

Radical Aristocratism



New Chinese Buzzword ‘Let It Rot’ Takes ‘Lying Flat’ to New Heights

The ‘lying flat’ generation has decided to stop caring altogether and to simply ‘let it rot’

May 19, 2022

Beatrice Tamagno

Even with countless errands on your to-do list, do you find yourself taking excessive breaks, scrolling through social media, or binging one Netflix series after another? If yes, congratulations: You’ve joined the ranks of Chinese youth who are ‘lying flat,’ (*tang ping*) or at least claim to do so.

In this involuted era triggered by China’s intense ‘996’ work culture, new slang terms are being coined to capture young people’s sense of doom and despondency.

The latest to join the Chinese lexicon is ‘let it rot’ (*bailan* 摆烂).

‘Let it rot’ means to let things that are already beyond repair deteriorate. Some suspect that the word originated from NBA fan circles and was used to describe teams that intentionally tank games or lose on purpose to secure a competitive advantage in the next round.

The phrase was picked up by Chinese gaming communities after reportedly being popularized by ‘Big Eggplant’ (大茄子), a livestreamer known for using colorful language.



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2021 was the year of tangping 躺平.

One by one, Chinese youths began to opt out of a system where additional effort no longer tracked additional rewards. In fact, the system was so overheated, rewards often decreased with added effort.

They called it "involution" 内卷. 2/7



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2022 is the year when Chinese chose to bailan.

Bailan means to actively embrace a bad situation (i.e. let it deteriorate further) rather than to try and flip it into a good one.

A similar Chinese idiom is 破罐破摔 referring to dropping a pot that's already cracked. 3/7

6:56 AM · May 12, 2022





'Let it be,' reads the sticker

Not long after, memes related to ‘Let it rot’ began circulating the internet and became embraced by the masses.

Bubbly 27-year-old Shanghai resident Erica Liu works in education and described herself as someone who isn’t easily self-defeated. In recent times, however, she has identified more and more with the ‘let it rot’ mentality and frequently uses the expression when chatting with her friends.

“When my company set impossible goals for me to meet, I just felt like the only thing I could do was to bailan,” Liu tells RADII.

Liu explained that the term ‘let it rot’ is similar to ‘lying flat’ but conveys a new degree of cynicism.

“‘Lying flat’ equates to spending little effort and adopting a laid-back attitude, whereas ‘let it rot’ means not caring whatsoever, seeing as there is nothing to be done.”

Other netizens on Weibo have shared similar sentiments with comments such as, “Lately, I really want to bailan. There’s just too much going on in my life.”

Unsurprisingly, many of said commenters are caught in Shanghai’s drawn-out lockdown or other cities in China that are experiencing movement restrictions. The buzzword describes how they have gone into ‘goblin mode’ and are enjoying it.

Whether the ‘let it rot’ mentality represents the final stages of cynicism among Chinese youth remains to be seen.

Article retrieved from <https://radii.co/article/let-it-rot>

Let us be lazy in everything, except in loving and drinking, except in being lazy. — *Lessing*



A WeChat sticker of two avatars performing bailan together

Intro to No Hope, No Future, Let the Adventures Begin! By Flower Bomb

The sun, moon and the stars do not wait; they bomb the sky with their presence. A tsunami does not hesitate; it announces a death rattle of destruction before dissipating. So *why* should I wait? And *who* am I waiting for? And who are *they* waiting for? The Future is a god obeyed at the expense of one's immediate desires in order to secure distant membership in a nonexistent utopia.

The Future is a hologram projection of dreams and promises that get rejected by the present. For politicians and other authoritarians seeking long-term domination, The Future is often socially utilized to exploit one's fear of living in the moment. The Future domesticates wild desire, limiting its capacity to explore spontaneous, unpredictable experiences.

Today is here, right now like a blank canvas inviting my imaginative, destructive creativity. Do I dare to dream bigger than the prison world of material wealth, fashion trends and workerism? Should I indulge in savage hedonism against the monolith of collectivized misery? Yes! Against the gospel of The Future, my anarchy is a riotous celebration of *now!*

**Excerpt from TAZ: The Temporary Autonomous Zone,
Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism**

by Hakim Bey

Black Crown & Black Rose: Anarcho-Monarchism & Anarcho-Mysticism

In sleep we dream of only two forms of government — anarchy & monarchy. Primordial root consciousness understands no politics & never plays fair. A democratic dream? a socialist dream? Impossible.

