

Roadmap

Anarchist proposals to dispute present and future

Anarchist Assembly of Valparaíso

2023

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Before Starting

“(…) why not? the human being, the man, the woman, the child, neither higher nor lower, always equal (…) how to do it, how to get there? there is only one way: revolution, yes, Revolution, the general strike, the big one, abolition of property, socialization of the means of production, free love, free agreement, it seemed like a dream, perhaps or surely it was a dream, but who knows if it was ever all a dream and all was, nevertheless, realized or will be realized, who dreamed about the wheel, who dreamed about the electric light, who dreamed about the telephone? Everything was confusing, but once everything was even more confusing and there was no point in stopping to consider whether it was or not, the essential thing was to work to realize it, soon, and the sooner the better...”

“Shadows Against the Wall”, Manuel Rojas

It has been more than two years since we self-convened and gathered to give life to the Anarchist Assembly of Valparaíso, a place that has functioned as a meeting and action point for inhabitants of different territories along the Akunkawa. At that time, we were looking for a space for dialogue, debate and political imagination among anarchist comrades in the middle of the emotional, political and social maelstrom of those first months of the Revolt unleashed in October 2019. We opened, since December of that year, this process of collectivization of reflections, feelings, self-criticism and diverse proposals among people previously linked to anarchist ideas or in the process of getting to know them.

In this process, one of the fundamental self-criticisms has been related to the political isolation and self-absorption of anarchist events and spaces in recent years. This has made it difficult to develop the necessary and vital debate, both internally and with other political and territorial communities, in order to deepen and clarify our objectives and proposals.

Our composition as an assembly has been changing and with it, our horizons, reflections and practices, translated into different possibilities for action in this time and territory. Today, more than two years after our first meeting, and with the conviction and certainty of being part of a larger and more complex process that brings us together as communities in struggle, we have recognized the urgent need and the pressing responsibility to imagine, plan and give life to objectives, tactics and strategies that contribute to the popular processes of emancipation.

Following this line, and convinced that the only way to advance along this path is through the systematic exercise of collective reflection and imagination, we have considered it necessary to write this text as way of organizing ideas in ongoing debate and reflection in a first and humble attempt at a roadmap.

Starting Point

“The bond that unites us is beyond choice. We are brothers. We are brothers in what we share. In the pain that each of us must suffer in loneliness, in hunger, in poverty, in hope, we know our brotherhood. We know it because we have had to learn it. We know that there is no help for us, that no hand will save us if we do not reach each other’s hand.”

“The Dispossessed” Ursula K. Le Guin

For the construction of this collective analysis, we understand as fundamental the observation, knowledge and experience of our historical, political, social and material context.

We feel part of the great majorities that must, in one way or another, sell their labor power to survive. We recognize ourselves in the pains and joys of our class, in its miseries and beauties. We assume the contradictions inherent to our communities, understanding ourselves as the fruit of numerous violent and traumatic processes inherent to coloniality.

We are quiltes, guachas, bastards and champurria.

We recognize ourselves in the history of the migrants who dispersed the anarchist Idea together with their yearnings for social revolution in all directions, as well as in the experiences of struggle of the League of Tenants of Valparaiso (Liga de Arrendatarios de Valparaíso), of the societies of resistance and anarchist athenaeums, which from the tenement houses, workshops and social centers at the dawn of the twentieth century fought for a dignified life. In the struggles of the dwellers who built dreams from the peripheries, giving shape and life to the popular landscape. We recognize ourselves in the experience of the industrial belts (cordones industriales), in the popular kitchens, in the ancient struggle of women and dissidents to defend life and in the resistance against the dictatorship and the long 30 years of oblivion. We feel part of the long history of struggle of the oppressed classes, with their mistakes and successes.

From there, and to systematize this analysis, we identify three axes of domination that we interpret as structural bases of our historical, cultural and territorial experience: Patriarchy, Capitalism and Colonialism. These function as a model of production and reproduction of eco-social life and are continuously exercised over popular and oppressed bodies and territories. According to our analysis, it makes no sense to hierarchize these axes, since we identify them as concatenated structures that, in close and inseparable dynamics, reproduce exploitation and domination.

Some of the fundamental mechanisms of reproduction of these axes are: the appropriation of eco-social wealth through private property; the gender division of labor and the invisibilization of care; the imposition of the family and the heterosexual regime with biologicist and binary perspectives on bodies, identities and affections; the unequal development around world centers and peripheries; the mercantile and speciesist appropriation of the non-human world; and the precariousness of life in general.

