

REVOLUTION:

MÁS ALLÁ DE LA POLÍTICA

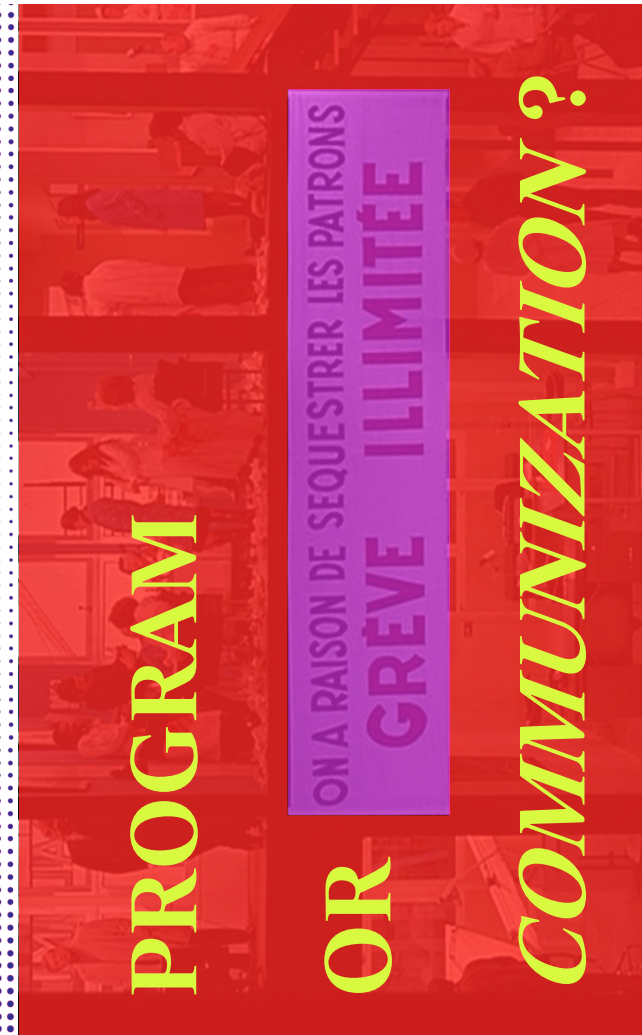
// EDICIONES INÉDITAS // LIVE FROM LOS
ÁNGELES // TONGVA-GABRIELINO TERRITORY //
FOR ANARCHY + COMMUNISM

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Para lxs desmadrosxs
For the trouble-makers

We're out here.
Live from occupied Tongva-Gabrielino territory.

Los Angeles.



An Ediciones Inéditas Translation

Postscript by Ediciones Inéditas

For further reading on gender and communization see:

- *Abolitionism in the 21st Century: From Communization as the End of Sex, to Revolutionary Transfeminism* by Jules Joanne Gleeson via Blind Field Journal
- *The Logic of Gender: On the Separation of Spheres and the Process of Abjection* by Endnotes

For further reading on race and communization see:

- *The Limit Point of Capitalist Equality: Notes Toward an Abolitionist Antiracism* by Chris Chen via Endnotes
- *Debord in Watts: Race and Class Antagonisms Under Spectacle* by Heath Schultz

– of social relations, because it is the negation of the forms of domination that give rise to social categories (class, gender and race).

In this sense, if “self-organization is the first act of revolution, what follows acts against [this self-organization],” and this sequence is made-up of immediately communist measures, anti-managerial measures, new non-commodified struggle practices, which are thus human, even within the violence that they presuppose and necessitate. What are some communist measures?

