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War and Peace: Understanding and Resisting European Militarism and Imperialism

At a time in which European powers play a major role in increasing militarism, fascism, ecological catastrophe, and violence on all sections of society around the world, the **Peoples' Platform Europe** aims to offer a transnational European framework to join forces, coordinate action, unite struggles, and create a common vision of the world we will build together.

Thank you for signing up for our working group **"War and Peace: Understanding and Resisting European Militarism and Imperialism"**, which is one out of several working groups consisting of organizations that will convene the in-person gathering of the Peoples' Platform Europe to be held in Vienna in February 14-16, 2025.

In the discussions leading up to the gathering in Vienna, we have been aiming to connect, discuss, exchange analysis, and to together prepare the groundwork for the February in-person meeting. At the Platform and beyond, we want to jointly develop a strong common analysis that will inform our political activities and serve as the fundament for coordinated and meaningful resistance against the forces that profit from killing life. The text below is a product of our collective discussions so far. We hope that it can serve as a basis for deeper and richer discussions and work at the workshop and beyond.

In the lives of millions of peoples around the world, the term "Third World War" is no longer an abstract idea. As war rages around the world, states and sectors profiting from it are preparing for further fronts of military confrontation. The wars to come will lead to irreversible losses of life on Earth. War continues and spreads in specific parts of the world, but its effects are deployed worldwide: the possibility of military confrontations is presented as always possible and unavoidable by states and institutions. While asserting themselves materially with force and power (political, financial, etc.), imperialist and militarist states and institutions also mobilize for war in the cultural and intellectual realms - from schools to the entertainment industry, thereby establishing the conditions for increasing profits at the expense of workers, women and LGBTQI+ people, and migrants.

Many of us, organized in different movements or struggles, are already engaged in numerous efforts to resist the systems and structures of power, violence, and domination. We do not accept the world as it is and continue our quests for alternative solutions. However, it is a reality that many of our efforts remain fragmented and inadequate given the immensity of contemporary attacks. As people organizing in Europe, a historical and contemporary center of global power, we have the responsibility to increase the unity of struggles in Europe and beyond. Understanding and resisting today's militarism and imperialism in the context of Europe is an urgent task of internationalists and freedom-loving peoples around the world. This working group aims to be a space to discuss and organize around this task. Together, we want to collectively develop political analysis of the strategic geopolitical interests of hegemonic European powers/institutions so that we can better organize and coordinate our struggles. The main institutions of capitalist modernity in

Europe (NATO, the EU, etc.) are among the perpetrators of crises within as well as beyond the continent. European countries are at the forefront of the international arms trade. The emergence of new international formations (e.g. BRICS) have implications for the world system, with countries like China and Russia increasing their military, diplomatic and economic capacities. However, in the US-dominated hegemonic world order, European countries continue to maintain a special role, particularly France, Britain, and Germany, due to their centuries-old legacies of colonialism and imperialism on a regional and world scale. Within the division of labour among NATO member states, there is also global division of labour among European military powers. Understanding these dynamics, with all of their contradictions, is key for effective struggle against war and for meaningful, just peace today. However, a geopolitical approach is not enough: we need to understand the effects of the war on the living and working conditions of millions of people in Europe. The logic of war and militarism penetrates directly the lives of people affected by inflation; the substitution of welfare expenditures with military spending and the repression of social struggles further legitimate more violent border regimes and nationalist rhetoric. Cuts in social spending place the burden of social reproduction on the shoulders of women, within a sexist and patriarchal family context, and exploit the labor force of migrants, who are deprived of freedom of movement through residence permit regimes and racist hierarchies.

We must be able to connect opposition to war to people's daily struggles against oppression and exploitation. We cannot leave political initiative to states or supernational institutions.

It is important to look beyond daily news cycles and develop a common assessment of states' long-term goals. We need to deepen our understanding about the nature of European imperialism and militarism today. To this end, among other things, we want to address the following questions:

How do EU policies affect different regions in the world? What are European states' (and their allies') envisioned fronts of war and how do they prepare for future scenarios? Where are interests entangled, where do they digress? What kinds of concepts and technologies will shape warfare in the 21st century (e.g. population-centric war, counter-insurgency methods, artificial intelligence, etc.)?

How do war policies, which affect the organization of industry and the market, the appropriation of productive resources and labor force, the management of migration, the (re)organization of social reproduction, the framing of climate policies, impact the material conditions of life and labor of people in Europe?

What does this mean for social movements and national liberation struggles around the world in terms of challenges and opportunities? How can they confront the Third World War and its material and social effects? What different perspectives must we consider in our internationalist analysis? And how can society in Europe, hand in hand with struggling peoples around the world, build their self-defence against the forces of war and occupation?

Below, we outline our initial concept for our collective discussions, which we hope to deepen and extend with your engagement and active participation.

Europe and War: Between States and Society

As there are many political, historic, and socio-cultural connotations associated with the term "Europe", we must not be simplistic in our analysis. This is particularly relevant when considering that not all European countries have the capacity to impose their will on others, both within Europe and beyond the continent. Historically, it was specific western European countries that established themselves through colonialism and imperialism, and today, too, different countries are affected differently by events and developments, and they need to fulfil different roles in the war machinery. We understand this economic and political reality as a sort of division of labour. Europe does not just hold a special role in relation to NATO and the US. There is also a division of labour within Europe in upholding militarism. This has presented itself especially in the last couple of years as a dividing line, geographically and politically, in Europe.

With the Russian invasion of Ukraine, there has been a hegemonic discourse that frames this as the "first war in Europe since World War II". This erases the years of war and suffering in different parts of Europe, such as those experienced by peoples in the Balkans. The aftermath of the wars continue to be felt by the communities in terms of complex and interrelated social, cultural, economic problems, including ongoing health issues. This also reveals the superficial ways in which the term "peace" is

constructed by the state system. It also shows our need to fight for peace as based on the refusal of exploitation, militarism, racism, patriarchy - and not as a temporary agreement between states.

Moreover, as we develop our alternatives, we must always be mindful not to equate the nation-state system with society itself. We must be aware that all societies, including those of the imperialist core countries, are class societies. As the rich/ruling classes command wars and profit from them, people from the lower classes perish in the frontlines. Moreover, despite all the attempts to suppress and distort liberationist legacies, at the society level, European history is also one of struggles against state violence, war, colonialism, imperialism, fascism, capitalism, racism, and patriarchy. Furthermore, we must understand war in relation to capitalist economy and issues affecting society and nature more widely: ecocide, feminicide, migration, societal divisions, etc.

The re-militarization of European society has been in the making for a while as surveillance, criminalization and police brutality are returning to the center of Europe, from its colonies, margins and borders. States reveal their plans to re-introduce military drafts. Universities and other public institutions are coerced into complying with national security frameworks. European-led war and militarism are in interplay with the rise of fascist and far-right forces inside Europe. Militarism also affects the entire political spectrum, including the left. Liberal states rely more and more on fascist movements to suppress organized labour and to discipline women, queer, and migrant bodies. Across the continent, we see spikes in attacks on refugees, migrants, and racialized people. Meanwhile, anti-war activity is suppressed and persecuted. People opposing the aggressive policies of European states, waged in their names, are subjected to criminalization, police brutality, and censorship. Society, increasingly more polarized and pacified, remains vulnerable and exposed to the warfare plans of our day and of the world to come. Disarmed and made passive, women are rendered vulnerable, and are therefore among those most affected by war, with sexualized violence, trafficking, and feminicides (including political ones) being among the factors impacting them in particular. Women are made increasingly exploitable as a strict sexual division of labour is imposed on them to privately manage social reproduction when the war command cuts on social expenditures. However, they have been at the forefront of protests against the drafts in Russia and Ukraine, refusing to be the mothers of expendable future soldiers. They have been sustaining life in Palestine, organizing the resistance in Kurdistan. They have been fighting against sexual violence and murders exacerbated by the war. And, as migrants, they move across the borders defying patriarchal violence and racism from the countries of departure to the countries of arrival,

Continuums of Violence and Power

Legacies of colonialism continue to play a role in the development of the continuum of war and control, of the punitive chain (surveillance, manhunts, capture, mutilation, confinement, torture, neglect or killing) and in the production of global apartheid. In many ways, the Third World War is playing out as counter-insurgency war, especially in the framework of the so-called "war on terror". There is incentive and consistent development of counter-insurgency from the imperial core and through brutal warfare abroad, especially in places like the Middle East. This in turn is related to questions around incarceration, surveillance, technology, all of which are inter-related.

Countries like France, Britain, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, and Italy have historically shaped and maintained global systems of domination through militarism, colonialism, and imperialism. France, a pioneer in connecting racial capitalism, the military-industrial complex, and colonial counter-insurgency, exported these methods globally. During its colonial wars, and particularly during the Cold War - in Indochina and then Algeria - it developed a counter-insurgency doctrine that propelled the counter-revolutionary militarization of the whole of society, opening the path to a form of militaro-security fascism. It then shared this know-how with the powers of the transatlantic bloc, and the doctrine of "counter-revolutionary war" continued to play a crucial role in the global counter-insurgency repertoire, as well as in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan at the beginning of the 21st century. Since then, French imperialism has tried to maintain its position in its "overseas" colonies and in Africa, as well as within its own territory, by crushing social revolts and segregating working-class neighbourhoods, together with the media and police. As the world's second largest arms trader, France also organizes a significant proportion of the world's

major arms fairs. Meanwhile, the intelligence and surveillance focus of the British state is increasingly clear to social and political movements. The former Empire works in the landscape of Europe but also operating on its own. In the aftermath of Britain losing its empire, the realm of intelligence became one of its many forms of power. The British state still holds a powerful intelligence grip over many formerly colonized places. It organized many psychological operations over the Middle East over several decades, in addition to developing counterinsurgency and population control mechanisms in different places, including within Europe. The British state's intelligence and diplomatic arms are employed in wars around the world. Italy has been establishing itself as leader of "peacekeeping" and military missions in what the Italian government calls the "enlarged Mediterranean". From the point of view of economics, political interests, migration, wealth flows, energy and weapons, this area involves North Africa, the Africa Horn, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. All of these territories mirror the neo-colonial and Italian/European mining and capitalist interests and oil multinationals. This type of vision corresponds to investments and military missions in each of these territories.

