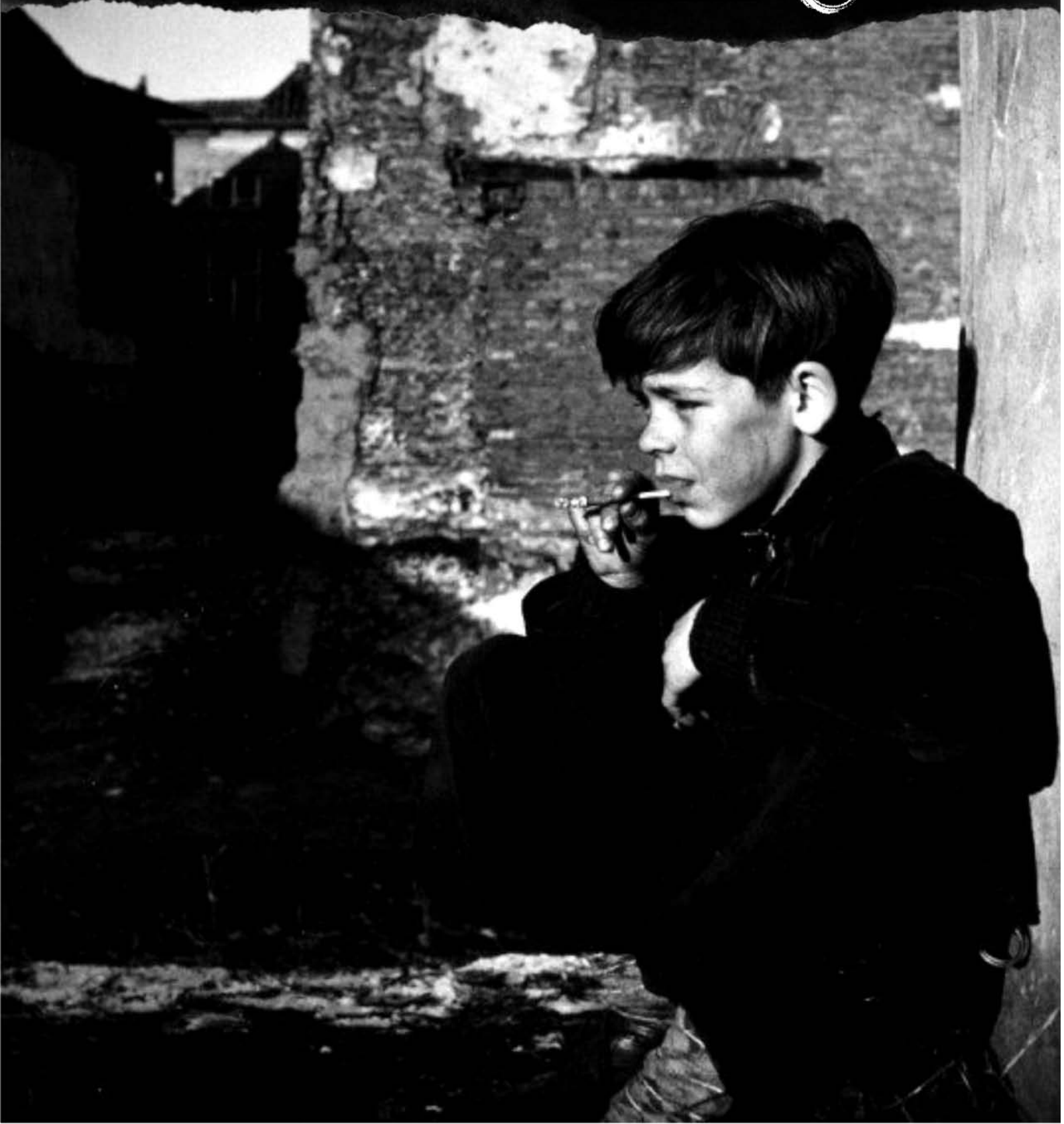


# *Contra la contra*

reaffirming critique and antagonistic assessment

October 2018





# Class Struggle

## Me, Proletarian?

The bourgeoisie has widely disseminated the notion that since the figure of the industrial worker has ceased being predominant in production, automatically "the proletariat has disappeared". But it turns out that the proletariat is and always was a historical and material condition from its birth and consequently this social class can't be reduced to a specific trade or labor occupation. As capital prevails, in turn the production of commodities prevails, and consequently so does the class which incarnates the exploitation of that force and labor time which is required in order to generate the value of these commodities.

