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7

BLACK, RED, PINK AND GREEN: BREAKING BOUNDARIES, BUILDING BRIDGES

Laura Corradi

INTRODUCTION

From 1990 onwards, new social movements have been expressing different forms of agency in terms of collective action, mobilization capacity, and self-reflection, re-elaboration of their own goals, limits and methods. Their relevance, contextual to the economical and ecological crisis, has been highlighted by a growing popular sympathy. So-called masses seem to be outraged by social inequality, the evidence of degenerative forms of patriarchy, and spontaneously take part in multifaceted processes of delegitimization of political parties and institutions.

The new social movements' antagonism to the status quo has been expressed at different levels: social, political and economic; it also includes, to certain degrees, critical issues related to gender, sexual orientation and the relationship between humans and the rest of nature. Interestingly enough, new social movements show several forms of engagement in radical discursive practices – in an intermittent way, often alternating dissimilar types of tactics and approaches to institutional politics in unpredictable ways. As stated by Laraña, Johnston and Gusfeld, what is significant for sociologists 'is the inability of these movements to be clearly understood within the European-American traditions of analysis. They constitute the "anomalies" of Kuhnian normal science' (1994, p. 3). If such anomalies can give birth to a new paradigm, they need to be a special focus of our interest as both scholars and activists.

The purpose of this chapter is to share empirical results and propose a new way to look at different kinds of oppositional political identities acting today within new social movements – which have somehow different roots and common intermittent practices. The empirical research discussed here focuses on the individual perception of constitutive elements of the four main components of contemporary social movements: the older 'historical' ones – anarchism and communism – and the younger ones, feminism and ecologism, which emerged in a powerful way during the social and political struggles of the 1960s and the 1970s. My research aimed to understand the activists' representations of anarchism, communism, feminism and ecology within the new social movements. By using chromatic terms, the object of the project was the individual perception of how black, red, pink and green have played a role in the making of each activist's political life. This sociological project – which may be considered unique in its genre in the new social movements milieu – has been inspired by Ilvo Diamanti's work *White, Red, Green and Blue* (2003), a masterpiece of politology in the context of Italian institutional parties, in which he discusses the political positions of Christians, communists, communitarians – that is, the 'green' Lega Nord – and the new Berlusconi party Forza Italia, whose choice of colour fell on a tranquillizer – heavenly, sky azure. In a nutshell, colour matters, even when boundaries between them get blurred. The results of my research were presented at the International Conference on 'Black and Red' at the University of Nottingham in 2008. Given the interest expressed by colleagues and friends, I felt encouraged to pursue more data.

Today in Western countries, mobilization against neoliberalism for health, environment, for social justice, against all types of exploitation and exclusion, has created a plethora of groups and associations as protagonists. They can be seen as hosting diverse traditions and mixed heritages: eco-anarchists, eco-feminists, eco-Marxists, anarcha-feminists, Marxist feminists, libertarian communists and so on. An amazing trend of combining old and new lines of thought can be identified both in the literature and in the realm of social and political praxis where this research found its context of relevance.

Some methodological remarks will be useful. In my work, anarchism, communism, feminism and ecology have been treated as large *signifiers*. All subjects interviewed have been asked to give definitions of what anarchism, communism, feminism and ecology meant to them. In so doing, they personally engaged with

their – often unquestioned – significance, on the basis of individual and social experience, readings and sharing: digging in their own biography. Much silence, density of thinking and concentration have been involved in the interviews. The research subjects took quite seriously the task of defining themselves and decoding those signifiers – understanding how their activism has been nourished by different theories and ideas – in the reconstruction of how the attribution of a certain meaning has occurred, and in analysing how much of 'the others' is present in us, given the deep *metissage* of political praxis and milieux.