The Economy of War

The possibility of nuclear war continues to be a serious threat to the planet. Under the NATO umbrella, nuclear weapons as deterrent act as a tool of domination. For as long as nuclear weapons exist, the threat of nuclear war is existential to all of humanity. The increased threats by the world's leading nuclear powers — the US and Russia — to use of so-called "tactical nuclear weapons" are a stepping stone towards normalizing the ultimate threat to human life. The lack of powerful movements for nuclear disarmament should be a serious concern for the anti-war left — their capture into institutional, reformist peace agendas should serve as a lesson of how the system will ultimately seek to neutralise resistance to war. New strategies to create a world free of nuclear weapons must be developed urgently and seriously.

We must understand war from an economical perspective. It is the war economy that runs the war, not war that runs the war economy. Military spending has never been so high. The shares of military companies are skyrocketing as we are witnessing a new cycle of investment into the war economy worldwide. In recent years, we have seen a rise in the militarization of police mainly through the war on migration, the conflicts around Europe in recent decades have also emptied military warehouses from the Cold War.

War moreover detracts from economic crisis in Europe. Far-right parties increasingly on the rise or in power, beat the drums of war to detract failure of their own ability to solve the economic crisis. The pauperization of the working class and the lower middle class creates a reserve army, i.e. soldiers that will be made to fight and die by state armies or privateers, private companies etc. Though the continent has seen record low unemployment rates in recent years, wages have not been keeping up with the inflation. What we are experiencing at this moment is not just lowering the workers' wages but lowering the costs of the coming war. When we add to this the catastrophic forecasts for the EU economy for next year, for the working class of Europe the question of participation in war as soldiers will soon become a question of survival.

The Power of Technology and Knowledge

Worldwide, the rise of new technologies is accelerating the dangers of both, planetary geo-political wars and local social discord and violence. Although society is and increasingly will be impacted by the consequences of new technologies, it has no say in their development or use, as the capitalist class owns the technologies and data. Mass surveillance, a process that has been evolving over the past decades, is key to both wars abroad and domestic social warfare. Today, states and corporations have vast access to people's private data, including their thoughts, opinions, and behavioural patterns on social media and apps. This insight is mobilized for state and capitalist purposes. The rise of artificial intelligence will only further enhance this capacity to surveil for a variety of purposes, from political repression to the development of precision weapons.

Effective resistance against war must involve exposing the dominant systems' ideological interventions and breaking their claims for a monopoly on truth. Through perception management and other forms of cognitive warfare, society is being kept in the dark about world-historical events. It is evident that without the role of information and knowledge institutions (e.g.

traditional news media, academia, think tanks, etc.), which are economically, politically, and ideologically aligned with state institutions, intelligence services, the military industry, and corporate power, it would be far more difficult to get society to accept warmongering and authoritarianism.

The monopoly of knowledge and the relationship between technology/science and society has been deeply challenged in the last year especially in the context of global student movements for Palestine. This shows us where and how certain strategies of capital are elaborated, but also where there may be opportunities to expose and denounce them and fight for meaning and truth against cover ups. The struggle for the production and accountability of knowledge is one main contradiction that could reveal possibilities to disrupt the present hegemony of war culture and ideology.

Today, especially in the context of Europe, propaganda no longer appears in obvious, recognizable ways, but is often very subtle and decentralized. From the rise of the 'combatting disinformation' sector to the use of women, queer, non-white identities to legitimize militarism and imperialism, information pollution makes it increasingly more difficult for people to develop critical, independent perspectives and positions. Analysis however is crucial for people's ability to resist locally and globally. While right-wing forces have in many ways successfully filled vacuums for their mobilization, alternative perspectives have been lagging behind in reaching society. We are concerned with how society's knowledge about the world is shaped by imperialist frameworks and narratives. Therefore, we must strengthen and make accessible anti-imperialist and anti-militarist analysis for society.

Against the War on Life

Increased competition for fossil energy resources and their extraction areas and transport routes is a major factor of military confrontation today. Most European countries depend on imports from outside, as their lack of deposits makes it impossible for them to exploit their own resources. Around the world, extraction is a cause of forced migration, as people escape the militarization of their homelands due to geo-political power games or changing climate conditions that affect their livelihoods (e.g. peasants impacted by draughts caused by battles to control access to waters). The phenomenon of 'green capitalism' packages old patterns of exploitation and extraction in the language of sustainability and environmentalism. Some of the greatest culprits of climate change, from imperialist states to oil companies, try to build public reputations around ethical responsibility while continuing to profit from the destruction of life.

The growing demand from European markets, further capital replenishment, and increasing the profits results in fierce competition and, under capitalist conditions, war is the logical consequence. This means that even ecological transformation in the sense of green capitalism ultimately leads to a further escalation of tensions as it takes place under capitalist and neo-colonial conditions. As has been long evident across the so-called Global South, imperialist states' slow but steady shift towards new energy systems will generate, reproduce, and deepen existing international hierarchies and cause further irreversible environmental damage. In any case, states on the weaker end of global politics do not have the financial or logistic capacity to transition towards new energy infrastructure without incurring immense amounts of debt at the expense of their national sovereignty. The increasing European demand for critical resources such as lithium, cobalt, tantalum and the like is already a catalyst for new conflicts. One recent example is the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where the strategic raw materials cooperation between Rwanda and the EU plays a key role.

Considering that present and future wars are inherently connected to battles over access to oil and gas reserves and fossil infrastructure, water, and other things, our solutions for peace must center visions that are tied to meaningful climate justice on a planetary scale - an approach for an alternative energy system that does not regard nature as a resource to be exploited and does not reproduce the Euro-American supremacy, and with that, more violence on "the rest of the world" in transitions towards new energy systems.

One aim of the working group should therefore be to strengthen our analysis of the relationship between militarism, imperialism and the ecological catastrophe. We want to expose the role of European states, companies, and other actors in the perpetuation of green capitalism/imperialism and other forms of extraction on a global scale. How can we politicize existing environmental struggles and increase internationalist, anti-imperialist

consciousness in these movements? How can we develop anti-capitalist, eco-socialist perspectives for alternative energy systems? What will be the role of workers in this process?

It is important for to understand the concepts and technologies that will shape warfare in the 21st century (e.g. population-centric war, counter-insurgency methods, artificial intelligence, etc.) as well as the ways in which wars will be shaped by competition over oil and gas reserves and fossil infrastructure.

Creating transnational politics of peace

War fought with weapons and violence has devastating material effects not only on the lives of those who choose to stay or are forced to stay due to lack of alternatives, but also on those who live far from the bombs. Alliances and solidarity between states are based on violence, exploitation and domination. Through these alliances, they seek to suppress daily political struggles everywhere. Many of our struggles aim not only to stop wars being fought with bombs, but also to oppose the impact of wars, especially on women, migrants and workers, through a system of social reproduction fueled by exploitation, sexual division of labor, racism, and border violence. European states respond to these mobilizations with oppression and criminalization, imposing bans on protests against atrocities committed by states such as Israel in Gaza or Turkey in several areas of Kurdistan. These restrictions aim to close off spaces of struggle, hindering collective organizing that seeks to break the logic of war and its material effects on people's lives.

For this reason, it is crucial to strengthen the link between anti-war and social struggles. Only through our collective strength can we build a transnational politics of peace, capable of connecting the diverse struggles against patriarchal violence, neoliberal exploitation and racism, and subverting the oppressive conditions of social reproduction under capitalism. We can fight the war by building common strategies based on transnational solidarity and collaboration. Creating a transnational politics of peace means rejecting the normalization of war, not only in places affected by wars, but wherever we struggle for a life free from oppression, poverty, racism and patriarchy. Peace, in our understanding, is inherently entangled with justice and liberation for all.

What is to be done?

Together, we want to think and organize around questions such as: How can peoples, workers, women and LGBTQI+ people, and migrants build their collective power and self-defence against the forces of war and occupation? What tactics are needed for movement building against militarism and imperialism? How do we oppose the war, starting from our struggles against patriarchy, racism, and capitalist exploitation? Beyond fragmented efforts, what can a unity of struggles against imperialism and militarism, against the Third World War, look like in Europe and beyond?

Your participation in the discussions in Vienna will greatly enrich this strategic effort. We want to use the physical togetherness during the platform to further our comradely relations and plan future ways of sharing resources, keeping each other informed about initiatives and campaigns, plan joint efforts, and, most importantly, strengthen and unite our struggles.

We hope you will join us in this effort and look forward to speaking to you. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, suggestions, or feedback.

We are at a turning point in time, and we must organize every moment for the world to come. The unity of our struggles is crucial to our survival. We can no longer afford anything other than victory.