The proletariat is marked by the perpetual dispossession of its means of living, and consequently must work for a wage; the so-called "modern consumerist lifestyle" which many wage laborers attempt to achieve is far from being the reflection of the supposed stability and improvement which can be reached under capitalism. Buying an automobile or paying for some vacations at the beach, having some brand name athletic sneakers, a plate of food on the table, going to drink beer on the weekend or have hot water in the shower, paying rent for a flat or a mobile phone; are "comforts" which in any country, can only be afforded without sacrifice by a highly reduced number of people. If today there exists a greater circulation of commodities which were considered to be inaccessible for the majority of the population seventy years ago, it's not due to the prosperity of this system, but the necessity to create mobility for the demands of the market through credits which the banks bestow and deduct from our wages (with high interest), supplying us with invisible money which in real life we pay for with more work. It doesn't matter if we "make a living" inhaling heavy metals in a mine, placing beams at a construction site, at an office in front of a computer, in a clinical laboratory, as day-laborers harvesting crops for agro-industrial enterprise, as chambermaids in a hotel or as waiters in a restaurant; we continue to be slaves to the wage, to the debts and the increase in work which we must do in order to pay for a well-being which never arrives.

The bosses, the State and even the priests reverberate on a daily basis that by working hard, saving up and being disciplined one can reach a certain amount of stability. Many of the exploited end up fooling themselves and rush in search of that citizen's dream of having a house, a car and a family while the kids play with the dog in the yard and the grandparents recline on the balcony reading the newspaper and knitting a sweater. Evidently, this whole fantasy comes crashing down when an accident, terminal illness or simply old-age incapacitate us from continuing to labor or we pass 30 years serving a company which suddenly throws us out with a kick in the ass without severance pay; to then later see how the savings go up in smoke in an instant (supposing that we would have them). The desperation, sadness, depression and anguish that results from these circumstances, ends up imposing the solutions of capital: prozac, indigence or suicide (immediate or gradually under the lure of alcohol or other hard drugs).

It's for that reason that instead of folding to the frustration from handing out resumes every day with no response, or feeling hungry in front of an empty refrigerator, we must begin to pose the question of why this state of things should continue being so. Our daily anxieties and regrets are not incidents "which only

happen to us individually", thinking of ourselves as unique and different is an ideological veil which nurtures the unfettered functioning of this prevailing mode of production, which seeks to keep us atomized and isolated at all cost to kill amongst ourselves and never fight the root of the true problem. The concrete reality is that we are proletarians who act as appendages of this megamachine and only by recognizing ourselves as such can we seat the basis for subverting that which is eating us alive.

## **Capital only offers catastrophe**

Today it's more tangible how enormous amounts of human beings turn out to be useless for the valorization of capital and for the plans of the dictatorship of the economy. Hundreds of thousands of job posts are being substituted at an ever-accelerating rate by the work of technological automatons with the aim to reduce the costs of production of the different companies (the development of Artificial Intelligence as the best example). Even the institutes of knowledge (since the beginning functional to Capital) by means of their scientist/professional spokespeople don't have reservations in affirming that in the next 20 years, the unemployment at a global level will approach around 80%. Evidently, for the conglomerates that manage the highest spheres of the economy, as much for the convinced defenders of this society and its ideologues, there's [still] no reason to worry about this whole problem because it's enough for them to reduce the whole situation to some collateral damage, the short term solution to which being that the governments regulate the activity of this whole superfluous mass keeping them occupied in more precarious jobs under the modality of outsourcing or self-exploitation in the so-called informal commerce. But this solution, in not achieving to palliate the constant inflation in the prices of commodities, entails that those precarious jobs, as well as many branches of informal commerce, sooner or later will collapse, leading to the eternal return of unemployment and pauperization <sup>1</sup>.