Whether my REMs bring verdical near-prophetic visions or mere Viennese wish-fulfillment, only kings & wild people populate my night. Monads & nomads.

Pallid day (when nothing shines by its own light) slinks & insinuates & suggests that we compromise with a sad & lackluster reality. But in dream we are never ruled except by love or sorcery, which are the skills of chaotes & sultans.

Among a people who cannot create or play, but can only *work*, artists also know no choice but anarchy & monarchy. Like the dreamer, they must possess & *do* possess their own perceptions, & for this they must sacrifice the merely social to a “tyrannical Muse.” Art dies when treated “fairly.” It must enjoy a caveman’s wildness or else have its mouth filled with gold by some prince. Bureaucrats & sales personnel poison it, professors chew it up, & philosophers spit it out. Art is a kind of byzantine barbarity fit only for nobles & heathens. If you had known the sweetness of life as a poet in the reign of some venal, corrupt, decadent, ineffective & ridiculous Pasha or Emir, some Qajar shah, some King Farouk, some Queen of Persia, you would know that this is what every anarchist must want. How they loved poems & paintings, those dead luxurious fools, how they absorbed all roses & cool breezes, tulips & lutes! Hate their cruelty & caprice, yes — but at least they were human. The bureaucrats, however, who smear the walls of the mind with odorless filth — so kind, so *gemutlich* — who pollute the inner air with numbness — they’re not even worthy of hate. They scarcely exist outside the bloodless Ideas they serve.

And besides: the dreamer, the artist, the anarchist — do they not share some tinge of cruel caprice with the most outrageous of moghuls? Can genuine life occur without some folly, some excess, some bouts of Heraclitan “strife”? We do not rule — but we cannot & will not *be ruled*.

In Russia the Narodnik-Anarchists would sometimes forge a *ukase* or manifesto in the name of the Czar; in it the Autocrat would complain that greedy lords & unfeeling officials had sealed him in his palace & cut him off from his beloved people. He would proclaim the end of serfdom & call on peasants & workers to rise in His Name against the government.

Several times this ploy actually succeeded in sparking revolts. Why? Because the single absolute ruler acts metaphorically as a mirror for the unique and utter absoluteness of the self. Each peasant looked into this glassy legend & beheld his or her own freedom — an illusion, but one that borrowed its magic from the logic of the dream.

A similar myth must have inspired the 17th century Ranters & Antinomians & Fifth Monarchy Men who flocked to the Jacobite standard with its erudite cabals & bloodproud conspiracies. The radical mystics were betrayed first by Cromwell & then by the Restoration — why not, finally, join with flippant cavaliers & foppish counts, with Rosicrucians & Scottish Rite Masons, to place an occult messiah on Albion's throne?

Among a people who cannot conceive human society without a monarch, the desires of radicals may be expressed in monarchical terms. Among a people who cannot conceive human existence without a religion, radical desires may speak the language of heresy.

Taoism rejected the whole of Confucian bureaucracy but retained the image of the Emperor-Sage, who would sit silent on his throne facing a propitious direction, doing absolutely nothing. In Islam the Ismailis took the idea of the Imam of the Prophet's Household & metamorphosed it into the Imam-of-one's-own-being, the perfected self who is beyond all Law & rule, who is atoned with the One. And this doctrine led them into revolt against Islam, to terror &

assassination in the name of pure esoteric self-liberation & total realization.

Classical 19th century anarchism defined itself in the struggle against crown & church, & therefore on the waking level it considered itself egalitarian & atheist. This rhetoric however obscures what really happens: the “king” becomes the “anarchist,” the “priest” a “heretic.” In this strange duet of mutability the politician, the democrat, the socialist, the rational ideologue can find no place; they are deaf to the music & lack all sense of rhythm. Terrorist & monarch are *archetypes*; these others are mere functionaries.

Once anarch & king clutched each other's throats & waltzed a totentanz — a splendid battle. Now, however, both are relegated to history's trashbin — has-beens, curiosities of a leisurely & more cultivated past. They whirl around so fast that they seem to meld together...can they somehow have become one thing, a Siamese twin, a Janus, a freakish unity? “The sleep of Reason...” ah! most desirable & desirous monsters!