Long live internationalism, long live the struggle of freedom-loving peoples! Until victory!

Anti-fascism: The Rise of Fascism and Conditions of Democratic Forces in Europe

How do we define fascism?

The word "fascism" originates from the Italian word "fascio" meaning "bundle" or "group". This term is directly linked to Benito Mussolini's early political movement, "fasci di combattimento" or "fight clubs," which referred to a bundle of people united under a common goal.

The earliest examples of fascist states can bee seen outside of Europe for instance in the formation of the Turkish Republic and the following genocides of armenian and syriac peoples.

• Fascism is deeply linked to social crisis. When the capitalist monopolistic system can't maintain balance in society and the crises deepens due to their constant tendency to increase exploitation of society, the capitalist elite turns to fascism to control the situation and prevent social uprising (A. Öcalan).

• Fascism is tightly linked to the nation-state since it represents a concentration of power in a central elite while expanding the area of exploitation controlled by that elite, in comparison to the preceding city-state system. This requires an increasingly artificial idea of "one nation" to legitimize why the society under that particular state's rule should accept that order.

• Woman, as the first "occupied territory" and the first part of society to be enslaved is the first target of fascism, therefore patriarchy is one of it's foremost frontiers.

• The mentality that has been created in society to make exploitation possible is also a root cause of what allows fascism to thrive under the nation-state. Therefore it is not merely a economical-capitalist cause but also a question of mentality.

• Through the rationalization of understanding of society that the Enlightenment stimulated a reductionist understanding of humanity was caused and as such the basis for fascism was created (T. Adorno).

• The separation of society, between us and them, has been the first step toward the mentality change that exploitation and capitalism requires. This is expressed in many ways, for instance extractivism against nature and racism against migrants.

• The middle-class is a reservoir of violence. When the state develops a fascist practice the middle-class is the main recruitment ground for fascist violence since they feel like they are one with the state.

• The fascist regime uses ideology that seeks to explain what the regime is doing (and why), putting it into a kind of frame of logic through the use of propaganda (H. Arendt).

• Violence is a central tool of a fascist regime. Not only to defend the regime itself but also as an ideological tool to create fear and the sense of power.

• A radical transformation of the state occurs when it moves into a fascist phase. A mechanism of eliminating all possible opposition within the state itself is commenced.

• The "banality of evil" - the general population become participate in the violence of the state understanding it as a normal thing.

• Fascism is not just a political issue but especially capitalist culture could pave the way for fascism through conformity, passivity and lack of critical thinking.

• Capitalism and fascism are linked but they are distinguishable from each other (Begaudeau)

What are the continuities and discontinuities between historical fascism and today's fascism?

Characteristics of historical fascism
• Fascism was installed and upheld through military force.
• It was upheld and continued by mass movements.
• Even though fascism has made claims to revolution, once it takes power it has always defended the statu quo, the dominance of the bourgeois elite (Traverso).
• Fascism was used as a counter-revolutionary alternative at a moment where socialism and social democracy were strong movements and had the potential to lead a revolution
• Fascism wanted to "nationalize" women, to integrate them into the system that aim totalitarianism and mass mobilization, at the same time that it promote and mystify women's traditional role as "mother of the nation's children".
• Male mentality has been the driving force of fascism in history

After the II World War
• The trauma left by Nazism and Fascism made it impossible to self proclaim as such for political tendencies with such goals.
• Fascism was practiced in the colonies through militaristic rule
• Imperialism put fascist methods into practice to fight back the Soviet Bloc, such as Operation Gladio and Operation Condor
• During the First World War, women had replaced men at the front in many professions, destabilizing gender prejudices and strengthening the influence of feminists. After the Second World War, although women's emancipation was once again debated, the "housewife" model remained the most widespread.

Contemporary fascism - Neo-fascism
• We are in a period where fascism is emerging - a period of fascistisation - rather than in an era dominated by fascism (Bantigny & Palheta)
• There is a difference in the domestic and foreign policies of European states. In Palestine and Kurdistan they already form fascism.
• The use of digital technology to increase the level of control on the individual and the "optimisation" of the consumer and isolation of social struggle
• Young women of the new generations joined neo-Nazi groups. They perform the role of the "strong and violent", while the home remains a place of extreme violence against women in these circles.
• The manipulation of the gains of the the feminist movements became a strategy of the fascists to attracting, exploiting and dividing women. Examples include the creation of self-proclaimed "identitarian feminist" groups are the rise of figures such as Marine and Marion Maréchal Le Pen in France, Giorgia Meloni in Italy and Alice Weidel in Germany. At the same time natalist policies and masculinist " incel " ideas spread.

The enemy within
• Despite the eclectic and sometimes contradictory expressions of fascism so far one common factor is the "National Myth" - the superiority of one nation over the others (M. Mohamed, P. Stambul)
• In the 1920s and 1930's emphasis was put on the Jewish people as the enemy of the nation
• Today, Islamophobia has taken over the role as the main ideology of racist and fascist forces in Europe - this is a main factor in developing an anti migrant narrative in Europe
• Using the divide between Jews and Arabs to amplify a new politic of persecution, suddenly Israel is "good" and Islam is "bad"

Eco-fascism
• The acknowledgment that nature is under threat but identifying the threat as foreigners, therefore the conclusion is that protecting nature has to involve controlling or stopping immigration (P. Guillibert).
• To protect the environment it is seen as necessary to take authoritarian measures to force people to act differently
• Overpopulation has to be fought by "sacrificing some people", first of all the migrants - and this should be done by enforcing borders and protecting private property

Liberalization
• Appropriating left-wing concepts and putting them at service for fascist practices
• Today a feminist argument is used for fascism and racist politics stating that especially muslim cultures mistreat women and should therefore be forbidden or marginalised

Legality and parliamentarism
• Just as the AKP and MHP in Turkey have formed a right-wing and fascist alliance there are similar

alliances emerging in Europe, such as in France and in Italy.

• The legal parties are normalizing a fascist rhetoric and agenda and paving the way for fascism - this in some cases leads to mutual strength between parliamentarian and street fascism, in other cases it has lead to weakened street fascism.

• Liberal mass media also plays a key role in normalizing racist and fascist narratives.

• It is worth pointing out that the era of fascism during the Second World War was preceded by mostly legal parties which later turned into violent, fascistic movements.

History and analysis of anti-fascism

Phases of antifascist struggle:

There are different phases of antifascist struggle that have been evaluated:

1. Pre WWII and during WWII (1920's until 1945)
2. Post WWII (1945 - 1990)
3. After the end of real socialism (1990's until today)

For the first phase the struggle is against the rise of fascism in the 1920's and fascism as an established system.The second phase is, in the former fascist countries, a struggle against the old fascist and collaborators. The third phase is after the end of real socialism. This marks a rise of nationalism in former socialist countries and a rise of conflicts and racist violence. It also marks a disillusion of the left movements.

Forms of antifascist organisation

1st phase

• Paramilitary organizations (often as wings of parties or unions), examples: Arditi del Popolo, Red front, Iron Front, Black Band

Cultural groups (propaganda through arts or youth culture), examples: Agitporp Troups, Edelweiß-piraten, Leipziger Meuten

2nd phase

• Urban guerrilla (as part of '68 movement), example: Action Direct, RAF, Brigate Rosse, FRAP, ETA, GRAPO

• Autonomus movements

Subcultural movements, example: Rock Against Rascism

• Unions

3rd Phase

• Autonomus Antifa groups

• Unions

• Legal NGOs (institutionalization of anti-fascist politics)

Which methods lead to success?

The question, if a anti-fascist movement was successful can not be answered positively on strategical level. If fascism is the outcome of capitalist crisis and capitalism hasn't been overcome, then there has not been a "final" success of anti-fascism.

On a tactical level there have been different successes. Outcomes of this are for example:

• Giving no space for fascist ideas

• Stopping physical violence of fascist groups or individuals

• Strengthening society's morals and awareness

• Deligitimization of state institutions by replacing their supposed functions such as self defense

• Preventing a fascist movement from growing

Examples of success:

• Workers and migrants fight together against fascists in Britain and are able to prevent marches such as in August 2024

• Front Popular in France was built

• Spanish civil war, with internationalist support, a resistance was held for years

• Students organizing together with workers stopping fascist marches or fight for better working conditions

Reasons for defeat:

• No unity between different progressive forces, energy was used to fight each other instead of a common enemy

• International support was not strong enough to prevent fascism to break out in countries

• Anti-fascism could not give direct solutions for a social crisis (short term perspective)

• Anti-fascism is not connected to a holistic idea that shows a different option to the existing system (long term perspective)

• Society is organised but not strong enough

Conclusions and thesis

Characteristics that are common for large parts of Europe and that can be defining in the creation of a common and continental strategy to fight fascism.