I had some expectations in this investigation. One was to encourage a spontaneous process – through the decoding of subjective political identities and discursive practices – in the direction of facilitating the awareness of an ongoing practice of breaking boundaries and building bridges in terms of better cooperation. This course of action is already taking place in several struggles of our social reality, while the reflection amongst scholars and activists seems to be not yet geared toward the necessity of shifting the attention from differences to commonalities.

There are several arenas where blacks, reds, pinks and greens are found together, such as antifascism and antiracism, in social movements against neoliberal globalization and 'humanitarian' wars; against nuclear energy and genetically modified organisms (GMOs); in lesbian, gay, bi and transexual (LGBT) associations, autonomous groups and grassroots organizing for health, environment, animal rights; in precarious workers' unions, students' collectives and indigenous rights organizations; in new waves of peasants living in communes, and in anti-authoritarian kindergartens. There are so many places where communists, anarchists, feminists and ecologists coexist. And I found more than that: such different identities tend to overlap within the subjects themselves.

LOCATED KNOWLEDGE: UNVEILING THE PERSPECTIVE

This work has been carried out with a reflexive sociology (Bourdieu, 1992) approach. If I am allowed to situate my research in terms of located knowledge, I should first confess a radical feminist methodology. Scandalously, I started from myself, having grown into diverse political environments since my childhood, with a Gramscian grandmother, who had been a partisan *staffetta*. The other one was a *curandera* in her peasant community. I had a self-defined anarchist, despotic and repressive father, who deeply loved his own

freedom and the idea of masses, and turned later into a fan of the Italian communist party, and a Gandhian mother, who believed in women's liberation. My adolescence was spent as a factory worker, full-time on a production line, where the study of Marxism was the only mental survival option. After the late achievement of a high school degree, I gained access to college and worked as a part-time janitor and babysitter. I was a fresh working-class student in a petit bourgeois, 'autonomous' university in Padua, where Negri's theory was hegemonic in an authoritarian way.

During my PhD years at the University of California at Santa Cruz, and then as a scholar-activist, I always had the feeling that different political ideas were finding space in my own way of thinking, merging in a non-dichotomous manner. Through the years, libertarian authors and practices have influenced me. Since 1990, I have studied Afro-centric and Native American theories, and had the opportunity of an early and intense political experience with the Zapatistas (1994–6), which included being a participatory observer at the *Acuerdos de San Andres de los Pobres* between the EZLN and the Mexican government. The *Intercontinental Encuentros Contra El Neoliberismo y Por la Humanidad* (1996–7) – organized first by the indigenous Mayan populations – highlighted the divisions and conflicts among Western activists (which have never been properly addressed or resolved) and also established the awareness of the need to create global venues of debate. The *Encuentros* stimulated the birth of an embryo of consciousness, which led eventually to the constitution of the World Social Forum – which, despite the internal bureaucracy, in its early years represented an important arena for attaining more contamination among different components, for producing a discussion geared toward action (leaving aside Western unproductive ideological debates, which suddenly didn't make much sense in the context of the world).

My quest for a non-Eurocentric political perspective in the last two decades has been deeply affected by postcolonial and subaltern studies. Eco-feminism and aboriginal sociology, as well as Adivasi indigenous standpoints and struggles, helped to re-educate me, in combination with my living for some time in jungle contexts. Reading about primitive subversions (Kulchyski, 1992) and gaining a theoretical and practical understanding of native cosmogonies made an important difference in my own existence and as a political militant.

Surprisingly enough, most of the interviewees did not make explicit reference to indigenous or aboriginal people's theory and practice, even though those who identified themselves with ecological thought

used several concepts that can be traced back to indigenous cultures. This is one of the reasons why, in this chapter, I have chosen to offer, as a qualitative research sample, an interview with a native feminist scholar activist. I felt such a perspective was missing amongst the (mostly white) interviewees.

