

ON THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE

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After having spent ten consecutive years in State prison, I am firmly convinced that any improvement of our material conditions is impossible of our own initiative and would have to come from without. And this is not the opinion of a man, easily given to pessimism or despair, but of one to whom truth is dearer than optimism, of one who reluctantly accepts the results of a decade worth of trial and error - or of your people, of scientific experimentation. I prisoners determined to improve prisoners living conditions here, like two genera, the first of these are the clouds who spend their entire bed in the law library. I'm convinced they are on the verge of betting their case overturned, as they have been for the last 25 years. These, I believe are the creators of the two evils, because on one hand they rant and rave about the evils and injustices of the system and on the other they believe these wrongs will magically right themselves if they are able to file the correct motion, and so they involve themselves in a bizarre performatory contradiction. For what I've shown elsewhere is true, that the system is irrational, ^{no} amount of reason i.e. no amount of sound arguments or cogent motions will make any difference. In the next place are the state approved prison leadership who think themselves anything but. I call them state approved because as I've shown elsewhere the equation more aggressive = more effective, without any nuance or qualification is one the state teaches to believe itself. In fact everything the reactionary convict vanguard taunts as the epitome of convicthood is on the contrary, beneficial to the state and detrimental to the oppressed. Where did we get the idea that the road ought to be separate if not from a unified oppressor who fears the unity of the oppressed? And where did we get the idea that someone once in P.C. should never be allowed back in population if not from a society determined to punish and not rehabilitate. It's the newer and younger convicts who are made to take the blame for the failures

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Of this reactionary vanguard. "It's this new generation, they don't want to fight for anything" - That's one idiotic claim you'll quickly tire of hearing or "Back in the 70's that C.O. would have got killed" - That's another one. And nobody ever stops to think that the circumstances, the conditions of battle, if you will, we're completely different back then - at least in Massachusetts. There were no cameras to prove who did what, no long term isolation blocks for the C.O.'s to torture inmates they don't take with impunity for decades on end etc... etc... In the past 50 years the State has adjusted its strategy numerous times to its benefit while we on the other hand remain chained to the ideal of a pitifully correct Golden Age that supposedly occurred in the late 60's, early 70's. Our solution to everything is fight more more teams, beat up more cops, "never mind it's done us no good the last 30 times" - "we need to fight more" - That's our problem! It's no hyperbole to say I've been involved in at least, at least, 100 Group Demonstrations, EVERY SINGLE ONE OF WHICH HAS FAILED, and many of which have made our lives measurably worse, and I'm the only one who seems to notice. "We didn't get enough people" or "it wasn't violent enough" - it's always our fault but never these reactionary old timers and their antiquated strategies. I'm reminded of something Marcus Garvey said that I thought was spurious at the time I read it. He said that white people will often try to involve non-white in their Group protests in order to make the latter look bad and themselves look good. ~~And~~ And while I don't at all agree with this in principle, I now believe I'm familiar with the phenomenon he was offering, however badly he framed it. I say this because it's strange how all of the saddest these racist white boys who won't even sell you a wellbaton believe in "Unity" when it's time for one of these foolish Group protests. Then when it fails and we're all worse off for it - there's this weird respect or renewed rapport between the C.O.'s and the white inmates that doesn't obtain for any of the rest of us who are still being treated like shit, sometimes even more so.

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If you didn't know better you'd think
the whole thing - whatever you were told
you were fighting for was a facade for
these genetic white dudes & the reactionary convict
vanguard to flex their muscle. As if to say to the
prison "Hey, you guys can't talk down to us, what
do you think we are Black guys or something?"
And finally since One Man Experience is merely
~~an~~ anecdotal don't merely take my word for it
but look to history. Look at every prison uprising
in American history and show me one, even one,
that did not result in worse repression than
whatever had existed hitherto when the cops
took ~~the~~ the prison back. Look at Attica, the Beall
and End-All & Prison Riots which gained us nothing
beyond a job & a grievance system and etc. I'm not
mistaken at all on Lockdown or some type of
repression 50 years later!

So much for prison reform without significant
outside assistance. And while we're wasting all that
time trying, like Fontalus for a fruit we should know
all out & owe reach, what opportunities for true happiness
and improvement we ignore. I'm reminded of a 3 stage
episode where he breaks out of his cell to obtain a rock saw
and then proceeds to lock himself back in and saw away
at the bars! ~~Everyone~~ Everyone who considers material things

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To be ~~like~~ Goals does the same thing even on the street working to make money to spend on luxuries and necessities which regenerate them hopefully enough to work again so that means and ends are confounded in an endless cycle, like Sisyphus. But in the case of Fontanus the fatality of material pursuits are even more obvious since there are self temporary gratifications to confound us in a circle - and that's the case with us here in prison. But let me make it abundantly clear what I do not mean by this. I am no more a proponent of the opposite extreme - Stoicism which dispenses with material goods altogether than I am of the Epicureanism which makes these some goods ends. I do not hold to the view that it is "not things themselves but what we think about them, that harms or pleases us" or any some such subjectivist nonsense. I know well that the ruling class would content us to believe there is no ~~distinction~~ objective distinction between this prison and ~~the~~ the real world. If only my mind would allow it ^{is} No, I am far from lending that view any credence. For everyone who has embraced that view has failed by it. For if I make myself indifferent to sex and drugs, I become all the more partial to eating, or if I succeed in being indifferent to food I become all the more partial to the company of my friends or the touch of my sheets against my skin, or the morning sunlight on my face - and then God forbid with all of my eggs in one basket the sun should be obscured by clouds one morning and I am forced to endure years worth of anguish all in a single moment! Such stories are told of all men who claimed to be indifferent to passion. Even Buddha we are told was thrown into psychological

