

# **Popular Power and Especifist Anarchism**

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# Ideas for Creating the Revolution to Come: Popular Power and Specifist Anarchism

The objective of this article is to reflect on **Popular Power** as an emancipatory strategy and examine how it relates (to a greater or lesser extent) with different revolutionary trends and currents, particularly those associated with the libertarian movement and its families. Given constraints of length and the intention to make these reflections useful and accessible, we will not meticulously cover all nuances and variants that could be explored in a more exhaustive approach. This is an introductory text aiming to meet basic yet essential objectives during the current period of anarchism's reorganization:

- Introducing the idea of **Popular Power**
- Supporting the adherence to this strategy as meaningful and justifiable
- Examining how various revolutionary trends relate to it
- Specifically discussing the **especifist** current, or more precisely, our proposal

## What is Popular Power?

**Popular Power** refers to the strategic proposition advocating that a socialist revolution can occur through accumulating social strength among the working class and dispossessed. Although this definition may not initially clarify the debate fully, it highlights key elements:

- **Strategy** as a deliberate plan to achieve clear objectives
- **Revolution** as a certainty that the existing criminal system can and must be overthrown
- Essential condition of mass social support capable of overcoming capitalist resistance

Additionally, Popular Power explicitly includes an essential strategic consideration, both for the revolutionary phase and the possibility of building an alternative society characterized by equality, freedom, and justice. It identifies spaces of struggle and self-organization as arenas where social strength capable of surpassing capitalist resistance accumulates, forming the embryo of popular institutions upon which we will construct our desired society.

Following this broad introduction, many comrades sharing our political tradition will likely feel identified. However, concrete strategic developments and theories regarding how capitalism sustains and reproduces itself lead to diverse, sometimes contradictory tendencies. To delve deeper, we will first justify the basis of our revolutionary "belief," then explain how our analysis of the current social system shapes our proposals.

## Not a Matter of Faith

Although we sometimes discuss revolution almost esoterically, our proposal is based on rigorous analysis. Our prognosis and practice are founded upon two certainties:

1. Capitalism is incapable of preventing severe crises—social, economic, political, ecological, and health crises. 2. Historical evidence shows that increased pressure on the exploited masses fosters revolutionary responses.

## **The Theory of Social Reproduction Behind Each Emancipatory Proposal**

Every strategic proposal arises from an explicit or implicit conception of how capitalist systemic reproduction occurs. Thus, every political proposal involves understanding:

- How prevailing power sustains itself
- Its weaknesses
- Opportunities for resistance
- Its future evolution

Anarchism has extensively documented capitalism's mechanisms of repression and reproduction—prisons, police, armies, schools, labor, advertising—all targeted by our criticism. However, libertarian movements lack systematic knowledge integration and strategic reasoning to guide praxis, often operating based on identity and tradition.

Returning to our central topic, our proposals depend on theories of capitalist reproduction. If capitalism is deemed insurmountable, proposals focus on escape or resistance. If unpredictability is emphasized, insurrectionist tactics prevail. Each theory guides different strategies, shaping their limitations or possibilities.

## **Insurrectionism and Popular Power**

Insurrectionist libertarian sectors recognize revolution as possible and necessary but argue unpredictability in social conflicts necessitates intensifying or provoking conflicts spontaneously. This spontaneous approach contrasts with their critiques of other trends for vanguardism and neglects planning post-revolution scenarios, leaving vulnerabilities to reformist interventions or co-option.

## **Revolutionary Syndicalism, Anarcho-Syndicalism, and Popular Power**

Spain historically exemplifies revolution based on class self-organization. Anarcho-syndicalism combines:

- Daily struggles
- Consciousness-building through experience
- Strength accumulation via self-organization

- Creation of alternative infrastructures

However, contemporary critiques highlight limitations imposed by precarious labor conditions, bureaucratized mainstream unions, and the state's absorption of previously autonomous social services. Furthermore, syndicalism's ideological heterogeneity complicates revolutionary orientation, especially in rapidly evolving contexts.

## **Autonomism and Popular Power**

Libertarian autonomism varies strategically, often proposing building alternative spaces immediately within capitalism's margins. Municipalist strategies advocate capturing pre-capitalist institutions as preliminary socialist spheres. Others emphasize creating anticipatory spaces for emerging struggles. Limitations emerge repeatedly through state repression, cooperative failures, and ineffective federation-building.

## **Council Communism and Popular Power**

Council communist proposals originate from Marxist critiques of authoritarian socialist regimes, advocating non-party popular councils. Criticisms include reliance on spontaneous self-organization, ignoring inevitable political interventions by organized groups, thus lacking strategies to counteract or confront these influences effectively.

## **Specifism and Popular Power**

Specifism (or platformism historically) advocates building explicitly libertarian organizations with ideological and strategic coherence, formulating unified social reproduction theories, and organized interventions in society. The goal is:

- Consolidating social strength
- Identifying and combating deviations
- Fostering revolutionary processes

We recognize the importance of strategic debate, actively engaging in political discussions and practical militant activity. Critiques of other strategies must include positive contributions, valuing strengths in syndicalist and autonomist approaches, actively participating, and fostering alliances.

While we challenge strategic common sense within libertarianism, we oppose anarchist unification or mass growth at the expense of coherence. Expansion must maintain strategic unity and action. We acknowledge the legitimacy of diverse political interventions and advocate honest debate rather than exclusionary sectarianism.

In conclusion, the thoughtful and politically adept specifist proposal remains consistent with anti-authoritarian libertarian principles, promoting:

- Free association
- Commitment
- Direct action
- Self-organization

We utilize tools like education, methodological clarity, and ongoing critical reflection to mitigate power dynamics.

Much remains to be clarified, developed, and proposed. Militancy must ground strategic ideas in reality, constructing transitional thinking, federative forms beyond coordination, capacity-building tools, and class-consciousness development. Despite daunting challenges ahead, we have begun our journey toward the future.

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