My central hypothesis is that subjects who are committed to social change and engaging in a radical questioning of the status quo – regardless of their ideological identifications – are inspired both theoretically and practically by different sets of ideas and social/political praxis. Overall, we may say today that social movements can nourish themselves from a common heritage, which is at times contradictory. The research project does not aspire to obliterate the value of differences and a history of conflicts among the four components examined. However, the goal is to focus on today's social representations, a synchronic perspective which may help to look further at the real state of the relations among the components themselves. As we shall see, the research results point out how heterodoxy is widespread among activists of different ages, who seem to have built their identities as colourful patchworks.

I decided to work with no other hypothesis than a larger one based on the assumption of commonalities between different components, and the existence of different ideas and concepts (taken from different traditions) in each subject. I asked the interviewees, 'What do "anarchism", "communism", "feminism" and "ecology" mean to you?' The body of empirical data that emerged consists of five in-depth interviews of privileged witnesses and 30 questionnaires administrated with an oil-splash type of recruitment. Most of the subjects involved in the research seemed to be happy about having the opportunity to focus on their own political identity. Someone even told me it never occurred to them to look at themselves in such a deep way.

I now present my research results, beginning with an interview with Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, political activist and author of the introduction to *Quiet Rumors: An anarcha-feminist reader* (2002). She was chosen as a privileged witness, as a person who has been studying and writing on the subject of intersections – in particular, between anarchism and feminism.

INTERVIEW WITH ROXANNE DUNBAR ORTIZ

Her self-definition is the following: 'feminist, historian, revolutionary'. She considers these to be super-identities, self-identifications, gifts.

Other identities pertain to whom she is materially: 'a working class person with a poor family background', a 'Native American from Oklahoma'.

Communism, for Roxanne, is 'the only force challenging capitalism; the dedication of communists I met, [they were] as models in my life and activism; the seeming irrationality of anti-communism [made me think of] the fragility of capitalist ideology; [and today I feel] the lack of communist analysis and organizing, in the US.' Also in her account of communism, there are 'national liberation movements and Maoism – which weren't always positive', yet she feels some of these ideas are to be considered part of her background.

In talking about anarchism, Roxanne starts with a preface about significant persons in her family. Her grandfather was 'a Wobbly in Oklahoma, where farmers had been kicked off the land'. Her father had a strong class consciousness, but anti-union feelings, 'a Scotch-Irish man who was convinced all [unionists] were sold out'. Her mother, a Native-American who embraced the Baptist Evangelical religion, was a 'very mystical' woman. A quite mixed heritage started to interweave her identity at an early age. Then, as a young adult:

> during Civil Rights movements in Oklahoma ... [the idea of] freedom and African American oppression ... I made my choice which side to be .... I have a very strong anti-authoritarian personality, with individualism and without selfishness. The essence of anarchism (differently from communism) is trusting the awareness of people to be out for the community.

For her, anarchy is mostly 'refusing to be a follower and to be a leader. Never trust leaders.' She ends by commenting how 'anarchism can exist without the analysis of capitalism and imperialism. It questions the state, but it does not change the state. It has a flow but it is an expression of freedom.'

Her account of feminism starts with a self-reflection: 'I never thought of myself as a female; I was so conscious of class. I was discriminated because poor not as a girl. [Then] Simone's [De Beauvoir] *Second Sex* in 1963... I was a teenager in the 50s and read everything translated!' In a sex-segregated social context where she lived, feminism at first meant, 'Understanding how women do act out the roles of patriarchy', which had to do with the 'common resentment toward the mother'. Her mother had become an alcoholic and died from it. Anger and bitterness were 'part of the feeling of sisterhood with other women ... at that time Valerie Solanas shot

Andy Warhol [which allowed us to] understand the "crazy woman" and the source of one's violence'.

While she was doing her doctorate, 'anti-militarism and anti-violence led to feminism, mutual support and mutual assistance, health centers, challenging the state, and the Vietnam War'. In that period, the writing of 'William Hanton, *Fan Chen Village*' was crucial. 'During [the] cultural revolution [the book[helped us for our own organizing – so young feminists picked up also anti-imperialism'. Then it was the time of '*Daring to be Bad* in the 80s – the divide between cultural and political feminists, and lesbian feminism, the purple menace with the pink triangle.'