The rise of fascism

• Fascism and extreme right is growing in Europe
• The increase of femicides in countries like Germany show how the rise of fascism is linked to patriarchy
• Fascism is using a strategy of provocation to divide the popular classes and divert attention from the oligarchies and the cause of social crisis which is capitalism
• In the face of growing social crisis fear is used to submit the masses to increasing authoritarianism and militarism
• The growth of fascism is pushing social democracy and traditional right in a reactionary direction
• Classism, patriarchy, racism and nationalism are used as a defensive reaction against globalization and the emergence of new identities
• Cultural battle is prioritized by fascism, amplified by social media, aiming to create a new cultural hegemony
• Post modern expressions such as identity politics inspired groups have emerged, labeling racism or nationalism as "just another identity" and thus normalizing it
• Anti-Jewish politics have given way to islamophobic politics
• Feminism and ecologism are being claimed by the ultra right wing, appropriating them and turning them into anti-migratory tools
• Within the nation-states there are very often suppressed or almost forgotten national identities. These often form basis for nationalism and separatism but can often also form a basis for democratic forces.
• Calls within fascist and ultra right wing ranks for "direct democracy" are emerging
• Right wing movements are against EU politics and more for their "own" national state
• The ultra right wing parties are actively seeking to build international relationships with their affinities
• Where there are underground organized armed fascist groups they also have connections with the state through the police force or even in the higher state institutions
• LGBTQ groups are targeted by fascists

The conditions of democratic forces

• Classical street fascism has been marginalized in many places but in some instances is still given a strong hand by the emerging parliamentary organizations
• The Antifa groups that were formed as a response to the threat of street fascism have naturally also stagnated or declined
• There are many anti-fascist fronts active but they have generally not managed to adapt to the neo-fascist parliamentary forms of organizing
• Many of the anti-fascist actions are reactions to fascist actions such as them holding manifestations and anti-fascists gathering to create obstacles
• Both fascist and anti-fascist groups are often found within hooligan and ultras culture
• Ecologists and decolonial movements are on the rise and often have an anti-fascist character

The future fight against fascism

• Femicide is one of the most urgent and severe consequences of patriarchal mentality and fascist practices - therefore the anti-fascist struggle and the struggle for women's liberation and protection have to be seen as one
• Positive values such as feminism and ecologism are being appropriated by fascist forces - therefore a strategy and an approach is needed to take these values back to a democratic, feminist and anti-colonialist meaning
• Since the link between social crisis caused by capitalism and the emergence of fascism is evident the anti-fascist struggle has to be anti-capitalist as well
• The main mobilization ground for fascist and racists politics is today the ultra right wing in the parliaments - the strategy therefore has to include a struggle against these forces
• Fascism is not just a physical attack but also a cultural attack on society - awareness of this has to be created and methods to confront it on the cultural arena have to be defined
• Fascism tends to protect private property therefore the collectivization of such is an important element in the struggle against fascism
• Capital is trying to use fascism to divide society - a response therefore has to be internationalist, forging bonds between peoples, identities and nations
• The fight against fascism is closely linked to migrant struggles, they are mutually dependent and must be thought of together
• The right wing is today in many territories better than the left at connecting with the grass roots - a

successful anti-fascist struggle therefore has to include ways to find back to society

• Under the guise of territorial defense, nationalism is appropriating the fight for land - the local struggle has to be built upon a mentality of non-exclusion and plurality

• An anti-fascist alternative has to be able to offer direct solutions to social problems to become a real alternative to populism

• Forces fighting against fascism and for democracy have to learn to work together and build bonds on common ground to develop the force needed to stand against fascism

• Liberal ideology is good at dissecting reality and turning it into separated and consumable entities that it can use whenever it pleases - an anti fascist response has to be able to explain reality in a holistic and congruent manner to point out the arbitrary ideology of fascism

• It is part of the struggle against fascism to be able to express and practice the kind of world we want to have instead.

• In anti-fascist spaces, we need to identify and fight against approaches that: overvalue everything that is masculine, and replay a fascination with the masculine figure of the "antifa", relegate feminist struggles to the background, are violent against women or others, assign rather invisible tasks to women/LGBT and 'valorizing' and 'spectacular' tasks to men

• We need to find solutions to behavioral problems within organizations, freeing ourselves from purely punitive, stigmatizing, intolerant or moralistic approaches.

Further discussion

• According to Arendt an essential trait of fascism is the rule of violence. Can parliamentary organizations such as Sweden Democrats, True Finns and Alternative for Germany be understood as fascist when they are not openly violent?

• In the discussion about whether or not some organizations are defined as fascist, maybe we should keep in mind that during the emergence of fascism in the 1930's the forces that later became fascist were not predominantly violent.

• At one point in history fascism conducts a holocaust, at another point in history it raises the flag of Israel in Gaza. Is it possible to define such a wide range of stances and do they have something in common underneath it all?

• Can fascism exist without capitalism? Can an efficient anti-fascism exist without also becoming anti-capitalist?

• What role does women's liberation and ecology struggle play in the fight against fascism?

• If fascism is fighting a cultural war, how is an anti-fascist struggle conducted on the cultural arena?

• How do we confront the racist narrative in a context of increasing migratory crisis?

• How do we build a new anti-fascist internationalism?

• How do we confront the patriarchal and capitalist mindset that fosters fascism?

• The struggle against fascism has to have a mentality element. How do we struggle against the "fascist within", how can we collectively unlearn associated behaviors and beliefs?

• The fight against the far right cannot be waged without a movement that challenges masculinity and the patriarchy while seeking to go beyond it. How can we realize this in our movements?

Ecological Resistance: Defending Life

Goal

The overall aim of the workshop "Defending Life" is to collectively explore and develop an approach that builds connections between theoretical insights and practical actions, working to democratize society within today's "Capitolocene"—an era in which capitalist domination pervades all aspects of life, bringing us to the brink of ecological disaster. This approach must engage with broad theoretical concepts and enable their connection to the specific practices relevant to each concrete struggle or movement on the ground. In this effort, we seek to highlight the neo-colonial aspects of capitalist modernity as well as the role of women, and explore the flow of the "river" of democratic modernity.

The concrete objectives of this workshop are:
• To map ecological crises across Europe,
• To outline Europe's role in the global ecological crises, including global warming,
• To identify ecological struggles and cultures of resistance within Europe,
• To jointly develop tools to strengthen awareness and resistance,
• To foster relationships and lay the groundwork for enduring connections between the workshop participants.

Particular attention will be given to moving beyond positivistic and purely analytical methodologies, breaking with deterministic approaches to better understand the complexity and interconnectedness of today's crises.

The ecological problem of capitalist modernity

Reports of environmental disasters in different parts of the world are published every day. These events are all manifestations of a single, overarching ecological problem, which is deeply embedded in the current hegemonic system and its economic, cultural, and institutional expressions.

The ideological narratives that suggest 'humanity's' responsibility for the climate and ecological crisis are misleading. The crisis is caused by a specific way in which the life of society, thus its economy, are organized and administered by nation-states and capitalism: To realize maximum profit, goods are produced and the needed natural elements extracted continuously, using them without considering the natural cycles by which these elements are replenished, destroying ecosystems and producing waste and greenhouse gas emissions. In this sense, the notion of Capitalocene is more appropriate than the misleading notion of Anthropocene.

In order to understand the root of the ecological problem of capitalist modernity, it is necessary to consider the historical, political and ideological processes of separation, appropriation and accumulation of nature.

Human beings and society are inherently part of nature. Therefore, the separation of humanity and nature must be viewed as a construct of **patriarchal civilisation**, and it is dating back 5,000 years. This separation has enabled the appropriation of women as the "first colony" for reproduction and

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demographic control by dominant men, and the appropriation of nature as a provider of raw materials in the production process, thus a hierarchical mentality in which the man dominates women and nature. At the same time, knowledge passed down from generation to generation, and the culture in which women played a key role was taken over by the ruling and elderly classes, closely linking knowledge to power. The accumulation of raw materials, assets, and of power of knowledge has enabled growth and perpetuation of this civilisation over time that has lasted for 5,000 years to the present day.

Colonialism makes the exploitation of natural elements possible by an apparatus functional to the repression, assimilation and to a "societicide" of populations of many geographies, outside and inside Europe. The energy supply necessary for the industrial apparatus, developed from fossil fuels but increasingly involving renewable energy production, along with the re-emergence of nuclear energy, is made possible by constant control, through war, embargoes, corruption, and propaganda on places along strategic routes to the centres of power in the Global North. Not only do war conflicts and weapons testing areas cause destruction and irreversible pollution of territories, but the ecological crisis will cause an exacerbation of the conflicts themselves, will have to be managed by governments through the military. Colonialism also had an impact on agriculture and territory management of societies, requisitioning land to produce pleasure foods for Europe and Northern America and making countries dependent on them for the production of essential foods.

Industrialism is a key issue in the ecological problem because industry consumes fossil fuels, land, water, life, and all other resources, poisoning the environment. Industrialism expresses the political character of industry when it is put at the service of the only principle underlying the movement of capitalism: dominating and accumulating capital/profit. The pursuit of profit and capital does not enable industry to establish a harmonious relationship with the living and non-living beings, but instead piles up enormous contradictions.

Class conflict and the management of the ecological crisis are closely connected: On the one hand, the hegemonic class uses cheap labour to feed the destructive industrial system; on the other hand, it dictates that society pays for the consequences of ecological crises. The exploitation of "nature" and society are linked as two sides of the same reality: They are forms of subjugation of societies and territories. To feed this system, a narrative that encourages the accumulation of goods and a certain way of life has been created. This narrative impacts every aspect of life and the way societies are organised: production of food, urbanism and transport as well as vital services (schools, hospitals), and has created a competition for land use that divides societies.

In this context, war is a phenomenon closely linked to the ecological problem. Often, the reason is the domination of natural resources, and as the planetary ecological crisis grows, this clash becomes more intense. However, war is also a phenomenon that destroys both society and the environment, why we can say that it is an ecological disaster in itself. An ecological struggle is a struggle against war.

