are now seeing the pattern of those displaced by this capitalist restructuring returning from the periphery to lay siege to the fortresses of capital (ie: big cities). Those responding to police murders are looters and criminals, going wild in Philadelphia while the left marched in circles downtown. As some prescient Philly anarchists observed, the left is not here for the new class war, the one bursting all around us. A shift is occurring, with or without the left, or the alleged *Tiqqunists*, and no one is in control of it, which is why it has every chance of overwhelming this half-dead system. If there was one truly dangerous idea in all those texts, it was the Imaginary Party. Prescient beyond words, it is the greatest legacy of all those collected writers.

So please, when you next attribute something happening in Atlanta to the Imaginary Party, please don't, because it's just a thought exercise, one meant to reveal the size of the grandest insurgent army the world has ever known. If we go by those who don't vote as an approximate indicator of the size of the Imaginary Party, it would be roughly 150,000,000 people in the U\$A. Beyond this, those who don't vote are the majority of all U\$A citizens, just as they are the poorest. No one controls them, there is no single leader, there is simply an anti-political ocean chipping away at the remains of the political establishment, and I can't wait until the hurricane hits.

In theory, this article will be released shortly after the end of the upcoming NVDA in Atlanta, and by then, hopefully more of this madness will make some sense. Authoritarian communists, the cult, any name will do to designate the bad actors out there. However, please don't forget how heavily certain people in this narrative have been targeted for repression by the state, but also don't forget that not everyone is the same, and everyone is responsible for their actions.

I had no idea that trying to deconstruct *Tiqqunism* would also create a partial, selective history of the anarchist and radical movements in the U\$A for the past generation. As the authors of *The Call* once told that generation, *that it might take a generation to build a victorious revolutionary movement in all its breadth does not*

cause us to retreat. We think about this with serenity. Just as we serenely recognize the criminal nature of our existence, and of our deeds. What was created within that generation exists beyond all of us, including the Invisible Committee, and the anarchist movement is much stronger, having absorbed all the lessons narrated above (and more!). It's up to all of us to press forward, baggage and all, walking towards that great, glowing, beautiful Idea.

The true poetry is that *Tiqqun* itself is a reference to the Jewish mystical concept of *Tikkun Olam*, which means *repairing the world*. I hope this giant mess of a religious text can aid in repairing the damage that has been done, and help us all move forward into the future.

—**An Anarchist**

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