

The Anarchist Mission In The Modern World

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It's not a novel idea, for today large projects aimed to rebuild the world are in decline. In the twentieth century, the powerful movements mobilized millions of people to storm political Olympus and start "great construction projects". But during the last century, they have gone bankrupt both ethically and practically, one after the other, and soon vanished entirely. Here in particular we refer to fascism and communism of the Leninist type. Even the seemingly triumphant liberal project just basically vanished into the global capitalist system and the global political game, where liberal mechanisms are hardly seen.

Among the ambitious ideologists daring to rebuild the world in accordance with their convictions, today, perhaps, only the voice of the jihadists is heard. However, Islamism is clearly not the big project which a person with an anarchist worldview would come to terms with.

Failed global plans at the end of the twentieth century gave rise to deep pessimism and paralysis of the ideas of transformation. However, the first decades of the new century clearly showed that the "end of history" did not occur. Growing instability, rebelliousness and ungovernability manifested themselves. The number of anti-government protests under a variety of slogans and flags has increased severely compared to the previous era.

At the same time, there is a desperate need for fundamental changes on the widest possible territorial scale. As before, we need a new world. Almost everything that exists in society is unacceptable and cannot serve as a framework for the present and future.

But what will the transformed reality be like? There are hideous prophecies of a "Brave New World" entirely ruled by the elites of post-humanity, or, on the contrary, a new feudalism and a great split, accompanied by an upsurge of brutal violence. Alongside these pictures there is a prospect of a global ecological catastrophe. But a different trend manifests itself more and more clearly alongside the diverse dystopias. It is an aspiration to direct democracy, equal collectivity, elimination of inequality and oppression, and search for a harmonious coexistence with nature. This tendency is sprinkled among many social movements, but has not been formed into a single stream. However, it brings the relevance of anarchism back to life. At a time when all other missionaries showed themselves to be deceivers or maniacs, it is time for anarchists to remember their mission and re-declare their global project. How can we outline its possible common features?

Demount the Mega-machine

The modern mass-society is concentrated in gigantic urban agglomerations. The lion's share of human life is controlled and directed by the laws of states, as well as capitalist relations in the sphere of production, exchange and consumption. As a result, a modern human finds oneself in the situation of being an object manipulated by gigantic machine-like forces. At the same time, we are constantly fussing. The modern world is "The Sleep of Reason" – an anesthesia of intellect and deep feelings, replaced by momentary, externally controlled, desires. This situation is abhorrent to human nature, it causes unhappiness and frustration, and after that – a thirst for something else.

But the monstrous massive carcasses of states evoke fear and doubt in us: is it at all possible to free ourselves from under its iron heel? The endless buying and selling, filling our daily lives with a million chores, aggravates our addiction, and even worse, as from within, corrupts and depraves us.

And yet, the course of life itself pushes us to rebellion. The accumulated historical experience teaches us that even the most seemingly omnipotent social systems collapse like a house of cards, and sometimes it happens completely unexpected. This is the starting point of our struggle against the ruling order. To crush and to demount the Mega-machine is the ambitious task of the anarchist movement.

The New Communality

Today, we see a progressive atomization and the weakening of collective relationships. Neighbors get to know each other less and less, and sometimes even avoid each other altogether. Loud family celebrations are becoming rare and enforced. The origins of this painful social phenomenon are complex and it is not easy to distinguish the main ones. However, here lays the growing sphere of individual entertainment, the general course towards individual comfort, which is always threatened by “excessive” closeness of communication, and the notorious egoism, which is organic for a capitalist market society and turns any ties into a temporary interaction of two consumers for the purpose of reciprocal benefit. The word “partner” is gaining more and more popularity in everyday life, which in Russian has a distinctly alienated note and acts as a kind of antonym to such concepts as loved one, friend, comrade...

We believe that the crisis of collectivity and mutual existence is one of the most catastrophic consequences of capitalism and statehood. Alongside with the ethics, the anarchist revolution has a concrete institutional tool for creating what we can call the “new communality.” This is popular assemblies, meetings, collective self-ruled institutions and autonomous economic entities. When the mite of the System, which has launched its suckers deep into the social tissue and separated us from each other, is ripped out of society, we will be faced with the NECESSITY to recreate our warm horizontal ties and connect us with each other by bonds of solidarity.

The collective building of social life will stand in direct contrast to the present social practices. Look at the current initiative of the Russian authorities to organize voting by mail – now not even the imitation of choice gather crowds of alienated strangers at the ballot boxes.

Yes, we plan to get together to make decisions, to cook food in crowded and noisy kitchens and not to receive it in sterile delivery bags. We plan to introduce our children to their fellows on the streets, and not to just sit them down to watch cartoons alone.

Economy

Managing people for personal gain, the perception of all living and non-living things as a resource for profit, pathological luxury for an insignificant minority and deprivation of the vast majority – are just a few strokes, the most striking illustrations that characterize the present economic model. Its essence is directly opposed to that we believe to be right and fair. The whole bunch of reasons to reject capitalism can be reduced to two main theses: 1) this economic system is unethical, unfair, ignominious; 2) it is unable to provide a decent material level for everyone.

Commodity-money relations, wage labor, investments, bank loans and interests – are so deeply ingrained in our daily lives, that at times it seems unreal to get rid of them. As if without them hunger and societal collapse would immediately follow.