“It includes the destruction of exchange when workers attack banks which hold their accounts and those of other workers, which forces them to make do without them; it includes workers communicating with each other and with the community their “products” directly and without a market and thus abolishing themselves as workers; it includes the obligation for the whole of the class to organize itself in search of food within sectors to be communized, etc. There is no measure, which taken on its own, is itself “communism.” That which is communist is not “violence” itself, nor “distribution” of the shit which class society has bequeathed us, nor the “collectivization” of machines means to suck out surplus-value; rather it is the nature of the movement which link these actions, underlies them, during moments of a process which needs to communize ever more or be crushed.¹⁰”

“From the moment that proletarians destroy the laws of commodities, they cannot stop (so that Capital will be deprived of essential goods and any counter-attack). Each social deepening, each extension gives flesh and blood to new relations, allowing the integration ever more non-proletarians to the communizing class which is in the process of constituting itself and dissolving itself simultaneously; reorganize its productive forces; ever more abolishing all competition and division among proletarians; acquire a military position and make of its content and course an armed confrontation against those whom the capitalist class can still mobilize, integrate and reproduce its social relations.¹¹”

Revolution: Program or Communization?

Written by Agitations
Translated by Ediciones Inéditas

10 Meeting 3, L’auto-organisation est le premier acte de la revolution, la suite s’effectue contre elle

11 Roland Simon (of Théorie communiste), on the site Des nouvelles du front

in current struggles. The death of programmatism did not happen by way of magic, it did not appear in the minds of theoreticians disconnected from class struggle. It is the product of the restructuring class relation that took place in the 1970s and is signaled by the collapse of the model of fully-employed male wage-labor; by the rise of feminized labor, either part-time or agency-based; and by the rise of subcontracting and fragmentation of “workers’ strongholds.” The circulation process is virtualized through finance and the dismantling of the welfare state disrupts the reproduction of the class relation. Capital, through globalization, does not just accumulate at the national scale, and it was the whole Fordist model which prevailed and then saw itself become outdated.

We do not need a program, we need unity. But on what basis? “Unity is not a means which makes the demand-based struggle more efficacious, unity can only exist by overcoming the demand-based struggle. The content of [this] unity is found when proletarians apply themselves to no longer be proletarian. This unity is the proletariat calling into the question its existence as a class: the communization of the relations among individuals.”⁹ The communist revolution is firstly the self-organization of workers, of the proletarian class, which struggles to free itself from work, which is capitalist exploitation. But this self-organization is insufficient, it is limited. In fact, even if the proletarian class struggles without unions or parties, without delegating its revolutionary engagement to representatives, and even if the revolutionary process is rather advanced, the proletarian class will tend to, once powerful, reproduce capitalist relations of domination. Communist revolution cannot be self-managed ‘til the end, or else it will inevitably become the self-management of capitalist reproduction.

The proletariat will then confront a contradiction which will oppose the defense of their interests as a class within capitalism, on one hand, and the impossibility for a capitalism in crisis to satisfy its demands which seek to perpetuate their very reproduction as a “race of laborers.”, on the other. This apparent insoluble contradiction can only be resolved by confronting the proletariat with itself, as a class, which will lead to its self-negation. “The present generation is like the Jews whom Moses led through the wilderness. It not only has a new world to conquer, it must go under in order to make room for the men who are able to cope with a new world.” (Marx, *The Class Struggles in France*).

It is by destroying these capitalist categories that we will really become autonomous individuals without being subordinated to some social power. The abolition of social categories which mediate relations between individuals such class, gender and race will provoke an obsolescence of all kinds of “social” organizations pretending to be interposed between individuals who only relate to each through society. Communism is immediacy – in the etymological sense of the term

how to act, to train it to make revolution. Ultimately, struggles formulate their own theory, and it is their uncertain confrontation with theoretical activity that will give birth to communist measures. “The relationship between daily struggles and the revolutionary passage is a relationship of true rupture, and as such, it is not subordinated to an accumulation of experiences or to any pedagogy.”⁶

Communists, since the 1970s, have offered up a number of hypotheses, and we can try to imagine what the content of communization will be. It will be the extension of *gratuité*⁷, of production without productivity, the production of communism by communism in the process of transition from capitalism to communism. In this sense, “communization” is opposed to “socialization,” since it is not a question of pooling commodity goods, but rather new ways of getting rid of them, in order to create non-commodified goods. Communization is the movement for the destruction of commodity value and with this movement bury the substance of capital: labor. Communization is the free activity of humanity in their struggle against that which divides them.