Ontological Anarchy proclaims flatly, bluntly, & almost brainlessly: yes, the two are now one. As a single entity the anarch/king now is reborn; each of us the ruler of our own flesh, our own creations — and as much of everything else as we can grab & hold.

Our actions are justified by fiat & our relations are shaped by treaties with other autarchs. We make the law for our own domains — & the chains of the law have been broken. At present perhaps we survive as mere Pretenders — but even so we may seize a few instants, a few square feet of reality over which to impose our absolute will, *our royaume. L'état, c'est moi.*

If we are bound by any ethic or morality it must be one which we ourselves have imagined, fabulously more exalted & more liberating

than the “moralic acid” of puritans & humanists. “Ye are as gods” — “Thou art That.”

The words *monarchism* & *mysticism* are used here in part simply *pour epater* those egalito-atheist anarchists who react with pious horror to any mention of pomp or superstition-mongering. No champagne revolutions for *them*!

Our brand of anti-authoritarianism, however, thrives on baroque paradox; it favors states of consciousness, emotion & aesthetics over all petrified ideologies & dogma; it embraces multitudes & relishes contradictions. Ontological Anarchy is a hobgoblin for BIG minds. The translation of the title (& key term) of Max Stirner’s magnum opus as *The Ego & Its Own* has led to a subtle misinterpretation of “individualism.” The English-Latin word *ego* comes freighted & weighed with freudian & protestant baggage. A careful reading of Stirner suggests that *The Unique & His Own-ness* would better reflect his intentions, given that he never defines the *ego in opposition to libido or id, or in opposition to “soul” or “spirit.”* The Unique (*der Einzige*) might best be construed simply as the individual self.

Stirner commits no metaphysics, yet bestows on the Unique a certain absoluteness. In what way then does this *Einzige* differ from the Self of Advaita Vedanta? *Tat tvam asi*: Thou (individual Self) art That (absolute Self).

Many believe that mysticism “dissolves the ego.” Rubbish. Only death does that (or such at least is our Sadducean assumption). Nor does mysticism destroy the “carnal” or “animal” self — which would also amount to suicide. What mysticism really tries to surmount is false consciousness, illusion, Consensus Reality, & all the failures of self that accompany these ills. True mysticism creates a “self at peace,” a self with power. The highest task of metaphysics (accomplished for example by Ibn Arabi, Boehme, Ramana Maharshi) is in a sense to

self-destruct, to identify metaphysical & physical, transcendent & immanent, as ONE. Certain *radical monists* have pushed this doctrine far beyond mere pantheism or religious mysticism. An apprehension of the immanent oneness of being inspires certain antinomian heresies (the Ranters, the Assassins) whom we consider our ancestors.

Stirner himself seems deaf to the possible spiritual resonances of Individualism — & in this he belongs to the 19th century: born long after the deliquescence of Christendom, but long before the discovery of the Orient & of the hidden illuminist tradition in Western alchemy, revolutionary heresy & occult activism. Stirner quite correctly despised what he knew as “mysticism,” a mere pietistic sentimentality based on self-abnegation & world hatred. Nietzsche nailed down the lid on “God” a few years later. Since then, who has dared to suggest that Individualism & mysticism might be reconciled & synthesized?

The missing ingredient in Stirner (Nietzsche comes closer) is a working concept of *nonordinary consciousness*. The realization of the unique self (or *ubermensch*) must reverberate & expand like waves or spirals or music to embrace direct experience or intuitive perception of the uniqueness of reality itself. This realization engulfs & erases all duality, dichotomy, & dialectic. It carries with itself, like an electric charge, an intense & wordless sense of *value*: it “divinizes” the self.

Being/consciousness/bliss (*satchitananda*) cannot be dismissed as merely another Stirnerian “spook” or “wheel in the head.” It invokes no exclusively transcendent principle for which the *Einzig*e must sacrifice his/her own-ness. It simply states that intense awareness of existence itself results in “bliss” — or in less loaded language, “valuative consciousness.” The goal of the Unique after all is to *possess everything*; the radical monist attains this by identifying self with perception, like the Chinese inkbrush painter who “becomes the bamboo,” so that “it paints itself.”