## **The illusions of capital fall to pieces**

Perhaps it's true that capitalism with its progress and industrial development in all its biological, chemical and technological branches has brought humanity to better living conditions than before? Contrary to what the various types of apologists of this economic order proclaim, it's impossible to find a curtain which covers the panorama of catastrophe which we are witnessing. In the best of all possible worlds <sup>2</sup>, nothing of what this system proposes as a solution eliminates the fact that we are subjected on a daily basis to wasting hours in transit to the workplace, breathing air infested with pollution, misfeeding ourselves with macabre food which has been subjected to industrial chemical processing, paying high rents for crammed mousetrap "apartments" (or not even having a place to live at all), sickness from working, and finally being

---

1. As we know well, unemployment and inflation unleash the competition for maintaining low costs on the basis of productivity, which propitiates low salaries + an increase in exploitation + an increase of working hours. A functional chain which no government even wants to break.

2. The liberals never tire of proclaiming that "although capitalism is far from being a perfect system, on the other hand it's the best system which humanity has known for not having to bear so much scarcity or illnesses, with a life expectancy as high as 80 years" (sic!).

subjected to the modernization and increase of the forces of repression and surveillance.

There's not enough space to recite a list which includes all of the adverse conditions of subsistence which millions of wage slaves around the world are confronted with day to day.

There's no piece of this planet which escapes the plans of this civilization of money, and furthermore, the supposed division between a "third" and "first world" isn't even real, given that capitalism is a system which feeds on the worldwide and constant mobility of value valorizing itself, materializing the misery and generalizing it. No economic process lays disjointed or isolated, despite the capitalists always boasting about economic advances and benefits, it will always be from a merely localist perspective where only their sphere benefits: they talk to us about how "we are more competitive on this side", but they don't mention that this competitiveness is due to our exploitation being greater, which lightens the costs of production, and therefore the competitors in other countries will be left bankrupt and will cast thousands into the unemployment lines. From the center of Los Angeles where real estate speculation has thrown thousands of people to the street, to the misery of La Villa de la Rinconada in Peru where people work without a wage in search of gold for the mining companies which sell this metal in Switzerland, these are the results of a mode of production in which the dynamic doesn't limit itself to the local or the regional, but its roots [as well as its repercussions] happen to be directly global and historical and consequently what occurs in one country can't be understood as "proper to", "particular" or disjointed from that which occurs on other latitudes.

## **Is Capital unbeatable?**

Yet the contradictions of capitalism never proceed in harmony; the wave of struggles on a global level of the last decade<sup>5</sup>, from Greece to Nicaragua, from Egypt to Argentina, have left it clear that under capitalism every "improvement" is a vile chimera; that development is the development of exploitation; that freedom is the freedom to die of hunger or die working; that equality is subject to the laws created for the protection of the bourgeoisie; that prosperity and well-being refer to the aspirations which only the bourgeoisie can reach; and that democracy is nothing other than the dictatorship of capital.

Evidently, the current period of struggles is composed of not very prolonged outbursts, of blows and counter-blows, of risings and falls where the social peace ends up imposing itself; be it through the hardening of State terrorism or through the wager on reformism. It's not strange that we would still be very far from entering even a pre-revolutionary phase at the global level. Nevertheless, the absence of outbursts, revolts or generalized struggles must not be confused with a period which will last forever, since the contradictions are always around and they tense to such a degree that they end up breaking apart everything which was believed to be solid and inalterable. Furthermore, if today the broad mass of the proletariat is weak, scattered and reformist, it's not due to a "natural cause" or an irreversible defeat where the class struggle has been subsumed to the capitalist mode of production <sup>3</sup>. It's necessary to seek the causes of this situation