Roxanne's ecological awareness started during the anti-Vietnam war activism, with the information about 'Agent Orange and chemical warfare' and in the anti-nuclear movement, later in promoting pesticide awareness. For her what is very important is the struggle for 'health and environment, [since] the beginning chapter of Marx's *Capital* – [the parts on] deforestation, pollution, slums, colonialism] ... the less known ecological part of Marxism' is the one she refers to as the most useful.

Finally, ecological thought played a crucial role in her decision of 'becoming a vegan, aware of animal rights, and politicize my behavior about how to respect the planet – which is related with my being a Native.' At the end, her Native identity, her familial heritage, became an identity choice encompassing even her recent choices. Her very roots, enriched with the consciousness she acquired during her life (through personal experience, readings, sharing with others) closed the circle of the interview in a meaningful way.

GIVE ME FIVE: DEFINITIONS

Now let us look at eight interviews of students (who also engage in precarious work) and manual workers, followed by eight interviews of intellectual workers (scholar-activists). This part of the research was named 'give me five'. I asked the subject to provide five definitions for each signifier (anarchism, communism, feminism, ecology). The following results should be read as synthetic narratives, as semi-precious raw stones excavated from the mine of individual and social memory. I have underlined the most frequent definitions, while the self-identification definition of the subject is highlighted in bold characters.

The first three interviewees considered here were participants at a 'no nuke camp' in the Puglia region, in southern Italy, where I

delivered a feminist leadership workshop in the summer of 2008. A student, a young woman of 25, defined herself as a **libertarian communist** and gave the following definitions:

Communism: sharing; clarity; rationality; method; goals

Anarchy: freedom; self-liberation; fun; creativity; autonomy

Feminism: revolution here and now; many girlfriends and women comrades; self-consciousness and self-government of the body; irony; pleasure

Ecology: future beyond myself; new generations; overcoming personal ego and anthropocentrism; harmony; relationship with the territory.

Her girlfriend, a militant in the same group, was also a student, 27 years old, who described herself as a **queer feminist**. She gave a definition in which the concept of 'consciousness' played a pivotal role:

Communism: a family against the family; training; utopia; experimentation; songs

Anarchy: consciousness of individuality; importance of small things; mental openness; equal and horizontal relationships; radical oppositional consciousness

Feminism: consciousness of myself; different relationships with family, other women and people; belonging; solidarity; personal self-determination

Ecology: consciousness of being an element of a living organism; anti-speciesism; vegetarianism; hope; projects.

A self-defined **communist feminist**, a woman student aged 27, gave the following classification, highlighting the concepts of self-determination and responsibility across the traditional ideological boundaries:

Communism: equality; sharing; self-determination; hope; resources

Anarchy: responsibility; direct action

Feminism: consciousness of myself and my relationships with others; self-determination; strength; rage

Ecology: will of living well; participation; responsibility; ecological action.

A 55-year-old activist and shoe-maker, mother of three, whom I interviewed in the communal house she had founded in Calabria, described herself with a political slogan: **no vote**. Here the definitions she offered tended to cross old ideological boundaries:

Communism: respect; sharing property; cooperation; freedom; a circular form of communication and decision making

Anarchy: love, trust, altruism of service; happiness of communion; the spirit of the village

Feminism: Magics; the strength of expressing myself and avoiding male authoritarian energy; fighting subalternity; having children; finding my male energy

Ecology: relationship between theory and praxis in everyday life; earth as rest; intuition and creativity; direct action; working outside and passing my experience to others.

