An anarchist guide to ... action

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Is action about power? Yes. Spirited action casts POWER in SITU. Duty. All means it is that action is motivated by a desire not to feel compulsion in harm or wrongdoing by inertia (tacit consent). The power to act is driven by passion. Statecraft wears against passion. Machiavelli says love is sickle and that hate makes rulers vulnerable. Antistatecraft embrace passion as a route to ethical action. What else is rage if not some instinct of vengeance? Your rage is an is that action is motivated by a desire not to feel compulsion in harm or wrongdoing by inertia (tacit consent). The power to act is driven by passion. Statecraft wears against passion. Machiavelli says love is sickle and that hate makes rulers vulnerable. Antistatecraft embrace passion as a route to ethical action. What else is rage if not some instinct of vengeance? Your rage is an

It means opposing the deployment of FEAR as an instrument of rule and all that fearful government involves. Rowland said it best:

to be kept in sight • inspected • spied upon • directed • law driven • numbered • enrolled • indoctrinated • preached at • controlled • estimated • valued • censured • commanded. It involves a lot of other things, too. Take your pick: the Princes, the Levitts, possessions, monopoly, capital, patriarch, colonisation... they all depend on fear. Action then,

an audacious and courageous, perhaps, but also honest and true: statecraft recommends lies and cunning. Recovering CRAFT as creative practice ART freeing it from perilous Machiavellian scheming.

What does action involve? Bakunin said

about the impossibility of PROPAGANDA BY THE DEED and some worry that it seems to give all kinds of self-regarding, self-aggrandising acts. It started off as a consciousness-raising task, based on confrontation. But it morphed into individual acts of violence and illegality. And of course, the history of the dispute often turns on the question of violence. But disagreements about propaganda by the deed are as much about design and intelligibility or the perceived reasons and motivations for actions, as they are about the morally just outcome. In particular, everyone is left scratching their heads about the intentions behind an action, then it’s not really an effective deed.

(Read it) it was Engels’s response. Like propaganda by the deed, the spirit of revolt celebrates individual freedom, and the refusal of the order that statecraft imposes. But it situates action family in a social context. How are individual acts of rebellion likely to be understood? What’s the response of the disempowered and marginalised likely to be? Revolt and resistance is not just about the rebellions. If you don’t want to fall back on the law – my rights – or the nation – our civilization – or capital – my lawyer – or force – my army to mediate social relations, you’ve got to negotiate differences in actions.

That can be interpreted in different ways. One view is that the creation of the doctrine of the means is that it defies a goal and then allows any means as long as they support its realisation: every thing’s ok as long as action is directed towards the goal’s attainment. An opposing view is that the fallacy of the dictum stems from the failure to properly specify the ends. This view says that it’s only possible to decide what kinds of actions are consistent with goals once the goals have been agreed. If they’re not agreed, what’s to stop anybody from imposing their ideals on everybody else? The first view denies ends for fear that individuals are likely to be sacrificed for the greater good, the second says that setting out the aims of action is essential in order to protect against their perversion or usurpation. That significant difference is the status that attaches to the idea of ‘goals’. On the first view, the end is linked to an idea of history as a progressive, civilizing or liberating force. Whether or not those involved in actions know it, they are treated as players in a bigger game – bears of oppression rightly deployed by experts or elites who understand the logic of history and are supremely confident about the benefits that action will bring (the breaking-gagsternakeme- ontelletta views. Weaver put it like this: the French Revolutionaries called for the rights of man. The Revolution cut off the heads of men). On the second, there is no ultimate good or prescriptive historical march; it’s only philosophy, not real life. Because we don’t accept that we’re destined to consume omlettes, we have to decide what we want to eat, and then plan on the provision accordingly. So refusing to be incorporated in the ends that history is said to desire is in only one response that we have to deal with repressive political philosophies. If I decide that there’s no logic in history, that there are no stages through which struggle must move, no necessary advancement and that history is just what I or we can make it, then the potential power of my actions can equally be said to depend on my determination of my ends – as opposed to my refusal to take part in any discussion about what might be desirable.

Anarchist Guide To...

1. Action is the art of antistatecraft

2. Action is one thing anarchists don’t do: revolt

3. What does action involve? Bakunin said

4. DESTRUCTION!

5. 1. Action is the art of antistatecraft

6. 1. Action is the art of antistatecraft

7. There is one proviso: THE MEANS MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH THE ENDS

8. Either way, the politics of antistatecraft steadfastly RESIST VANGUARDISM.

9. The politics of antistatecraft says ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE. Action is utopian but it’s not about utopia.

10. The politics of antistatecraft is about breaking free, resisting, experimenting and challenging norms and practices.

The politics of antistatecraft is about breaking free, resisting, experimenting and challenging norms and practices.

We can’t all do that, or do it all the time. We’re more or less ensnared in statecraft. But we all have breaking points and we can still interact and be inspired.