But we have a lot to oppose to the “trend”: human resources (today many thousands of people waste their worktime for the phenomenon of meaningless work (“bullshit jobs”)); workers practical experience, which allow them to maintain production without bosses; technology, which allow society to regulate the system of production and distribution in accordance with its needs and values ... This should be quite enough to transfer the economy from the elite to the hands of society, to ensure equal management of production by people of labor and to implement the principle “Each according to one’s ability, to each according to one’s needs.”

The mission of the anarchist movement is the following: by word, deed and example, root in society the understanding of the principles of economic justice, and, by overthrowing the state and capitalists, “clear the space” — to provide socio-political conditions for its implementation.

Elimination of discrimination

Modern society is full of discrimination on a variety of grounds. There are many features and specifications by which a person or a group can be discriminated. The reasons for this are old or new prejudices, the principle of collective responsibility, as well as the alienation of people from each other in a world permeated by capitalist relations.

Unscrupulous politicians skillfully manipulate by prejudice and collective responsibility while alienation is a “side” effect of the entire current system.

One of the oldest and most painful forms of discrimination for human existence is gender oppression. Even though, in Eastern Europe as well as in the “Western world”, the situation has changed significantly compared to the openly patriarchal past, women are still oppressed. This is evidenced by data on domestic, sexual and gender-based violence and the difference in average income. Practices and behaviors that belittle women remain strong. A striking example: the attitude “Politics is not a woman’s business.” There are many such imperceptible stones of contemporary culture that prevent a woman to release her human potential in our social reality.

And one more detail that is not often paid attention to, although it is one of the most important. The relationship between all people is heavily poisoned by gender stereotypes and the reciprocal consumer attitude and egoism based on them. Because of this, even the most seemingly close relationships bring people pain and misery, and not the opposite. The capitalist and authoritarian worldview prevents true intimacy from being born.

The mission of anarchism is to achieve true sisterhood / brotherhood between people, beyond any group characteristics. For this we have different tools: 1) joint practice of building and managing society, requiring equal cooperation and mutual warmth of all participants in the process; 2) a revolutionary political culture, requiring the conscious active involvement of representatives of all oppressed groups in joint social work; 3) finally, education and educational programs, helping to leave prejudices in the past.

Thus, the ambition of the anarchist project is to eradicate discrimination, improve interpersonal relationships and, no matter how vulnerable it sounds, return love for our neighbor into our lives. Capitalism and Authoritarianism as social phenomena stand in the way. This barrier is not indestructible.

Solution of ethnic conflicts

Since time immemorial, human society has been shaken and terrorized by violent clashes, triggered by ethnic or national cultural differences. Quite different criteria were also added to the load: religious, racial. National and ethnic conflicts reached a special intensity in the era of national states, which to this day is the main form of the political organization of mankind. With their appearance, the question began to be raised with extreme urgency: which nationality is the “titular” one in this or that state? Which land “rightfully belongs” to a particular national group? The result has been countless suffering for millions of innocent people: forced assimilation, mass deportations and, finally, atrocious acts of mass murder. After everything mankind has gone through, national conflicts continue to flare up brightly in all parts of the world.

Hardly any other imaginary contradictions in the history of mankind entailed such monstrous consequences as “contradictions” between “nations”. At the heart of the national conflicts often lie the interests of national political and economic elites, government bureaucracies, as well as the most ignorant prejudices and distorted ideas about their own neighbors – the “other” – the representatives of other ethnic groups.

At the root of the idea of a national conflict lies the question “We or them?”. Anarchism offers an alternative: “We and them are together and on an equal footing.” By denying the nation state, which is nothing more than an instrument of oppression and injustice, anarchists open the way to confederation: equal cooperation of peoples in all territories. One and the same land can be both Serbian and Albanian; both Armenian and Azerbaijani ... the list is endless. Equality and self-government, the social pillars of anarchism, are prerequisites for a fruitful and friendly dialogue between cultures. The need for this dialogue has not diminished, on the contrary, it has intensified in the 21st century.

Re-harmonizing with nature

The fact that capitalism and in general the constantly expanding human economy and consumption have an extremely destructive effect on nature has long been commonly known. As well as the understanding that this development threatens the planet and humanity.

We would like to take a deeper look at the problem. The anthropocentric worldview that prevails today, and the way of life conditioned by it, is a special case of a hierarchical relationship to the world and existence in general. Nature is the “workshop of man” ... This view is neither natural, nor ethical, nor acceptable. The true liberation of humanity can not take place without overcoming alienation from nature and finding harmony with it.

Which ecological solutions can anarchism offer? Modern technologies must be reoriented from maximizing profits to the conservation and restoration of nature. These measures would be combined with the procuring of worth material living conditions for all. Ideally, the extensive destructive human influence on nature should end completely. The knowledge and capabilities accumulated by humanity makes it possible to complete this task, or in any case move closer to its fulfillment.

The reorganization of living space, with the elimination of the monstrous metropolis as a form of human community life, is extremely important. The living settlement should be proportionate to the person, no matter how subjective it may sound. The lifeless anthropogenic landscape,

cutting off a human from the natural complexes, must give place for the harmonious inclusion of settlement in the natural landscape, the interweaving of the natural and the human.

Here and now

The total unacceptability of the current (un)being ... and the outlines of the renewed world, like prophetic dreams, excite our minds and hearts. These are the points of mobilization that do not allow us to give up and just accept. That is why we are ready to make efforts, to take risks so that to create a new society. Organized revolutionary struggle is the path along which we will achieve the goal outlined in this text. Victory is possible, and therefore we must win.

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Fighter Anarchist**

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