We also understand that currently, the political/military form that sustains these axes of domination are the Nation-States, which are perpetuated in everyday life through the dominant culture, the monopoly of organized violence and the hegemonic educational processes that shape our eco-social relations.

Tools (about theory and principles)

“To remain isolated, pulling or pretending to pull each one on his own side, without understanding each other, without preparing ourselves, without gathering the weak forces of the isolated, means to condemn ourselves to weakness, losing energy in small ineffective acts, quickly losing faith in the goal and falling into complete starvation”

Errico Malatesta

The first of our tools is the development of the material and collective analysis we make of our historical reality. From this, we recognize the existence of social classes and their structural antagonism, so we position ourselves in the class struggle as an active part of the broad exploited and oppressed class.

On the other hand, we take the historical tools of anarchism, understood as the practice of mutual aid, direct action, horizontality and self-management as essential principles for this path, but that must necessarily be nurtured and strengthened with the tools that other sectors and communities in struggle have given us throughout history.

Trans, class and intersectional feminisms have provided us with countless elements of social analysis and political action. For example, they have been able to show us the complex and often contradictory dynamics within the oppressed classes, in addition to making visible the crisis of care and its centrality in the production and reproduction of social life. On the other hand, social ecology and its eco-systemic perspective of social conflicts has allowed us to broaden and complexify our horizons of struggle against devastation and extractivism from our territories and the urgent and necessary resistance for life in all its diversity. In addition, we find useful some lucid elements of anti-authoritarian communism and its insistence on the oppressive centrality of money, value and merchandise in the capitalist structure, the democratic confederalism practiced and spread from Kurdistan and, of course, the organizational, community and ancestral tools present in the traditions of anti-colonial struggle and territorial autonomy throughout Abya Yala.

All these theoretical and experiential tools have served us as references to develop our political imagination and go beyond the limits of ideological purities and sterile bitterness. They have also shown us that imagination, without naivety or charlatanism, is an essential starting point in the dispute of the present and the future.

Where To? (On purpose and strategies)

“Radical movements can no longer afford a thoughtless diving into action for action’s sake. (...) Patience, the hard work of responsible commitment to the daily work of building a movement, must be valued over the drama of those who are always willing to “die” on the barricades of a distant “revolution,” but who are too elevated to engage in the tedious tasks of spreading ideas and sustaining an organization”

“Remaking Society” Murray Bookchin

We believe that the possibility of dismantling the system of domination and its model of reproduction of eco-social life is not only possible but urgent, and not by ideological caprice but by vital necessity. We think that, although this will not be a quick process, we, nevertheless, do not understand it as an unrealizable utopian future. Our bet is that it will be a real and concrete process that includes the dispute of the present and the future.

That dispute is oriented to the struggle for the construction of a model of production, reproduction and organization of eco-social life that puts vital needs, dignity and popular joy at the center. In order to build this other model, a process of revolutionary ruptures is necessary to put an end to the axes of domination on which the current social regime is built.

From a strategic perspective, and in relation to the major objective already stated, we see three axes of projection, planning and action.

The revolutionary transformation in the model of production and reproduction of eco-social life proposed here will only be possible with the decision and participation of the organized and massive forces of the oppressed classes. The development and growth of the transformative potential of the oppressed class, which we will call popular power, is undoubtedly the main, and first, strategic axis that we collectively envision.

We believe that the development of this power, understood as the capacity for action, is a collective learning process that must be nourished by the development of the oppressed sectors' own capacities, in dispute and conflict with the State and seeking through the construction of a counter-hegemonic popular bloc to carry forward a series of revolutionary ruptures that leave behind this system of death.

Anarchists together with others, as part of the oppressed classes, must collaborate for this to happen.

From this, emanates the second strategic axis proposed here: the development and broad and integral growth of anarchist organizations. The need to deepen and energize the political, theoretical and ideological development of the anarchist field invites us to overcome spontaneity, informality and pure affinity in pursuit of the search for permanent and sustained organizational spaces in time, which through long term work aim to root anarchism in the popular field as a real tool to imagine and realize collective emancipatory horizons.

A third strategic element are so-called prefigurative politics, understood as the need to build here and now the foundations of that other model of production and reproduction of social life. That is to say, the collective and material rehearsal in the present time, of the possibilities imagined for another world in the very work of present struggles.