In order for these phenomena to be accepted and implemented by human beings, hegemonic civilization has systematically destroyed and erased social morality, eroding society's natural self-defense characteristics, such as the ability to decide how to manage its common resources, build its own institutions, and educate new generations. To conduct this destructive enterprise, the syste of the capitalist modernity educates human beings to hierarchy and consumerism, particularly in the Global North.

Challenging the hegemonic ideology

European civilisation is based on anthropocentrism, androcentrism and imperialism. In fact, the historical, political and ideological processes of separation, appropriation and accumulation of women and nature are the basis of the civilisation that have developed in Europe to such an extent that it has become the hegemonic ideology throughout the world.

Capitalism is attempting to find technological solutions to ecological and social crises, but these cannot work. In fact, these are always partial, solving a specific (quantifiable) problem but neglecting the more systemic reasons that would involve questioning power, hierarchies and exploitation. These technological solutions are supposed to leave the ideological structures of

liberalism and individualism unchanged, and therefore, in the end, they do not solve the social and ecological problem.

In the process of objectification extended to every area of reality, we can trace its roots. Human beings, living beings and the non-living are on a varied hierarchical scale submitted, as objects, to the hegemonic subject. The subject sees itself as external to an inanimate object reality that it can then manipulate for its own purposes. We can say that the subject's perspective today is that of the male, adult, white, rich.

The final product of this process is positivist science. It is capitalist modernity's own way of seeing the world. Positivist science analyses reality by breaking it down into disciplines, rejecting a holistic view and neglecting the network of relationships. It pretends to measure and reduce everything to indices, failing to have a vision that understands problems in a deeper way. Similarly, positivism fails to understand why society suffers so much in capitalist modernity. In this sense, relying on positivist science means continuing to reproduce the problem by perhaps displacing it (to other social sectors or other territories), and delaying it.

Capitalism, industrialism, and colonialism are expressions of this ideology of power and the dominant man. Therefore, when analysing ecological problems, we must always contextualise them within social and economic problems. The current ecological crisis is thus a product of capitalism, but it has also deeper roots: It comes from a deep construction of social mentality, based on the binomial command-obedience, power-hierarchy, which finds its culmination in the capitalist system. The shape of social relations gives body to the system, i.e. to its mechanisms, its dynamics, which ultimately generate the current ecological, social, and economic crisis. From this perspective, the field of ecology is connected to all others: Environmental issues must be considered in their social, economic, political and cultural context. Environmental protection, for example, is a matter of societal self-defense, since its destruction poses a threat to life on the entire planet Earth. Moving towards this new equilibrium is a strategy of self-defence for society, because keeping society and nature apart, continuing in this cycle of alienation and destruction, is a threat to life itself.

In order to escape from the mentality based on hierarchy and exploitation, it is essential to bring to light the relationship with nature that capitalism has stripped from society and whose traces still resist in Europe. Empowering an ecological society also comes from engaging with cosmogonies and cosmovisions of other geographies that have resisted processes of colonization and assimilation, and that are the basis of struggles for self-determination of indigenous populations such as those in Abya Yala (this is the word used by the indigenous people to refer to the American continent).

Towards a new Ecological Paradigm

It is necessary to develop adequate epistemological tools which enable us to analyse reality in the most useful way for a process of liberation and defence of life. What are the fundamental categories through which to analyse reality? It is important to reconstruct the process that led to the current situation. What clashes, what choices, what crossroads were taken in history. Through what dialectic can we analyse this path? In this way, we can understand along which direction the democratic forces must strengthen their efforts.

It is possible to analyse historical developments as a dialectical relationship between the pole of power/ state/patriarchy and the pole of free cooperation of society in its plurality. In this dialectical development, the dominant civilisation tries to solve social and ecological problems by creating new and deeper ones in order to maintain its hegemony . The question of power and the question of the ecological problem are thus linked. Pollutant emissions, extractivism, and destruction serve the purpose of accumulating capital and power, so they are vital elements for those in power to maintain their position. Within this framework, it is important to analyse history from a sociological point of view, and to historicise sociology. What tools, then, should we use to analyse the processes that have seen the evolution of land use and care, industrialism and urbanisation? In these processes, women's practices and resistance have played a central role that needs to be understood. From these, and other, foundations we intend to question the tendency of future struggles and alternatives.

As part of this analysis, it is necessary to understand the layered consequences of the Industrial Revolution on history, on life, and on society, as well as on the meaning of industry, now emptied of its intrinsic creative character.

It is necessary to talk about the Industrial Revolution because from that moment agriculture, along with weaving, ceased to be the main mode of production, making industry reach its highest degree of capital accumulation, of profit gain. The Industrial Revolution thus marks an important turning point in the loss of society's ecological consciousness: it is the moment when cities cease to be complementary elements to the countryside; in the Middle Ages, in fact, it was the importance of agriculture that determined the development of the craftsmanship sector in the city; the two realities with their respective social actors, in fact, were complementary to one another.

However, this is not just a matter of surplus production, which in fact already existed in earlier times, nor even just a revolution in economic terms, but something that has completely changed the structure of social, ethical, political, and ecological life. The two main political consequences we can trace are: industrial revolution paved the way for the development of the nation-state and initiated the second major global attack on society after colonialism: the imperialist process.

As the consequence of a long socio-historical accumulation, the Industrial Revolution marks the first time in history when energy became independent of human physical force and brought about the transition that led urban production to overtake and become more important than rural agricultural production. Urban society thus overtakes rural society, initiating the colonial dialectic between cities and villages, centre and periphery, marking the beginning of the dominance of the bourgeois class and the appearance of industrialists among society's actors. At this stage, science begins its planned participation in production, becoming instrumental to profit maximization and complicit in capitalism attacks on nature and society. The implementation of analytical and positivist mentality to life has thus led to the moral decay of society, depriving it of its meaning and original essence, causing the radical weakening of our ecological consciousness. Proof of this is life in urban cities, where society and its values are commodified - from history to culture, to sacredness and nature, society is put at the service of the market. In the city, society loses its essence as a dimension that breeds and regenerates life. Indeed, the greatest threat embodied by industrialism consists in its anti-social nature. It is a theft and a massacre to all peoples and the whole earth.

This, however, should not lead us to think that urban and rural areas are part of two opposing environments or that the former arises as a space and phenomenon in contrast to the latter. On the contrary, it is a relationship of an entirely different kind: contrary to what the statist view suggests, the village represents the condition of possibility for the existence of the city, which is born precisely from colonial expansion at the expense of the countryside and positioned as the center through its role of domination, exploitation, and production of violence, including epistemological violence. Its growth is cancerous, both in an imaginative sense because of the parasitic nature of its endless expansion and in the literal sense because of the consequences it entails for the environment and the health of living beings, human and non-human.

The way of understanding and interpreting reality to be developed must be ecological in itself. This means re-signifying the existence of society through the human and non-human relationships that it consists of, socialising and redefining the relationships between us and the Earth.

Ecological movements and struggles

The ecological movements of recent years have achieved many successes and shown great strength and determination. However, they have also had to face both the forces of the system and their own shortcomings; these two elements have prevented them from progressing and creating an ecological society. In this regard, some issues need to be discussed in depth today, as the development of the modern capitalist system is becoming more destructive by the day. At present, ecological movements in Europe feel the need to share experiences and develop strategies, long-term visions and alternatives that can show a common path.

In recent years, uprisings and movements have put on the agenda the urgency of imagining and living an alternative to the existing system. Envisioning the alternative is a compass for imagining which way to go, for designing strategies to get there, and thus for choosing tactics. Very often it is present in all struggles, but it is not explicit. And that is why it can be manipulated by the system.

In order to discuss this issue, it is important to discuss the motivations that drive ecological movements, starting with ourselves: the defence of

the land and its resources, a historical course vibrant with values and principles, a way of living and interpreting reality. The current clash is above all a clash of ideologies and mentalities. Therefore, the transformation must also take place within ourselves. In fact, the problem of power and domination, over the living and the non-living, is intertwined with that of ecology.

Ecological struggles need to be reconnected with the broader spectrum of social struggles, against capital, against patriarchy, racism, and fascism. All these issues form a bundle that needs to be addressed holistically. Three main dimensions emerge from the collective experience: the re-discovery of a social, solidarity-based and inclusive morality that goes beyond the logic of individual profit; the conditions for society, in its plurality, to have a say in the decisions that affect its life and territory; the conditions for satisfying, producing and consuming on the basis of society's needs rather than profit and without exploitation. Ecological struggles have often seen the need to reconnect urban and rural areas and to develop eco-communities. This also means re-discovering certain capacities that the system takes away from us: the capacity for self-government, the capacity to organise social cooperation according to autonomous principles and objectives.

In the knowledge that there is a lack of forums where many different movements can come together to share their visions and strategies and find a common way forward, there are many issues we would like to discuss. With the idea that this platform is the first of a series, we would like to start with questions that allow us to share each other's vision, the political issues that each struggle is facing and what common strategies we can build and what spaces we can create to continue the conversation after this workshop.

First we intend to collectively elaborate a vision of the main critical aspects and existing conflicts in the ecological field between the system and society in which Europe plays a leading role. Then we would like to trace ecological problems and a common history, or better, a HERSstory of the European territory of societies resistance against capitalist modernity, trying to get out of the gaze of a story written by the dominant male. Finally we would like to explore different ways of organizing to share tools and to find ways to connect struggles and resistance. Leaving us with a "COMPROMISO" (as in Zapatistas conferences).