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Turmoil upon hearing His Homeland had been invaded. I think the Hindus express this principle allegorically when they say a Bod Being Reincarnated as a man or worse feels more pain in that moment than any man or beast does in its whole ~~life~~ lifetime. You might say, la Sun, that both the Epicurean and the Stoic make the same error by placing a primacy or importance on material things that they do not deserve - the former by the constant pursuit thereof, the latter by insisting the measure of a man be how well he overcomes them. What we are in need of, then, are an entirely new genera of gods to pursue and measure ourselves by - a way of thinking in which the material is so trivial it ~~is not to say~~ cares little whether we are completely addicted or completely oblivious to the world. Or stated more precisely, one that would prefer both goods if possible, but since it is not, strives for the deeper more satisfying of the two - since this would be the end ~~of the matter~~ whereas the others are means. I've often said that just because I believe revolutionary socialism to be the most important political doctrine, it does not follow from that that I believe political doctrine to be particularly important - to put it another way. I hope in this way not to be ~~found~~ counted among the idiots dying to die for a cause - for indeed the graveyard is full of young men who died for this or that cause they thought history

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would remember them for ~~their~~ but as it turns out
 there is only one cause worth our love, which is why we remember
 Christ, Socrates, and Thomas Moore who by virtue of what they did
 for more than the fact they died are the exception to the rule
 and are in fact remembered by posterity. It is this Supreme Cause
 which I before identified also as our Supreme Good. Now the best
 of anything is bound up with its essence or definition - a watch for example
 is jewelry that tells time - ~~and is not a mere ornament or a mere~~
~~purpose that has for its end simply telling the time, but~~
~~rational thought - a mental, not a physical activity~~ and so
 a good watch is one that keeps accurate time. Likewise
 man is an animal that abstracts Universal, Rational Thought.
 It follows from this that man's Supreme Good is a Mental and
 not a Physical Activity. A Rational Man is a Good One, His Truth
 and the Truths Derived From His Thought are the ones worth dying
 for should the situation arise whereas many of my neighbors I
 say with no admixture of embellishment or hyperbole would gladly
 die to see Chicken Patsy eliminated from the menu and think
 themselves quite noble for it - but again I digress. Now what I mean
 by ~~mental~~ Mental or Rational Activity is I suspect greatly divergent from
 what most have in mind so I absolutely insist on my contemplative
 alternate, outlined in the next few pages to be included as a necessary supplement
 to this essay. The particular ideas represented by the Big Notes are represented by
 the little ones mentioned in ~~my~~ my imagination - for what else is it but
 the Universal contained in the Particular? And so first I represent Every Level
 of Reality from the Most to the Least August so that at the end I have
 firmly in my mind a picture of all general pictures of all that is humanly

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Knowledge in Reality - More a Knowing That you Know
Then Knowing Itself - Something General, That is To Say
Transcending Universal and Particular. Then Finally, I
Work my Way Back Up From Bottom to Top Considering
The Infinite Number of Things in Each Level of True no
Knowledge of, and These are Represented To My Imagination as
Forms of Nature - They Culminate in a Great Form. And
When at Last I can Clearly See in my Mind's Eye the Distance
Between Myself and Infinity, The ~~Part~~ ^{Part} of My Soul is at
One With the Most Profound Object the Soul can Know, or To
Put it another way, the Dearest Part of Myself is Satisfied
Most Deeply, For Knowing not All can be Known is akin to
Knowing All. This Method I developed in the Platonic
Contemplative Tradition, in the Tradition of Ancient Christianity,
in the Consummation of all my life Experience of Poverty. I
Made it the Subject of This Essay ~~because~~ not because it
is a Strategy I developed to get me by, to help me forget
prison. No, on the contrary, if some Genii were to
Give me a Choice Between Never Having Been in Prison
With the caveat I should never have developed this
Contemplative Method and Staying Put, I would Choose the
latter ~~without~~ Without Hesitation - Since
Holt, as I said, the Greatest Human Good and Good of All other
Goods. This is in stark Contrast to the Stoic/Buddhist/Middle
Anonymous Style of so-called Rehabilitation, ~~which~~ which is
Nothing other than State-Sponsored Subjectivism and delusion,
The author of ~~the~~ un-fold miseries given on an

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~~of~~ & Respectability by Parole, ~~and~~ Probation, Courts and Prison Mental Health Services. The Contemplative Strategy that follows, while seeming unintelligible to most but the author gives the reader an idea of the immense number of particular thoughts that can be held simultaneously in the True Meditation, which unlike ~~its~~ its Buddhist analog that sees Empty Minded Ignorance for Bliss, thinks the whole world, the whole entire world, in one glorious thought. In the splendour of that vision, the hardships of prison life ~~are~~ ~~are~~ become mere petty trifles.