In the same household, which is commonly identified as an anarchist milieu, a 42-year-old male farmer described himself as a **post-Marxist ecologist**, and gave the following definitions:

Communism: analysis of society; class relations; capital-labour and capital-nature; history of evolution of capitalism; the commodification of human relations

Anarchy: solidarity; laicism; power of the state; critique of bureaucracy; freedom

Feminism: the differences in the physical relationship between males and females; legal and economical inequalities; gender solidarity; analysis of the gender differences

Ecology: different approach to the economy; different development; change in priorities; global environmental emergencies; resources.

Another occasional guest of the house, a manual worker and self-defined **anarchist**, male, 37 years old, gave the following characterization. It is interesting to notice the similarities between keywords chosen to define communism and anarchy at one end, and feminism and ecology at the other:

Communism: solidarity; equality; idealism; social justice; organization

Anarchy: freedom; solidarity; equality, social justice, eco-sustainability

Feminism: respect of women's freedom; consciousness in the couple relationship; diversity; awareness of gender oppression; power

Ecology: against the state; respect for nature and environment; energy; sobriety; self-production.

A man aged 37, who belonged to the same anarchist federation as the above interviewee, defines himself as a **libertarian**. Curiously, he attached the word 'freedom' – which is emotionally loaded – to communism and feminism, while for defining anarchy he chose more rational types of meanings:

Communism: equality; collective work; literature, Gramsci; struggle against dictatorships and for freedom

Anarchy: self-management; self-production; self-government; self-esteem; self-sufficiency

Feminism: refusing submission; more sexual freedom; equality and responsibility; gendered anti-authoritarianism; critique of the command and gender violence

Ecology: respect of living beings; vegetarianism; contact with the earth; lifestyle and example as consciousness building.

Another man, a nomadic craftsman aged 52, defined himself as

libertarian and attached the word freedom to communism, while reserving the key word 'respect' for anarchy and ecology:

Communism: freedom; equality; independence; sharing, co-operating and helping with no private property; transparent relationships in couples

Anarchy: revolution from within; giving value to people around you; respect for humans and nature; talking to people and giving information; avoiding self-exclusion i.e. staying in 'reservations'

Feminism: victories around the body and work

Ecology: respect for nature, exchange; cleaning forests and rivers; change the system; stop consumerism.

The first intellectual worker I interviewed was a Colombian mother, aged 37, a researcher who defined herself as a **feminist libertarian**. In her descriptions, she attributed freedom to communism and feminism, and used the keyword 'desire' for anarchism and feminism, and 'spiritual' for ecology, which was quite common among the interviewees:

Communism: understanding; freedom; joy; togetherness; praxis

Anarchism: playfulness; spontaneity; desire; importance of the individual; rupture

Feminism: liberation; freedom; subjectivity; the unity of intellectuality and desire; the body

Ecology: balance; non-human otherness; spiritual; metaphysical; groundedness.

A young assistant professor, aged 34, mother of two, defines herself as a **libertarian feminist post-Marxist anarchist ecologist**. She placed 'freedom' in what is usually considered to be the right spot and combined 'liberation' with feminism twice:

Communism: fight against alienation; solidarity; liberation; fight against capitalism; human emancipation

Anarchism: freedom; emancipation; critique of established authority; self-government; autonomy

Feminism: women's liberation; equality between sexes; liberation of the body; creativity; struggle

Ecology: relation with nature and environment; rediscovering our being as part of nature; respect for the others; future generations; saving the planet from ultimate disaster.

A Greek researcher, male, 39 years old, defined himself as anti-authoritarian and gave the following definitions:

Communism: romanticism; simplicity; modesty; self-sacrifice; pride

Anarchism: against money; no power; no showing off; love; ecology

Feminism: respect; understanding; non violence; love

Ecology: food; water; air; sun; rain.

A British professor, male, aged 66, chose anarcho-Marxist as a way to portray himself. In his descriptions, 'freedom' combined with anarchism, while 'equality' was the common keyword for communism, feminism and ecology:

Communism: utopia; discipline and order; orthodoxy; education; equality

Anarchism: spontaneity; freedom; self-organization; art; imagination

Feminism: gender equality; opposition to violence; sexual equality; lesbianism; anti-hierarchy

Ecology: balance; anti-industrialism; anti-globalization; environmentalism; species equality.