Thus we propose a few questions to stimulate discussion and bring different experiences and points of view into dialogue:

1) Which processes of separation, appropriation and accumulation by Capitalism have been historically carried out in the place where you live (your territories)?

2) Which ones are nowadays carried out?

3) How have these processes changed society's relationship with nature?

4) How has your society resisted and is still resisting these processes?

5) What is the role of women?

Questions for the second day (to answer before):

6) What are your short-, medium- and long-term goals of your struggle?

7) What tools do you use to decide about your strategies?

Women's Democratic Conferderalism: Women Weaving The Future

Dear participants in the Women Weaving the Future workshop,

<mark>The past century has witnessed significant breakthroughs and victories in the fight for women's liberation.</mark> Across Europe and beyond, collective political movements have achieved advances in legal rights, education, work, and representation. Yet, the patriarchal capitalist system remains largely intact. Oppression, injustice, and inequality continue to shape the lives of people in societies rooted in power and hierarchy. The world is still deeply entrenched in patriarchal norms, colonialism, and capitalist exploitation—and Europe is no exception. Quite the opposite is true.

In response to this reality, we, the organizing group of the workshop Women Weaving the Future, have decided to write and share this text with you. It is an attempt to analyze the dominant patriarchal and capitalist system in Europe today and to underline the urgent need for anti-systemic resistance that dismantles power structures holistically, in defense of life.

Of course, we don't claim that this text provides a complete analysis of patriarchy in Europe or fully represents the voices, experiences, and struggles of <mark>all women, feminists, queer groups, collectives, and organizations across the continent. Instead, it reflects the result of nearly four months of fortnightly (and</mark> later more frequent) online discussions among us—a group of organized women of different ages, from different countries and political experiences in Europe. As active members of struggles, collectives,

movements, etc. within Europe, our collective perspectives come from our political organizing work.

<mark>Trying to weave all these perspectives into one text has been no small challenge. And yet, while diverse,</mark> our group is still largely (though not entirely) composed of women who hold certain privileges— for example, in terms of race, class background, or freedom of mobility—thus reflecting a partial gaze on power and resistance of women in Europe. From the outset, we aimed to invite women from all oppressed groups and less visible struggles in Europe, both to our online discussions and to the workshop in Vienna. We've done our best within the limits of our time and resources. Still, it is not enough, and we know that the path toward building truly transversal alliances among women in Europe is a long one.

So, we offer this text as a starting proposal—a first step toward building a common ground for analysis. It's an invitation to begin a dialogue that will go far beyond these words, with the hope of discussing and rewriting it collectively in the future.

The many faces of patriarchy in Europe – a total assault on society and life

<mark>Patriarchy is one of the oldest and most deeply established systems of power and violence in collective human history. Its complex origins stretch back thousands of years</mark>. It has shaped the lives and the social, political, and economic conditions of peoples around the world. It is intertwined with other systems and structures of power, domination, and hierarchy - entangled with capitalism and the

state. As a system, patriarchy manifests itself in different ways in different contexts. It normalizes violence and exploitation, shaping societal mentality through culture, laws, and ideologies. It is woven into the fabric of everyday life: from the family to global state policies.

In Europe, the ideology of liberalism has become rooted in people's minds and institutions over centuries. We can describe it as a framework that heavily relies on state power. Liberalism is the ideological foundation of the world system of states. Born in the European Enlightenment era, liberalism aligns with capitalist principles as it promotes the accumulation of wealth through private property and market-based competition. Its definition of progress and development is Eurocentric and secularist and has evolved historically with industrialism and colonization. Although liberalism champions speak of free speech, equality, and the rule of law, its capitalist essence preserves social and economic hierarchies, disguising the racial and gendered forms of exploitation at the heart of capitalism. Capitalism, and the liberal world system that it has helped establish, after all, is based on centuries of accumulation through slavery, colonialism, and imperialism. **These methods of oppression were first felt also against the bodies, time, and labor of women--particularly of those who did not conform to the dominant system--through feminicide, erasure, and subjugation in all areas of life.**

Today, patriarchy has many faces, both in Europe and around the world. On one hand, there is what could be described as "liberal" patriarchy, in which some women and queer people are integrated into the dominant system while the general patriarchal organization of life remains upheld. They are even incorporated into historically masculine institutions like the military, gaining some rights while seemingly fighting to defend liberal worldviews globally. This shift often leads to blurred lines between left and right under liberal ideology. At times, even right-wing politics expand to include minority rights; however, these policies are unstable and can be reversed at any point. Less subtle are the many forms of overt violence and injustice perpetuated by patriarchal power – from domestic abuse and violence against those who refuse to conform, to foreign policies that destroy the lives of women, the colonized, and the poor around the world. Feminicide, rape culture, and everyday sexism express themselves daily in every realm of life, mutilating our sense of self and our relations in society.

In Europe, struggles for women's rights, equality, and representation undeniably achieved milestones over the last century. At the same time, this did not lead to a dismantling of the patriarchal capitalist system. Instead, we find ourselves stuck and fragmented. Issues such as gender identity, the gender pay gap, and gender-based discrimination are important and meaningful sites of struggle. However, the focus on symptoms can sometimes take over in struggles, at the cost of developing more radical perspectives to abolish systems of oppression at the root. While specific issues are undoubtedly important, they are often treated in isolation, without being integrated into a more holistic analysis and approach. The existence of legal protections is not enough to address deep-rooted systemic issues.

Moreover, in the context of Europe, a center of capitalist modernity, women's struggles cannot be confined to the issues and causes that affect women within the borders of Europe considering the historic and present role of European colonialism and imperialism in making the current world system, including the role of patriarchy within it. Numerous women's liberation struggles have inspired the world and shaped international solidarity in Europe. Still, mainstream feminist spaces continue to be exclusionary towards racialized and poorer communities, especially Black and migrant women, despite the interrelation between sexism, racism, and class. Eurocentricism and colonial mentalities prevail in analysis and practice, even among radical and revolutionary groups, despite the ease of communication and access to information in today's world. As such, internationalism must be a key component of women's struggles located in Europe.

Patriarchy also manifests itself in left organizations and movements. Women's experiences of violence, harassment, and discrimination are often silenced and not believed. This further reveals the need for autonomous organizing as an organizational principle and strategy for building consciousness and overcoming patriarchal mindsets.

These and other issues highlight the need for a more comprehensive, critical approach to patriarchy and the capitalist system. It is important to insist on revolutionary and autonomous perspectives to transcend fragmented and reactive struggles and address broader structures of power and oppression.

Fascism and the new faces of the right

Across Europe, the rise of fascism and right-wing government policies and movements impact women immensely. Renewed and more and more aggressive waves of nationalism, especially in the aftermath of the so-called "refugee crisis," reveal the new faces of the right in Europe. In practice, the right is increasingly becoming the central position, and it is imposing itself as the main agenda-setter that others are forced to react to.

It is not surprising that women are increasingly among the faces of the new right, with people like Alice Weidel or Giorgia Meloni being prominent figures in legitimizing patriarchal values and norms. In a way, women are rewarded for preaching patriarchal values. The privileges they gain from functioning within the dominant system and embodying a form of extreme individualism often lead them to abandon other women and actively undermine the broader struggles for women's liberation. This can be seen as an ongoing process of conservative and right-wing forces to co-opt women and women-related causes in their political and cultural agendas. The discourses espoused by the right furthermore serve to advance a regression in women's rights and autonomy over their body, for example the right to abortion. They impose essentialist definitions onto people and their bodies and identities, with particular hostility against queer, trans, and gender non-conforming people.

Further, the right frame demographic changes due to migration as a biological threat to white European existence, positioning women's bodies as central to this ideological battle. An example of this is the right's discourse around violence against women, which often ends up blaming migrant communities or perceived "cultural" threats resulting from a move away from tradition. This way, they can, on one side, pretend to care about women's issues while on the other side, continu e their fight for the white, Christian, heteronormative family ideal.

As an extension of the same politic, there are calls from liberal, conservative, and right-wing sides to increase policing, surveillance, security, and scrutiny around racialized and migrant people due to threats they allegedly pose. In reality, these policies reproduce racism and Islamophobia. Meanwhile, they also grow the profits of the military and security sector: many companies involved in developing cutting-edge military technology (including surveillance drones, AI-powered weapons, etc.) are also constructing the detention infrastructure that sustains the European border regime. These, in turn, are sites in which migrant and refugee women, often accompanied by children, experience terrible conditions in the aftermath and during ongoing traumas of displacement.

We also live in a world in which mass communication dominates and shapes our perception of reality. We experience an overflow of information in a time in which more and more people in society are addicted to their smartphones. The monopoly of big tech companies, including social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, X, Instagram, TikTok, etc.), means that we live in a world in which algorithms direct our knowledge and consciousness. These algorithms create echo chambers that repeatedly present only one side of reality to any given individual, which generates disconnection and polarization - we can deeply experience that in social life, in the fragmentation and polarization within and between our societies, peoples, and struggles.

Inner-migrant dynamics

When speaking about racialized forms of violence and injustice in the context of Europe and how they affect women, we must consider inner-migrant power dynamics. Gendered forms of racism within migrant communities result from intersecting racism and sexism, where internal hierarchies based on race, ethnicity, and religion further marginalize specific groups of women (e.g. lighter-skinned or non-Muslim migrants experience different treatment compared to Black, darker-skinned or Muslim women; Kurdish women in Turkish-dominated communities or women from minoritized faith communities like Êzidîs or Alevis face added discrimination from others from the same region; women migrating from Eastern or Southern Europe to western metropoles or women with precarious legal statuses are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, etc.). Black women continue to experience extreme forms of racism, discrimination and exploitation both from white European and migrant communities.