---

3. This fallacy is common currency in tendencies like "value theory" (Jappe, Kurtz) or the communizers in the fashion of *Theorie Communiste* or the exegetes of Jacques Cammatte. We will not go further into this critique right now, that we will leave for future issues of this publication.

in the development of the continual defeats which have occurred after decades of capitalist counterrevolution (extermination, repression and prison), in addition to the fact that a large part of the struggles which have occurred during the last few decades have practically had to start from zero, wandering with a lack of assessment and with positions which only make a fragile rupture from the defunct. On the other hand, immediatism and the false conceptions which contemplate the revolution as a heroic gesture, vehemently ignore that the assaults which the proletariat executed against capitalist society in 1917, 1968 and 1977 didn't happen either spontaneously or in the form of a miracle, but were the result of decades of headlong confrontation with the existing reality. Finally, it's important to not lose sight of fact that the social reality is imposed in forms which exceed the expectations or suppositions of any group or individual. The process of revolutionary and classist confrontation, beyond being long, will not be exempt from numerous failures, and furthermore it will never be either voluntarism or the pretentious mechanicism of actions which will give us the result which is hoped for.

### **Aversion to your supposed gravediggers**

Proposing to go to the garden to cultivate in common as a social alternative, advocating the impossibility of defeating capitalism, isn't far from envisioning the possibility of apocalyptic futures or advocating for the immediate extinction of the human race in order to stop the collapse of the planet <sup>4</sup>; it's a form of accommodating to the plans of Capital, which seeks at every moment to reinforce the myths of its supposed invulnerability, so suppressing all possibility of questioning and transgressing its material foundations. To believe that the struggles will cease or will wander in confusion, co-opted in reformism forever, corresponds once again to that capitalist reason of seeing reality in an anti-dialectical manner, meaning cleansed of negative contradictions, as if the processes would always keep themselves linear and without conflict between those who seek to overcome this reality and those who on their part try to conserve it with all of its structures.

The class struggle is a constant in Capital, it is its intrinsic condition and its existence doesn't depend only on the level of social outburst which manifests at a given moment <sup>5</sup>; The class struggle can not be reduced to a particular struggle of a given country, nor is it defined as a struggle which will only take place in a far-off future when the proletariat "will have a specific program for accomplishing the revolution" <sup>6</sup>. The class struggle must be understood as the essence of capital in its totality, an essence which the bourgeoisie would like to cleanse but cannot.

---

4. A naive act, given that many dystopias like hunger, war, control and destructive technological advancement already have place in this society, cohabiting with the "prosperities of capitalism". Furthermore, it's capitalism itself which since long ago has been exterminating the human race and continues to do so at an increasing rate.

5. Just as capitalism is not erased if an individual goes off to the mountains and survives without money; the class struggle doesn't disappear if the social peace triumphs by means of the repression wrought by the bourgeoisie and its State.