Despite mysterious hints Stirner drops about a “union of Unique-ones” & despite Nietzsche’s eternal “Yea” & exaltation of life, their Individualism seems somehow shaped by a certain *coldness toward the other*. In part they cultivated a bracing, cleansing chilliness against the warm suffocation of 19th century sentimentality & altruism; in part they simply despised what someone (Mencken?) called “Homo Boobensis.”

And yet, reading behind & beneath the layer of ice, we uncover traces of a fiery doctrine — what Gaston Bachelard might have called “a Poetics of the Other.” The *Einzige*’s relation with the Other cannot be defined or limited by any institution or idea. And yet clearly, however paradoxically, the Unique depends for completeness on the Other, & cannot & will not be realized in any bitter isolation.

The examples of “wolf children” or *enfants sauvages* suggest that a human infant deprived of human company for too long will never attain conscious humanity — will never acquire language. The Wild Child perhaps provides a poetic metaphor for the Unique-one — and yet simultaneously marks the precise point where Unique & Other must meet, coalesce, unify — or else fail to attain & possess all of which they are capable.

The Other mirrors the Self — the Other is our *witness*. The Other completes the Self — the Other gives us the key to the perception of oneness-of-being. When we speak of being & consciousness, we point to the Self; when we speak of bliss we implicate the Other.

The acquisition of language falls under the sign of Eros — all communication is essentially erotic, all relations are erotic. Avicenna & Dante claimed that love moves the very stars & planets in their courses — the *Rg Veda* & Hesiod’s *Theogony* both proclaim Love the first god born after Chaos. Affections, affinities, aesthetic perceptions, beautiful creations, conviviality — all the most precious possessions of

the Unique-one arise from the conjunction of Self & Other in the constellation of Desire.

Here again the project begun by Individualism can be evolved & revived by a graft with mysticism — specifically with tantra. As an esoteric *technique* divorced from orthodox Hinduism, tantra provides a symbolic framework (“Net of Jewels”) for the identification of sexual pleasure & non-ordinary consciousness. All antinomian sects have contained some “tantrik” aspect, from the families of Love & Free Brethren & Adamites of Europe to the pederast sufis of Persia to the Taoist alchemists of China. Even classical anarchism has enjoyed its tantrik moments: Fourier’s Phalansteries; the “Mystical Anarchism” of G. Ivanov & other fin-de-siècle Russian symbolists; the incestuous erotism of Arzibashaev’s *Sanine*; the weird combination of Nihilism & Kali-worship which inspired the Bengali Terrorist Party (to which my tantrik guru Sri Kamanaransan Biswas had the honor of belonging)...

We, however, propose a much deeper syncretism of anarchy & tantra than any of these. In fact, we simply suggest that Individual Anarchism & Radical Monism are to be considered henceforth one and the same movement.

This hybrid has been called “spiritual materialism,” a term which burns up all metaphysics in the fire of oneness of spirit & matter. We also like “Ontological Anarchy” because it suggests that being itself remains in a state of “divine Chaos,” of all-potentiality, of continual creation.

In this flux only the *jiva mukti*, or “liberated individual,” is self-realized, and thus monarch or owner of his perceptions and relations. In this ceaseless flow only desire offers any principle of order, and thus the only possible society (as Fourier understood) is that of lovers.

Anarchism is dead, long live anarchy! We no longer need the baggage of revolutionary masochism or idealist self-sacrifice — or the frigidity

of Individualism with its disdain for conviviality, of *living together* — or the vulgar superstitions of 19th century atheism, scientism, and progressism. All that dead weight! Frowsy proletarian suitcases, heavy bourgeois steamer-trunks, boring philosophical portmanteaux — over the side with them!

We want from these systems only their vitality, their life-forces, daring, intransigence, anger, heedlessness — their power, their *shakti*. Before we jettison the rubbish and the carpetbags, we'll rifle the luggage for billfolds, revolvers, jewels, drugs and other useful items — keep what we like and trash the rest. Why not? Are we priests of a cult, to croon over relics and mumble our martyrologies?

Monarchism too has something we want — a grace, an ease, a pride, a superabundance. We'll take these, and dump the woes of authority & torture in history's garbage bin. Mysticism has something we need — “self-overcoming,” exalted awareness, reservoirs of psychic potency. These we will expropriate in the name of our insurrection — and leave the woes of morality & religion to rot & decompose.

As the Ranters used to say when greeting any “fellow creature” — from king to cut-purse — “Rejoice! All is ours!”