State policies, such as headscarf bans or increased surveillance, exacerbate these divisions. The state enforces broad stereotypes of certain groups as "dangerous", which deepens racial and gender hierarchies. Such increased policing and oversight disproportionately affect marginalized women, limiting their autonomy within both their

communities and society at large. This state paternalism, including liberal approaches, relies on control and surveillance rather than addressing the root causes of discrimination. At the same time, these struggles and dynamics within and between migrant/diaspora communities could also create fruitful ground for the re-creation of different international identities, including those based on internationalism. ==Creating divisions between women is a key tactic of antidemocratic politics: if we are alone, we can more easily be assimilated, instrumentalized, attacked. Our strength is precisely in the social character of our identities and ties, and in building unity in diversity.==

Youth: relationship to identity, culture and land

Identity and culture are an enormous ideological battlefield today. Young people, their bodies and lives, are often at the center of this. Rising militarism within societies, the online popularity of toxic, misogynistic figures espousing a form of dominant masculinity, and imposition of traditional gender roles impacts the self-perception of young men and their relationships to themselves and to others. Meanwhile, especially in the past few decades, youth, have increasingly been migrating from rural areas to urban centers, which creates further wedges between society and land and further removes people from subsistence economies. Youth, especially from non-EU countries, migrate or aspire to migrate to Western Europe, trading in the community life with friends and family at home for the prospect of better living conditions, which usually translates to hard labor, social isolation, and exclusion. This is another example of the extraction of manual and intellectual labor from the periphery to the center of power in Europe.

For many young women in Europe living in smaller urban and rural areas, patriarchy is a daily reality that they have to accept as normal and live by. The idea that patriarchy in Europe manifests mostly beneath the surfaces is removed from reality - patriarchy is alive and dictates the living conditions of women very explicitly all over the continent. Meanwhile, those with the privileges to adopt more cosmpolitan lifestyles and views of themselves, seemingly free from the 'burden' of roots, can sometimes have illusions about the ways in which they are affected by patriarchal structures, due to the supposed freedom they perceive to enjoy.

Due to one's 20s and 30s being the common age to have children and form one's own traditional family unit, this phase is often full of major life decisions, and with that, contradictions. However, latest when entering domains of work or relationships, families, state bureaucracies, etc. do women quickly realize the extent to which the system is still based on the discrimination and exploitation of women especially through free or cheap care work, on the patriarchal division of labor, and on the willingness of women to carry the maintenance of society. Young migrant women furthermore face assimilation, as they are confronted with multiple, sometimes contradicting sets of societal expectations. Confronted with all sorts of pressures and socio-economic uncertainty, even active women become depoliticized or take less radical life decisions in their 30s.

The patriarchal capitalist system in our lives – and the non-solutions it offers

Patriarchal violence, including feminicide, continues to be a major factor affecting our lives and power relations in society. As a form of social control and domination, violence is used to keep women in their place - whether at home, in our movements, or in the broader society. While the state claims to be the main institution to protect women from violence, it often appropriates the struggle against violence, and neither can it tackle the root causes nor does it offer sustainable solutions. Its punitive responses, instead bring about the opposite: prisons, surveillance, racial profiling, and borders, they all aim to enforce their order and suppress our voices, existences, lives, and politics.

==As individuals and organizations that are part of society, we see the mirrors of this existing patriarchal violence. From male dominance, division, and competition among women, the exploitation of trust to betrayal and abuse. The patriarchal system is so deeply ingrained in us that all of us can be deceived sometimes and need to learn how to face mistreatment the hard way.== Unfortunately, we still struggle to find the right ways of dealing with the aftermath of violence. Too often we aim for justice and transformative processes but fail in the face of reality and the lack of supportive systems. Within feminist circles, there are more and more voices demanding policing, stricter sentences, and longer prison time to respond to and prevent violence

against women. More police and stricter courts mainly enforce hegemonic power as racism and Islamophobia and deepen the structural oppressive system that these institutions are based on. They cannot be expected to bring about the necessary fundamental cultural and ideological shifts to overcome the deeply-rooted mentalities behind violent patriarchy. They cannot eradicate feminicide and rape culture.

Gender and class are inseparably interwoven. Economic exploitation and patriarchal structures reveal themselves, especially in domestic and care work. Confined largely to the realm of reproductive labor—work that is often unpaid—women have become a foundational yet invisible force in sustaining capitalist economies. The capitalist market and system rely on this unpaid labor, exploiting women's roles within households and communities, in cities and rural areas. In addition to unpaid reproductive labor, women – especially migrant women - are incorporated into the workforce as cheap labor, particularly in sectors like caregiving and low-wage industries. This undervalued work that we give our time, heart and effort to is what keeps the capitalist economy running. Women also face the double burden of work—doing both paid labor and the unpaid care work that families rely on. Many of us work part-time or in jobs with no security. This reality also means that many of us have no or only limited time, resources, and capacity to participate in organizing - yet we are fighting for a better life in many ways that are often invisibilized. This leads us to the question of connecting organized and informal struggles. How can women's organized struggles and organizations more genuinely and seriously center the informal struggles woven into our daily lives?

At the same time, not all of us experience these struggles in the same way. Class and race divisions result in different realities and conditions for poor and racialized women. Some women are more privileged and can climb the 'social ladder', nevertheless are often expected to do unpaid care work. The exploitation of migrant women is a clear example of how patriarchal capitalism thrives on racial and class inequalities. We could see this challenge while mobilizing for this very platform: many of those who could not afford to come were migrant or racialized women - whilst we aim to bring people together, we face limits of material capacity and can't meet all needs despite our support efforts. Class dynamics also deepen social and economic divides, producing feelings of shame in us, especially among working-class people, migrants, and the poor. Naturally, material conditions impact people's consciousness. Due to material struggles, the very people who would benefit the most from fights for change are often too busy or exhausted to do so. This creates a vicious cycle of disempowerment.

What would it mean to overcome the patriarchal capitalist system? This question is inseparable from the role of women in society. While the socialization of women as a collectively oppressed group has been constructed over time through power, domination, and hierarchy, it is also rooted in a long history of women as caretakers and nurturers as well as social and economic leaders in families and communities, as well as many other diverse and subversive realities beyond tradition. But women's multiple roles in making society have been severely attacked over centuries of patriarchal subjugation by violence, societal disempowerment, confinement into the private sphere, and the exploitation of women's labor. On this base, the division of wealth along capitalist profit interests, violence, and the commodification of life are deeply interconnected. Our perspectives must be able to simultaneously analyze women's (diverse, changing, and dynamic) roles in society and the organization of work and care. We need to find ways in which our societies can organize to overcome these contradictions.

In a world fragmented by patriarchy and capitalism —systems that isolate and atomize individuals—it is the communal spirit that must be revived. Women can actively lead this revival and rebuild communal society. They can be at the forefront of pushing back the family-state pressure on women to take the double burden of working for the market and family. If societies were built to value care and community over profit, women would not have to be forced to work both in the nuclear family and the capitalist market in exploitative ways. Women need to claim their active and diverse spaces in a self-empowered society that manages to control its resources and distributes them according to the needs of the communities. For that, we must transform the oppressive and coercive conditions that have historically shaped women's role in society and reformulate the terms and means of sustaining the life and well-being of people and living creatures.

Capitalist modernity's answers to the question "How to live?"

We see, feel, and experience how under capitalist modernity, the idea of a good life is commodified and brought together with deep patriarchal beliefs. Some of the most important aspects of life—health, education, friendship, family, connection, and community— are targeted and repurposed. Neoliberal policies further shrink the spaces for our peoples to regenerate and flourish outside capitalist and patriarchal relations. There is an absence of autonomous and radical spaces that could offer space for meaning, care, community, imagination, and alternative building.

The world of health, for example, is dominated by consumerism. Women's bodies and well-being are specifically targeted within this. Generally, there is a powerful push within mainstream culture, especially through social media, to focus on individual well-being and empowerment. This emphasis on "choice" feminism, often distracts from the need for collective struggle. Instead of encouraging women to come together and organize from within society, we see that the focus lies on personal empowerment, individualistic self-care, and personal boundary-setting. This promotes a view of feminism that centers on individual success and choices rather than collective responsibility and care in order to challenge and transform societal power structures. More and more people are becoming aware of mental health issues for example. But mainstream discussions often overlook the broader socio-economic factors, the decay of social relations, and spiritual meanings that contribute to making people "sick" in a capitalist world. People become more knowledgeable about symptoms but lose sight of the root causes. Especially the beauty industry is feeding into this culture which heavily targets the younger women among us and turns the natural process of aging into something to be avoided at all costs. In the name of choice feminism, we are confronted with unrealistic standards, which create insecurities and competition among us women. In some ways, this is a reversal of old feminist struggles to fight the ideological and physical colonization of women's bodies. The truth is, yes, we need to heal our bodies, minds, souls, and our communities - but those answers will not allow that. We need to find our own, self-determined ways to heal as part of struggle, community, and life!