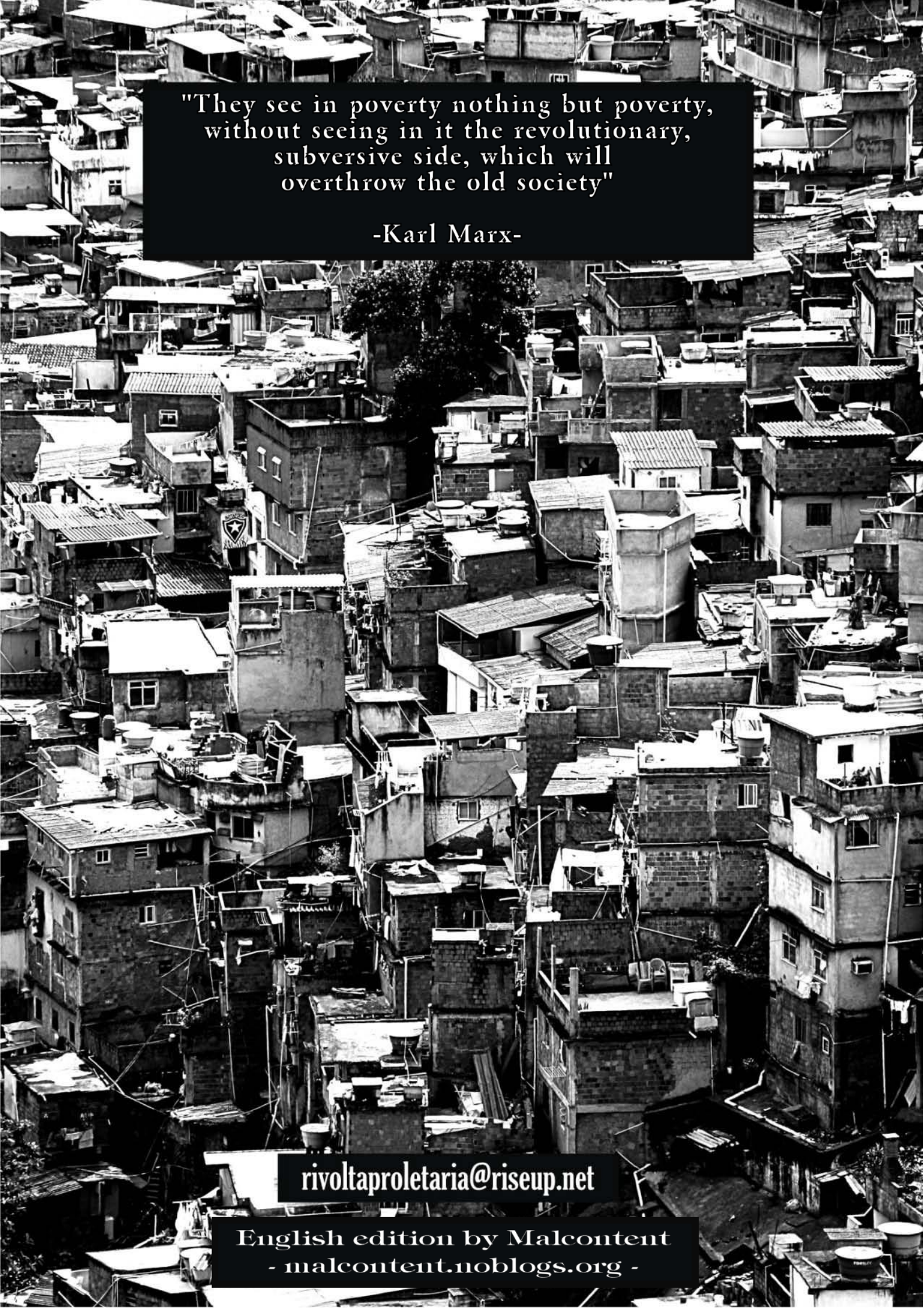
6. We must not get confused between what a revolutionary program and the class struggle are; since a revolutionary and communist program is the product of the development of the class struggle and not the other way around.

The mystifications, the false identities and various types of ideologies of Capital can only temporarily be of influence in causing to believe in the nonexistence of class antagonism and its consequences.

But the class struggle is not an ideology or a path to choose, but a reality materialized in each one of us as proletarians and which accentuates from the moment when an alarm (almost like a trumpet sounding in the military barracks) reminds us that we must go out to destroy ourselves working.

This malaise and the subversive potential which it brings with it are not an individual act, but the social condition which leads to taking to the street and confronting everything and everyone who defends this order.





"They see in poverty nothing but poverty,  
without seeing in it the revolutionary,  
subversive side, which will  
overthrow the old society"

-Karl Marx-

[rivoltaproletaria@riseup.net](mailto:rivoltaproletaria@riseup.net)

English edition by Malcontent  
- [malcontent.noblogs.org](http://malcontent.noblogs.org) -