Theory with hypothetical value prevails over any self-proclaimed “true” revolutionary theory, believing that it knows how to make the revolution from the elements and categories of the capitalist mode of production. But if we do not have a revolutionary “program,” we then intervene everyday in class struggle at the very least as proletarians, and if not, sometimes as activists. Already Marx affirmed in Theses on Feuerbach: “The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking, which is isolated from practice is a purely scholastic question.” Also, we all necessarily create theory since we all talk about the current world, with or without Marxist terminology (at work, at the coffee shop, with our families, among friends, etc.). Theory is there whether we like it or not, even if it has no predetermined utility.

“Theory is not useful, but rather it is necessary when it is not a pre-existing theory of some goal or some practice. But that means that theory is constantly and deeply loaded, even if it is also always critical. Theory is never in a naively positive relationship with the course of class struggle, it is an amorous, fusional and stubborn relationship.”⁸

Communist theory, in fact, refers to the futility of the demand-based struggle within a revolutionary perspective, and allows us to think and critique interclassism and the overwhelming citizenism that prevails

6 Il Lato Cattivo, Photos à travers la vitre

7 This is a term which has no direct translation in English. *Gratuité* is an “economic” concept where a good or service can be gained without an exchange of money or any kind of barter.

8 *Théorie Communiste* n°25, p.28

According to communization theory, born in the 1970s, the worker’s movement first knew how to positively affirm itself, but then little by little began to decompose during the 1960s, and that this whole cycle of struggle was known as “programmatisation.”

From the emergence of the capitalist mode of production up until the present moment, workers’ struggles and the vision of the overcoming of capitalism that emerged from these struggles were founded on an autonomy and a positivity that workers were able to maintain within capitalist relations. One could describe the revolutions of this period as attempts to abolish capitalist relations through the affirmation of one these constitutive poles: namely, whether, the affirmation of the proletariat constituted as a class (whether by a Party, Councils, or an Autonomy), or the affirmation of the class of Work confronting Capital and the bourgeois class.

According to Marx, class struggle is based on the contradiction between labor / Capital, both poles looking to defend their interests: capitalists seek to make ever more profit, and thus to extract a maximum of surplus value from the work of proletarians, while proletarians seek to survive by selling their labor-power, and sometimes take arms against capitalist injustice (known as Justice in bourgeois society).

Within the so-called “programmatist” period, revolution comprised a program pursued by the proletariat, and the proletariat had to exert its dictatorship over counter-revolutionary bourgeois forces. In this period workers’ councils were created (Russian soviets in 1917, German workers’ councils from 1918-19, Italian councils in 1921, and Hungarian ones in 1956) and the slogan “liberation of labor” regularly appeared (humanity must do away with its alienation as workers and recapture their real humanity). Communists of Leninist allegiance envisaged a period of revolutionary transition, followed by the degeneration of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the “socialist” state, whereas anarchist or Luxemburgist communists envisaged the generalized self-management of the means of production, a “society of associated producers,” etc.

“The proletariat is then invested with a revolutionary nature which makes it contradictory with Capital, and which modulates in accordance with more or less mature historical conditions. Programmatisation is not only a theory, it is above all a practice of the proletariat within which a rise in the power of the [proletarian] class within the capitalist mode of production is positively the footstep of the revolution and of communism, up until the 1960s.”¹

At first, proletarian struggle belongs to what Marx described in Capital (Vol. 1, Ch. 6) as “the formal subsumption of labor to capital.” Which means that capitalist domination over workers is only formal, its

1 *Théorie Communiste* n°26

rooting within society is not yet complete. Workers can, in a revolutionary situation, form a class “for itself,” capable of becoming autonomous from the capitalist class it confronts. Such a situation lasted until the 1920s. Subsequently (and until the 1960s), this domination gradually became “real” and accentuated and thus the labor movement became fully integrated into capitalism.

