

Unmasked musings

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Speech is in no way a sufficient building of bridges between ideals and reality: actions are in order, especially when they are out of order, with or without a mask.

Finding yourself in a risk-filled situation, where beatings and arrest are a possibility, is calling for personal protection, and, among other measures taken, this can be realised by the use of masking up, thereby possibly minimising adversity. This does not necessarily mean that the mask will protect you from direct harm (discussions concerning the effect of masking up in the presence of chemical weaponry such as tear gas flourish). Nevertheless, it can still do much good for your well-being. The mask can function as a cloak of calmness when shit hits the fan, and counterproductive feelings and behaviours come knocking. In this way, the mask is acting the role of support in a situation of rupture, when the chaos that operates around you may affect you negatively – even if you are deliberately reproducing and improving this chaos. Perhaps this sounds trivial, but with a tool like masking up, you can develop your response toward any kind of oppression. It can assist you in teaching yourself to think and act clearly and rationally in anxiety-provoking situations, thereby upholding your attentiveness. However, the fear within you is not to disappear entirely, because it keeps you on edge; keeps you detail oriented; keeps you in the now. Furthermore, fearlessness can be harmful to you and, to other people as well, depending on your choice to enter any kind of agreed-upon alliance of resistance. Needless to say, a loose cannon is only useful in its entirety when it is pointed against our enemies, and not ourselves. Conversely, at the other end of the spectrum, this fear must not overcome you either, endangering yourself and others.

The calmness mentioned above may be connected with the minimising risk of identification, which in itself works in your favour. However, masking up does not mean that you cannot be identified with certainty, and even if that was actually possible to achieve, certainty can easily become a pipe dream in the hands of the authorities. It is important to be aware of the fact that more often than not, they do not need to make a positive ID to oppress you in any way they see fit. If they feel you are who they are looking for; if they believe you to be their hunted perpetrator – then masked or not, they will come for you with everything they have. Their limitations long gone, and hypocrisy proportionally revealed. We need to be ready for this.

Resist the enchantments

When Søren Pape Poulsen, the current minister of justice of the Danish state, is calling for a self-induced unmasking of anti-authoritarian rebels with the reasoning behind it that by doing this, people stand up for their own actions, it is nothing more than a ridiculous excuse for bringing down oppression on these destructive, threatening and uncontrolled individuals. Someone like Pape Poulsen does not give two scoops of shit whether or not people stand behind their actions. He is a politician; his profession results in a *de facto* immunity. He gets off either by obeying the law as a vulgar testament to his own creation, or by disobeying it, because he knows it is possible for him to do so with impunity. Clearly, people should stand behind their own actions, but that has nothing to do with unmasking yourself in an act of liberating destruction against any kind of authority, or against any other kind of other unjust limitation. Fighting off imprisonment and beatings, avoiding compromises and reformism, and not confusing natural born rights with statist privileges, is forever present, and it demands our individual and collective embrace.

Freedom and destruction unmasked

Masking up will not determine the everlasting need for rebellion in an authoritarian world, and not in a million years does it hide the needs and desires for life affirming fulfilment and freedom. It will never pose a deviating factor in our actions of confrontation against true adversaries such as cops, elected officials or C.E.O.'s, and, every accessory of human treason they can bring upon us, be it a cage, a domesticized animal or a cease-and-desist letter, will not go unanswered. Masking up is a choice you make, and not a precondition for any kind of insurrection. Thus, I will indulge myself with the following sentiment: The beauty of a naked face consisting of cutting gazes, shadowy

human features and facial expressions of hope and justice, all of which are coloured in blazing flames only a stone-throw away, is something to admire and encourage – even if it is not to become a personal realisation of your own. ♦

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