Excerpts from *The Unique and its Property* by Max Stirner

I Have Based My Affair on Nothing

What is not supposed to be my affair! Above all, the good cause, then God's cause, the cause of humanity, of truth, of freedom, of humaneness, of justice; furthermore, the cause of my people, my prince, my fatherland; finally even the cause of mind and a thousand other causes. Only my own cause is never supposed to be my affair. "Down with the egoist who only thinks of himself!"

I don't at all need to show that everything that tries to push its cause over on us is concerned only with itself, and not with us, only with its well-being, and not with ours. Just have a look for yourselves at the rest. Do truth, freedom, humaneness, justice want anything else than that you get enthusiastic about them and serve them?

And won't you learn from these shining examples that the egoist gets on best? I, for my part, take a lesson from them, and instead of serving those great egoists unselfishly anymore, I would prefer to be the egoist myself.

If God, if humanity, as you affirm, have enough content in themselves to be all in all to themselves, then I feel that I would lack it even less, and that I would have no complaint to make about my "emptiness." I am not nothing in the sense of emptiness, but am the creative nothing, the nothing out of which I myself create everything as creator.

Away, then, with every cause that is not completely my affair. You think that at least the "good cause" must be my affair? Which good, which bad? I am myself my own affair, and I am neither good nor bad. Neither makes any sense to me.

The divine is God's affair; the human cause is "humanity's." My affair is neither the divine nor the human; it is not the good, the true, the just, the free, etc., but only my own, and it is not general, but is—unique, as I am unique.

For me, there is nothing greater than me! [...]

A world of countless "personal" profane interests now stands against these representatives of ideal or sacred interests. No idea, no system, no sacred cause is so great as to never be outpaced and modified by personal interests. Even if they momentarily, and in times of rage and fanaticism, remain silent, they still soon come out on top again through "the sound sense of the people." Those ideas only win completely when they are no longer hostile to personal interests, i.e., when they satisfy egoism. [...]

My intercourse with the world consists in this, that I enjoy it, and so consume it for my self-enjoyment. *Intercourse* is the *enjoyment of the world*, and belongs to my—self-enjoyment. [...]

From now on the question is not how a person can gain life, but how he can squander it, can enjoy it; or not how he is to produce the true *I* in himself, but how he is to dissolve himself, to live his life to the full.

From Stirners Critics by Max Stirner:

Another example of the uninteresting is work, which passes for one's lifework, for the human calling. This is the origin of the prejudice that one has to *earn* his bread, and that it is shameful to have bread without having worked a bit to get it: this is the *pride of the wage*. Work has no merit *in itself* and does no honor to anyone, just as the life of the idler brings him no disgrace. Either you take an interest in work activity, and this interest doesn't let you rest, you have to be active: and then work is your desire, your special pleasure without

placing it above the laziness of the idler which is his pleasure. Or you use work to pursue another interest, a result or a “wage,” and you submit to work only as a *means* to this end; and then work is not interesting in itself and has no pretension of being so, and you can recognize that it is not anything valuable or sacred in itself, but simply something that is now *unavoidable* for gaining the desired result, the *wage*. But the work that is considered as an “honor for the human being” and as his “calling” has become the creator of economics and remains the mistress of *sacred* socialism, where, in its quality as “human labor,” it is supposed to “develop human capacities,” and where this development is a human calling, an absolute interest.





Suggested Further Reading

Prison Break by Flower Bomb

Tangpingist Manifesto

Manual for a worldwide manuke revolt by Matsumoto Hajime

How the Stirner Eats Gods by Alejandro de Acosta

The Abolition of Work by Bob Black

An Invitation to Desertion by Bellamy Fitzpatrick

Desert by anonymous (readdesert.org)

Demotivational Training by Guillaume Paoli

Active Vs Passive Nihilism by anonymous

Possum Living by Dolly Freed

Evasion by Mack Evasion (google 'evasion the anarchist library')

The Unique and its Property by Max Stirner

A Forest Garden Primer by Sylvia Wilde

The Right To Be Lazy by Paul Lafargue

The Ideology of Work by Jacques Ellul

"Humanity knows nothing at all. There is no intrinsic value in anything, and every action is a futile, meaningless effort." - Masanobu Fukuoka, The One Straw Revolution

Feral Distro
feraldistro.noblogs.org
feraldistro@proton.me
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