A young researcher, female, aged 25, defined herself as an anarchist feminist. She saw the ethics of relationships as a link between anarchism and feminism, while equality and egalitarian relationships

connect communism and anarchism. Expressive values were dominant in her account of the contribution ecology gave to her political identity:

Communism: multifaceted theory and practice; communal living; equality for women in the workplace; the work of Marx; strong economical analysis and proposal

Anarchism: freedom; responsibility; counter-normativity; philosophy of everyday life; ethics of relationship

Feminism: ethics of relationships; queer theory; specific oppression of women; provides tools for creating egalitarian relationships; useful tool for people of all genders and sexual orientation

Ecology: sustainability; love for nature; the importance of future; putting humans into context; the circle of life: death, birth, growth.

A scholar from Cyprus, a woman, aged 40, defined herself as an anarchist and gave the following characterizations. Interestingly, the concept of freedom links communism and anarchism; the concepts of imagination and 'the embodiment of theory and practice' connect anarchism and feminism. Organization describes both her idea of communism and ecology, which is mostly characterized by rational types of concept:

Communism: organization; resistance; protection of working class; imagination; discipline

Anarchism: self-government; fearlessness; freedom; embodiment of theory and practice; imagination

Feminism: freedom; way of life; protection of women; resistance; embodiment of theory and practice

Ecology: organization; future oriented action; globality; creativity; commitment.

A researcher, male, aged 30, defined himself as a critical anarchist-communist. He offered the following descriptions, also based on equality and freedom, acknowledging that feminism contributed an important aspect to his own identity:

Communism: equality; cooperation; the material basis of freedom; historical movement; care for others

Anarchism: participation; substantial freedom; non-dogmatism; necessity for action; critique of moralism

Feminism: deconstructing masculinity; questioning myself and my sexuality

Ecology: the transcendence of nature; notion of gift; respect; transience: the ephemeral, beauty.

A young intellectual worker, male, aged 24, defined himself as a **revolutionary** and gave the following definitions, where the rational aspect is attributed to ecology. For the previous interviewee, it was described in opposite terms:

Communism: common property of means of production; revolution; conflict; class struggle; organization

Anarchism: self-management; emancipation; struggle; freedom; education

Feminism: sex equality; sexual freedom; gender consciousness; deconstruction of dominating relations; emancipation

Ecology: respect for the world; rational relation to environment; respect for nature; green technology; questioning productivity.

A COMMENTARY

The richness of the data offers the reader some evidence for an ideological miscellaneousness which calls for some remarks. Regardless of how the interviewees represented themselves, their statements appear to resemble each other. In other words, it does not matter that much if the self-definition is primarily as anarchist or communist, feminist or ecologist – which at times is difficult to assess, given a wide range of original self-definitions. Since they were asked to focus on the positive aspect of each line of thought, they tended to offer similar visions and display a feeling of satisfaction afterward.

Beyond the positive methodological edge – which was a native

suggestion – communism seems to have lost much of the authoritarian features of the past. While anarchism finds its proverbial individualism downplayed, it still keeps an uncontaminated aura of creative chaos. Being a radical feminist, I was expecting to find clear signs of how feminism has been changing the two main ideologies in a prevalent way. Instead, what I found is a high degree of contamination in all directions. Concepts that are commonly attributed to feminism and ecology seem to have influenced the representation of each interviewee's personal history and experience (among those with both communist and anarchist backgrounds). Feminist and ecological perspectives appear to have inspired and stimulated in a similarly powerful way both manual workers and intellectual workers, males and females.

The research data is prone to be submitted to further analysis. A slight difference seems to emerge between feminism and anarchism, showing inward types of concepts, while communism and ecology were mostly associated with outward-type concepts. They seem to be located on a continuum, between poles of subjective and objective, in a non-dichotomous way.