It seems fundamental to us the exercise of breaking with the limiting dichotomous visions between the present and the future, and between ends and means, since they are contained in each other and configure the fields of analysis and action in which our daily lives, possibilities and proposals are developed.

How? (on tactics and methods)

“Without discipline, without organization, without humility before the splendor of the goal, we will only entertain our enemies and never achieve victory”

Mijail Bakunin

We understand strategies as paths that allow us to advance towards the achievement of our short, medium and long term objectives. Tactics are the necessary steps to follow these paths. Concretely, the actions that are deployed in different scenarios and function as a bridge between organized thinking and planned action for a specific territory, understanding its particularities and historical, political, demographic and cultural conditions.

In this line, as a first tactical element, it seems urgent to us to become an active part of the spaces and initiatives of socialization, struggle and broad popular organization, linked to basic material needs, such as housing, health, education, defense of territories and waters, food sovereignty, etc. In these social spaces, whether raised by ourselves or previously existing, our role should aim at their strengthening, contributing with constancy, tools and ideas that dispute the reformist and/or authoritarian ones and dynamize the class self-organizing processes. In this

sense, and in tactical logic, the struggles for demands at this level, which generate tangible improvements in the lives of the people and communities, are fruitful spaces for the accumulation of experiences, trust and collective knowledge necessary for the formation of a popular initiative with real transformative force and emancipatory perspective. As an anarchist organization, we must promote the broadest participation and popular protagonism in all spaces of struggle, involving ourselves in the struggles for the defense of the public, simultaneously that the fence of possibilities is moved towards popular and community control, planning, management and decision of eco-social issues.

At the same time, it is relevant to create and maintain our links with other organized anarchist and non-anarchist political groups, with the sincere transformative intention of breaking the chains of capital, patriarchy and colonialism. Where the objective is to mutually strengthen the spaces of participation and execution of politics, assuming without naivety that the differences between groups are resolved in the struggle for the construction of the power of the peoples and not from the infertility of the pure ideological trench.

A second tactical element is the existence of open and public anarchist organizations. Organizations that make social anarchism visible as a valid and possible historical project through continuous, constant and articulated work, while disputing the referents, meanings of public and popular debates. The organized anarchist voices, their positioning in the face of the conjuncture and their capacity to confront the contingency, are a step towards that dispute and towards the construction of another world. To bring anarchism out of obscurantism and socialize it is urgent for our time.

Our third tactical proposal is the practice of prefigurative politics. This practice contains and is sustained by broad, constant and daily educational processes that aim to develop new institutions, infrastructure and eco-social relations, through the implementation of depatriarchalizing and decolonizing methodologies that are applied transversally to every collective process, understood as a rehearsal of the lives, relations and communities that we wish to build.

The prefigurative rehearsals of other forms of life must become arguments that strengthen, develop learning and consolidate popular organizational capacities. And they should not be understood as a renunciation of the struggles for rights or services, nor should they be put into practice as islands distanced from the daily existence of the rest of society.

The path for the implementation of our tactics is traversed by the politicization of tenderness and collective care. We need to nurture and help to deepen the creation and implementation of diverse methodologies and humble proposals that contribute to destroy this system of death from its foundations and, in parallel and step by step, contribute to the transformation and construction of social and political relations in which affection, care and joyful complicities are a fundamental part of the community and territorial political framework. The real possibility of transforming everything is to be found in the sphere of the daily and sustained, and not in the anecdotal and spectacular. These tactics are designed for that area.

Final Words (For now)

This text is an exercise, an experiment that has implied putting in common and in conflict our experiences, knowledge and diverse reflections around the dispute of the present and the future and the possibility of pointing towards emancipatory horizons collectively recognized

and desired. At the same time, it has seemed to us a good and sincere way to establish a dialogue with other collectivities and people who may have interest, curiosity and even resentment around what we in our organization have discussed and propose as analysis and actions to be taken in the short, medium and long term in our communities and territories.

We understand a roadmap as a guide to orient ourselves, which inevitably responds to the analysis of our current context and our current experiences; therefore, the path is variable and the possibility of changing, deepening and complexifying our proposals is always an unfinished task, which requires our continuous attention and responsibility.

To propose to dispute the present and the future through the organization and articulation among the exploited, may seem, in our context, something naive or pretentious, but we are sincerely convinced that the only essential thing is to work to achieve it, soon, the sooner the better.

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