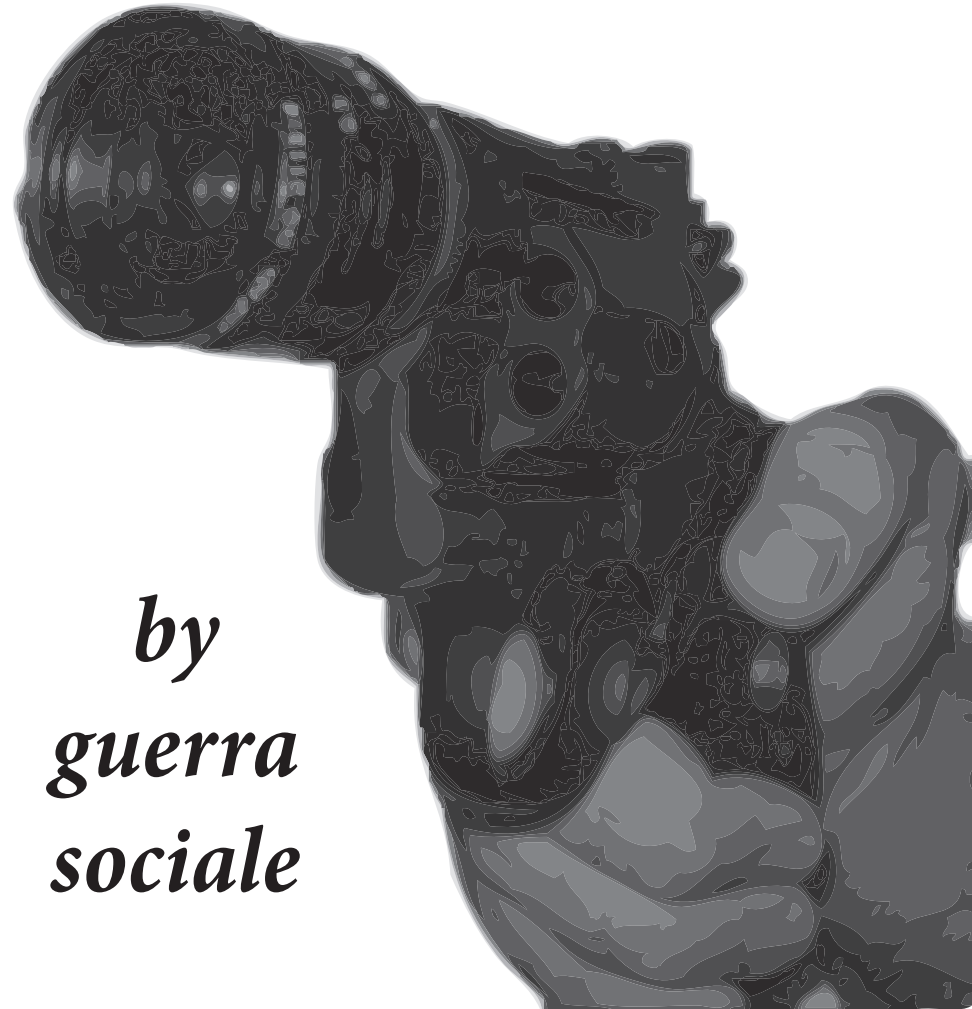


The Reasons for a Hostility

about the mass media

*The Media Aims,
The Police Fire*

*by
guerra
sociale*



Our hostility toward journalists – their words, their images – needs some more clarification. As we explain in the following notes, the point is not the greater or lesser honesty of the individual journalist or photographer, but rather the role of the media apparatus itself. That mass media has the pretension of being the total representation of reality is made obvious by this simple fact: for it, anyone who refuses to speak with journalists, “doesn’t want to communicate with anyone”. As if it was impossible to communicate in a direct manner, without the filter of the press and television. It is the same attitude that the political authorities have: anyone who refuses any relationship with them, so they tell us, refuses dialogue with everyone. And yet, despite the great steps forward in social domestication, the world is not just populated by authorities, cops and journalists. In fact, it is actually beyond and against their power that real dialogue begins.

The mass media is an integral part of the ruling order. As such, it forces participation, excludes, recuperates and represses at the same time.

It forces participation. Everyone must believe that the only reality that exists is that which the newspapers and television shape daily, the reality of the state and the economy. The media is the indispensable tool in the determination of consensus. It is the modern version of the myth, i.e., of the representation that unites the exploited with the exploiters. The media socializes the populace.

It excludes. Thoughts and actions hostile to this society must not appear. They must be silenced, falsified or rendered incomprehensible. Silencing when their very existence is an attack against the constituted order. Falsifying when that which cannot be silenced has to be opportunely reconstructed. Rendering incomprehensible when the media is forced to concede some partial truth to revolt, so that its total meaning goes unnoticed. The media takes every means of autonomous expression away from the powerless. The one-sided nature of information is the opposite of communication between individuals.

It recuperates. It invites us to dialogue with the institutions, it creates spokespeople and leaders, it integrates all subversive ideas and practices once it renders them harmless, separating them from their context, making us consume them without living them, suffocating them with the boredom of the already well-known.

It represses. It collaborates with the police in denouncing and slandering, it prepares the terrain for the with opportune alarmism, it publicly justifies their operations. Sometimes it represses by admitting an action is right – someone called this “laudatory repression” – i.e., by presenting that which is not subversive as being so, that which is just around the corner as distant, that which has just now started as finished. More often all one gets from the mass media is the work of falsification and repression, i.e., the more openly slanderous and criminalizing aspect. But rage against journalistic lies is short-lived since it can be undermined in less conflictual periods by series of sufficiently honest articles. The problem is not the honesty of the individual journalist or the accuracy of the articles, but rather the social activity of the mass media. In the media machine, intellectual qualities and ethical norms are swept away by the mass of information, by the “totalitarianism of the fragment” that is the true face of the news. Critical intelligence is formed through association, analogy, memory. News, on the contrary, is the product of separation, of details, of the eternal present. Media passivity is only the reflection of the passivity of work and of the market. As is well-known, the life that gets away from us comes back to us in the form of the image. The more one is informed, the less one knows, i.e., the less one lives.

Today no one can do politics without selling her image. Anyone who does not want to break with politics in all its forms does not want to break with media representation. He might insult journalists for several weeks, in the impossibility of doing anything else; then she will return to dialogue.

The media is necessary for mediating with power. It is itself, and recent events confirm this, what urges dialogue in order to, thus, foster the repression of those who don’t dialogue with their enemies.

In the chatter of consensus, the police file starts against anyone who remains silent. Because to break off with the press and television, with the images and labels that they place on our backs, means breaking off with politics.

But the conclusion cannot be that of the autism of the ghetto, but rather that of a rebellion that gives itself its own tools of autonomous communication.