Within the programmatic period, while capitalists sought to generalize the wage-working class, “the proletariat made the revolution – its seizure of power – dependent on a maturation of objective conditions (the development of the productive forces) and subjectivity (its will and class consciousness).” The proletarians seeking to make revolution had the ambition and goal of controlling the movement of capitalist value, and thought to abolish wage-labor by using work orders in lieu of money. Moreover, programmatic revolutionary theory has never taken into account the contradiction between woman / man, and has therefore never been able to attack the mode of reproduction of capital through the activity of “women,” this socially-constructed gender which reproduces the “race of laborers.”

“What the workers’ movement called into question was not Capital as a mode of production, but only the management of production by the bourgeoisie. For the workers the task was simply to yank the productive apparatus from this parasitic class and destroy its State and create another, directed by the conscious part of the party, or to sap power from the bourgeois State by self-organizing themselves the base of production, by way of unions or councils. But the task was never, nor was it ever attempted, the abolition of the law of value.”²

There was no offensive made against commodity production, or against the machinery itself. Though it is not a matter of saying that the proletarians were “wrong,” nor that they were “right” in acting as such: they acted in a way adequate to their times. If the programmatic revolution did not succeed, in sum, it is because this revolution was not able to attack the very reproduction of exploitation. Whenever a new cycle of struggle opens up within each period, new revolutionary methods offer themselves up to proletarians, but they were defeated every time, from the 18th c. revolts to the Italy’s Creeping May [of the 60s-70s], passing by the workers’ Internationales.

“Each historical cycle of class struggle reformulates the content of the communism as well as the form of its establishment on the basis of the defeat of the preceding cycle and the restructuring of the class relations that result, which in turn reshapes the composition

of the proletarian class, the forms of its exploitation, its practices in immediate struggles, the forms of class struggle management on the part of the State and the global structure of accumulation. Each historical cycle and reformulation of the content of communism is justified by considering each the most recent, mature and definitive episodes [of class struggle], even if history will prove it wrong.”³

What can be done today if we affirm the death of programmatism? We should pose the revolution as communization, as “the immediate production of communism: the self-abolition of the proletariat by way of its abolition of Capital and the State.”⁴ And revolutionary theory, if it can no longer found a program, must necessarily be more abstract, in the present, and without being able to practically found a strategy from past concrete historical movements (this where the internal difficulty of diffusion arises from the decline of both orthodox and heterodox Marxisms, too far removed from the daily lives of the working masses, as well as from their comprehension of class struggle). The failure of “economistic” Marxist theories’ comprehension of the social sequence in progress, since the restructuring in the 1970s, has led to a renewed interest in the critique of the Economy as such. It is no longer a question of the affirmation of the proletariat, but rather its self-negation, and it is difficult to find in this some positive content. The experience of such a process [of self-negation] is one sorely missed, and which we will have to do without.

“Under present conditions, any search for the definition of communism must resolutely break with the categories which serve to analyze and critique the capitalist mode of production. This rupture, nonetheless, is not an arbitrary jump into a utopia which will be fed by the small dissatisfactions with current individual and collective life. It rather relies upon the reality of a crisis of the categories of capital which manifest, and will manifest, themselves concretely within the crisis activity of the proletariat. It is upon the modalities of the uprising of the proletariat on the basis of the blocking of the accumulation of capital which give direction to the communist overcoming of the capitalist crisis.”⁵

To conceive communism today is to advance some audacious concepts, valid only as hypothesis, valid only as a current understanding of the proletariat’s activity. There is a fundamental gap in temporality between theory and proletarian practice. Theoretical activity always bears a lag, it can not believe itself capable of dictating to the proletariat

3 Il Lato Cattivo, Photos à travers la vitre

4 Endnotes 1, Postface

5 Bruno Astarian, Le Communisme, tentative de définition