A comment on similarities in the personal dictionaries used by the interviewees: most definitions could be easily swapped with each other, since the political identity of the signifying subject is not at all indicative of the attributed meanings. Moreover, if we look at the words chosen by the interviewees, there is a recurrence of terms usually considered to be non-political: love, beauty, desire, body, sex(uality); and other terms which are also found in different political areas, such as solidarity, respect, equality, here combined with a revolutionary vocabulary, as in the case of self-determination, autonomy, liberation, direct action. In reality, words seem to not belong to specific political arenas, and tend to be exchanged and appropriated in different expressions and meanings by the subjects, even changing their sign. For example, features like 'idealism' are given an unquestioned positive sense. In the connotation of the signifiers, the main difference I found between manual workers and intellectual workers seemed to be more conformity of the latter to the standard ideological boundaries, in face of more 'poetic' and unconventional types of description in the first group.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the interviewees seemed to offer what I would call 'post-ideological' representations. There is no evidence of correlation

between the types of self-definition and the ways in which conceptual terms are allocated in reconstructing what each interviewee has been taking from each set of ideas in order to define a personal political identity and agency.

The research results seem to confirm that activists involved in global justice mobilization tend to have multiple identities. As new social movements theorists Della Porta and Diani wrote, the phenomenon has been often left uninvestigated: 'little attention has been given to the systems of relationships in which actors are involved, and this has prevented the multiplicity of identities and allegiances among militants and movement groups from being recognized' (2006, p. 98). Also within the same group or association, 'collective identification is rarely expressed through integrated homogenous identities'. This can be explained, because identity is a fluid matter, 'a social process, not a static property'. In other terms, the identities of people who actively engage in social movements today do not have a hierarchical structure; they can be defined as multiple identities (Calhoun, 1994) or polycentric identities: 'identifying with a movement does not necessarily mean sharing a systematic and coherent vision of the world; nor does it prevent similar feelings from being directed to other groups and movements as well'. Therefore group identities 'can be seen as a meeting point of histories, personal needs and heterogeneous representations' (Della Porta and Diani, 2006, p. 99), which clearly emerges from the research results. One of the reasons for the permanence and appeal of new social movements, despite differences and contradictions, may be the fact that 'global justice activists have so far displayed a great tolerance toward each other's combination of identities' (Della Porta and Diani, 2006, p. 100) – a positive output, a sign of complexity awareness, may be an encouraging feature of the post-modern condition (Harvey, 1990).

The interviewees' statements made me think about Alberto Melucci's early works on new social movements (e.g. Melucci, Keane and Mier, 1989), where he discovered that a small group can experience multiple orientations within itself, being like a reflection, a microcosmos, of the movement as a whole. In my research, located in the political crossroads of communism, feminism, anarchism and ecology, in questioning how different concepts inform similar political identities (and how similar concepts affect different political identities) several issues remained unaddressed. An important one about blurring boundaries between communism, feminism, anarchism and ecology has a strategic value: what are the minimum

common denominators in the collective political representations of communism, anarchism, feminism and ecology?

I found an unexpected correspondence between the representations of communism and anarchism – maybe the sign of a reciprocal influence which is, in the world of politics, unrevealed to some extent: anarchists who feel the need for Marxist economic analysis, and communists who are aware of the need to respect individual freedom, who deeply question the authoritarian drifts. All interviewees seem to be in different ways impacted by feminism and ecology in terms of self-reflection as wo/men and as human beings, as a part of the natural/social environment. Maybe boundaries have been broken and bridges have been built while we were still looking at ideological divisions. Perhaps we should look more at new realities in a non-dichotomous way – far from dusty books, with fresh eyes, and with a strong will for learning from the realm of social praxis.

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PART III

GEOGRAPHIES OF ANARCHY