

Which international? Some scattered considerations starting from the Greek edition of the interview

The publication in Greek language of the interview “Which international?” (“Quale internazionale?”) it’s an important opportunity to support the editorial initiatives of anarchist propaganda with a view to international solidarity between comrades, as well as a moment in continuity with the solidarity mobilisation of 2022-‘23 in order to break the blanket of isolation imposed for over two years against comrade Alfredo Cospito with the prison regime of 41 bis. However, it’s not just about that. Given the topics addressed in the text, I think it may be an opportunity with which to take some steps forward in the continuation of a deepening on the hypotheses and organizational concepts that distinguish anarchists, therefore to be able to delve into the debate that the international anarchist movement has matured since the very first decades of the last century regarding the nature of the specific anarchist organization, its functions and perspectives. Entering into this debate and into the tangle of aspirations intertwined with it still reflects an urgency and a wish: to develop new energies for a renewed impetus in action.

The elaboration and publication of the interview-dialogue “Which international?”, which took place together with Alfredo between 2018 and 2020 in the pages of the anarchist paper “Vetriolo” (followed by subsequent book editions published in 2021 and 2022, flanked by a substantial appendix, including the last one published during the hunger strike against 41 bis and life imprisonment without possibility of parole), has therefore placed itself in the furrow and in the wake of a debate dating back to time. Well over a century ago the terms of the debate between anarchists would have been placed between “organizationalists” and “anti-organizationalists” and since the eighties – with the decisive contribution of the comrades who published “Anarchismo” and “Provocazione” – they have been placed between organization of synthesis (crystallised in permanent structures and periodic congresses, having quantitative growth among the main purposes) and informal organization (based on affinity groups and comrades who recognize themselves in a projectual hypothesis or area, having action as a propulsive aspect). With the cessation of any revolutionary yearning or of radical transformation of social reality on the part of the more or less historical synthesis organizations (a cessation commonly detectable and motivated by historical reasons in which I don’t delve into during this brief contribution), I think that today’s debate can be defined in terms of a necessary deepening of the declinations that informality has assumed at least in the last quarter of a century, so in the different theoretical-practical paths that the comrades considered appropriate to undertake in this sphere. According to my very personal reading, if on the one hand the reflection on this question has certainly determined the germination of countless revolutionary impulses, on the other hand, as far as the Italian-speaking anarchist movement is concerned, reluctance, misunderstandings and a priori preclusions have emerged that have led to the consolidation of a chronic difficulty in facing with the issue. To these aspects, a further one has been added in recent years, interposed by the repressive apparatus: the need for the state to put an end to it beforehand with any deepening in terms of perspective, isolating and attempting to give a warning in this sense, as well as demonising the support for the reasons of the attack against the state and capital (see in many respects the Scripta Manent, Sibilla and Scripta Scelera investigations with regard to the related charges of instigation to commit crime with the aggravating circumstance of the purpose of terrorism).

With the anarchist paper “Vetriolo”, in which Alfredo also participated, we have from the outset (2017) had the determination to enter the topic, thus attempting to make a contribution to the debate on the organisational question amidst the anarchist movement, as well as on some aspects of anarchist theory, aware that – as stated in the introduction to the first edition of “Which international?” as a book – “emphasising the importance of action, of the destructive fact generically intended, is not enough to pull us out of the shallows of the lack of perspectives”. In particular, the pages of the paper dealt with the anarchists’ concept of class struggle, overcoming the misunderstandings that often lead to the notion that the concept of “class” is a kind of Marxist manipulation or an anachronistic theoretical tinsel and should therefore be set aside. “Vetriolo”, even with all its limitations, therefore represented a space in which to explore the implications that the changes that occurred in the social reality of those years and the ongoing technological process had determined in the struggle. In this sense, in “Which international?” the emphasis is firmly placed on the need to act against the overall technological turnaround that has been taking place for decades, fighting it now, before it’s too late, especially in its most propulsive sectors.

Alfredo Cospito’s transfer into 41 bis prison regime (May 5th, 2022) was particularly motivated by the outcome of the Scripta Manent trial at the Court of Appeal of Turin and by the investigation activities that led to the Sibilla operation, the latter concerning in particular the publication of “Vetriolo”, including “Which

international?”. While, as far as Scripta Manent is concerned, the sentence in the Court of Cassation against the twenty or so accused comrades came a few months after Alfredo’s transfer under 41 bis (and this sentence was followed by a series of hearings concerning the definition of the extent of the sentences against comrade Anna Beniamino and against Alfredo himself), as far as the more restrained Sibilla operation is concerned, the trial phase has not even been reached. This investigation was shamelessly used to justify the detention of the comrade in 41 bis and with it, as well as through the other proceedings already mentioned, the newly appointed inquisitors intended, among other things, to claim that anarchists are “instigators”.

I would like to dwell on this point, not so much out of a non-existent need to “rebut” these kinds of accusations and imputations, but because it seems to me that the issue deserves a mention anyway. As revolutionary anarchists, we place no trust in the justice of the state and give substance to our ideas, our specific world view, in order for this to be a stimulus for autonomy of thought and action. We therefore support the reasons for the attack and don’t “instigate” or “direct” anything. As stated in multiple initiatives during the mobilisation in solidarity with Alfredo and the other revolutionary prisoners, against 41 bis and life imprisonment without possibility of parole, those who act against the state and capital have developed such a determination that they don’t need to be instigated. It’s therefore this autonomy of thought and action that is expressed, not gregariousness and subordination to orders.

The detained anarchists are revolutionaries who like so many other comrades find themselves imprisoned because the state believes in this way that it can issue a warning against our struggle, a warning above all against revolutionary paths and experiences. Any repressive attack by the state – be it large or small – is hence to be understood within the ongoing clash, modulating itself according to its course, and is put in place by the repressive apparatus in order to attempt to impress a deterrence on the necessity of the action, trying to discourage any maturation in this direction. We are at a time where it’s becoming increasingly clear that war is the constitutive essence of the state, where state and capitalist massacres – an expression of the same logic of war – are the order of the day, where the exploited are increasingly brazenly slaughtered by labour, where governments proceed undaunted in their warmongering spiral supported by the organisms of international capital. Thus, Alfredo Cospito’s transfer to 41 bis is also an expression of the politics of war, and as an act of internal war it must be understood, with all that this entails.

In this context, the current evolution of the conditions of exploitation, of production of a humanity increasingly subordinated and subjugated to the techniques of capital, and thus deprived of any residue of dignity, will determine new needs of clash. The wish outlined at the beginning of this contribution – to develop new energies for a renewed impetus in action – therefore seems essential, both now and in the longer term. Beyond the rapid changes that have taken place in recent years, a text such as “Which international?” remains relevant and can be a valuable opportunity for reflection in this sense.

Greetings to all the comrades present and special thanks to the comrades who organised the initiatives.

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