Struggling within or against the system? Defending our struggles

Today, women's struggles for liberation are more visible and connected than ever before. Beyond borders, women organize themselves at the local, regional, and global levels to tangibly change their own lives and conditions, and with that, the lives of many others. At the same time, they are being integrated and assimilated into capitalist modernity's institutions, which co-opt, pacify, and depoliticize their demands. Feminist ideals, developed over long periods of time in collective struggles, are made to align with consumer culture and state interests. In this way, women's struggles are recognized but in ways that maintain the status quo. It is important to resist the assimilation of women's struggles, by insisting on the transformative potential of radical anti-system politics and principles. Understanding the dynamics that have emerged in the 21st century is crucial to defend our movements.

Fragmentation

Borders do not only divide the relations between people and land. They also fragment our struggles by limiting the scope of our activism and political causes. They force communities to mainly address the system/problems/issues within one nation-state at a time. Given the interconnectedness of such systems of power in our lives, it is important to advance transnational and internationalist perspectives, share struggles, and develop analysis across borders. This is especially the case concerning migrant and racialized women, who are among the most exploited both within and outside the EU. Caught up in daily news cycles and concerned with immediate environments, we often react incoherently to events without taking the time to analyze deeper, structural forces like class exploitation, colonialism, and imperialism beyond our immediate contexts. We need to analyze the deep structures that lie behind politics and events and their continuities while staying grounded in local struggles.

Beyond physical borders, social justice struggles, including feminist groups, are often fragmented due to an overemphasis on ideological or cultural differences. In recent years, this has resulted in divisions that led to multiple demonstrations taking place on the same day (for example November 25th

or March 8th). There are major differences when it comes to organizational principles like women's autonomy. Moreover, ideological disagreements on important topics like transgender liberation and sex work, have become occasions for feminist groups to publicly attack and completely turn away from each other in deeply divisive ways instead of seeking direct dialogue and mutual transformation.

Another factor driving fragmentation is the confinement of feminist (and other progressive) debates to bourgeois/elite circles. For example, the academic liberal way of debating social problems is extremely inaccessible and offers no concrete solutions. There is a massive gap between academic discourse and lived experiences. This inevitably leads to a divorce between theory and practice. Too often, theoretical feminist discussions and studies leave out the thoughts and lives of those directly impacted by oppression. The appropriation and emptying of concepts and frameworks that historically emerged from political struggles turn subversive ideas and theories into material for abstract discourse detached from society and disconnected from real-world issues.

Assimilation and co-optation

In recent years, terms like "feminism," "women's and LGBTQI+ rights," and "queer liberation" gained visibility. This visibility is an outcome of a long history of social struggle against systems of oppression, led by marginalized groups. However, shifts in mainstream discourse are also state interventions that seek to pacify movements demanding radical change. From a revolutionary perspective, we need to critically and self-critically examine these developments.

Today, states in Europe, especially those promoting themselves as global upholders of liberal democracy, and champions of equality and human rights, cannot ignore social inequalities. However, rather than being a genuine goal, equality is often only talked about and represented at the aesthetic level by institutions of power. The very idea of equality is being distorted in this way. Despite progress on some fronts in the realm of rights, the actual material conditions of the masses of people have not immensely changed. People's situation even worsens in many ways. There is a clear difference between representation and bureaucratic equality vs.

meaningful material transformation and justice.

Women's liberation is absorbed into the dominant capitalist and patriarchal system in part through terms like "representation" and "inclusion". This essentially liberal notion of change is based on individual empowerment within an oppressive system. In this way, institutions can "look" as though they have changed due to the new faces they display on the outside, without having to change their operation, function, structure, etc. For example, minor adjustments to recruitment policies might be presented as concrete change, but these are often superficial and symbolic rather than transformative. Letting a few individuals from historically oppressed groups enter positions of power does not alter the conditions faced by the vast majority of oppressed people.

Not only is representation insufficient to address the root causes of injustice; but it is also part of a larger, dangerous trend: through purple or pink-washing, progressive agendas can be put in the service of statist, patriarchal, and even fascist agendas. The boldest example of this is the propaganda around the diversification of militaries and violent border security institutions like Frontex (in part based on the UN's Women, Peace, and Security framework). Europe is furthermore at the forefront of promoting the concept of "feminist foreign policy", which often masks the underlying patriarchal and capitalist forces that drive global war and militarism. Liberal feminist perspectives on war and conflict generally tend to focus on gender inequality, overlooking the role of imperialism, capitalism, and class exploitation in the war industry. In any case, even if they appear to promote diversity, institutions of power continue to perpetuate violence and oppression around the world – and, of course, women are among those most affected by war. European women are thus made complicit in global oppression and domination.

Dependency

Our social movements frequently become pacified or controlled through various methods of state and corporate power. This includes repression measures like criminalization, surveillance, and police violence, but also softer factors such as co-optation into liberal or reformist mentalities or forms through NGO-ization and dependency on funding.

The mainstream "change" economy that emerged over the past decades, which revolves around states, political parties, or billionaire-funded NGOs, created a system of dependency in the social justice world. While external funding can tactically help and empower local groups at times, this comes at the cost of being tied to external agendas, which often necessarily influence the politics put forward. Causes like gender equality and women's economic empowerment are among the most prominent causes in the NGO sector, a world shaped by bureaucracy, corporate money, and government lobbying, which is separated from real people and their communities. NGOs are also neo-colonial soft power tools of European states in the Global South, where they create dependencies among the most oppressed in the name of women's empowerment, thereby sidelining revolutionary political movements struggling for decolonization and sovereignty.

Material realities and organizational problems are linked. As people are forced to operate in the capitalist economy, it becomes difficult to build long-term organizations inside society. Socio-economic issues prevent many from political organizing to begin with. Already active people, too, often struggle as they face economic problems in their personal lives. Women disproportionately do care work and additionally face traditional expectations.

Moreover, how resources are distributed among individuals and institutions shapes the dominant discourse on the reality of social problems and solutions. The voices of those most affected by inequality are often silenced. Some circles or classes have more access to resources than others and those who want to gain access are expected to ideologically and politically assimilate. This generates one-sided perspectives. It can appear as though a majority holds a certain opinion when in reality the most vulnerable people cannot fully engage or bring in their perspectives or are denied participation in the discussion.

Erasure

Struggles and movements are also pacified and marginalized through the systematic erasure of radical social struggle histories and collective political memory. Paternalistic state policies, liberal discourses, and capitalist ideas of empowerment and progress distort the history of society and social struggles. Struggling forces are limited in archiving their own histories and achievements, due to repression and organizational problems. In the age of social media, which promotes the "influencer" model of politics especially among youth, trajectories of political progress are further confused. Individual profiles and mainstream political groups are in the public spotlight as those who bring change, while organized struggles are stigmatized or invisibilized due to direct criminalization or indirect marginalization.

Collective political memories and legacies of decades - in fact, centuries and millennia - of women's struggles in Europe, including migrant women's struggles, exist everywhere around us, despite attempts to eradicate them from our hearts and minds. It is not just patriarchal history-writing that invisibilizes. The work of previous generations has been undermined or destroyed in Europe in the context of hostility to communism/socialism in the Cold War era. As a result, in some ways, the demands and claims of feminist theory and practice have even gone backward. Today, too, the attention and platform given to liberal feminists in mainstream public and governance spaces stands in contrast to the repression faced by radical, anti-systemic movements.

This erasure creates a perception that working within the dominant system is the only path to victory. It leads to the surrender to mainstream agendas due to a lack of belief in one's own autonomous strength. It is therefore important to emphasize any progress made is not due to the benevolence of liberalism or state interventions but an outcome of grassroots struggles and the radical and autonomous answers that people collectively developed.

When it seems like an impossible task to self-organize and change society in radical ways, people and movements turn to the state for solutions. This appears like an efficient compromise sometimes, but, ultimately, our ability to fight is appropriated or destroyed this way. Entering institutions to try and change them from within ultimately incorporates our efforts into the capitalist system. Radical politics must be able to adapt and be creative in the face of conservative or right-wing politics, but without losing principle and aim.

As movements that seek to build autonomy and demand revolutionary transformations in all spheres of life, we must remain radical and refuse to soften

our tone in hopes of attracting more people from the political right (as liberal parties do right now). Feminist groups and institutions need to keep a radical perspective on struggle and actively reflect that in their politics but without losing touch with society. We cannot rely on the state for the change we imagine and deserve—true progress will come from below, from the people who continue to fight and defend life through autonomy, self-organization, and revolutionary struggle.

Opportunities amid Chaos

Despite attacks from multiple directions, there are many reasons to seize the current moment in history and insist on radical alternatives. While we must remain vigilant and concerned about assaults and dangers, there are ongoing developments that offer themselves as opportunities in the present.

Geopolitical events in recent years revealed and exposed the true faces behind the liberal masks of European states. As militarist and imperialist policies proliferate, as seen in European governments' stance in the context of Israel's genocidal war on Gaza, sections of society are becoming increasingly more alienated from the European liberal democratic promise. Despite attempts to portray their policies as legitimate and popular, European states face much dissent and rejection inside society. People are unhappy with the economy, are unwilling to become cannon fodder in future wars, and are extremely distrustful of politicians and governments. Across the ideological spectrum, there is a sentiment that Europe is becoming increasingly more authoritarian, that freedom of expression is being restricted, and that society's will is being usurped for larger interests.

Meanwhile, there have been several grassroots mobilizations in European society in recent years. Across Europe, as in other parts of the world, there has been an outpouring of protest and resistance in the streets, workplaces, and schools. Youth and student movements, anti-war direct-action groups, environmental struggles, and workers' and women's strikes have emerged and grown. Although many of these remain short-lived and fragmented, they also led to the increased visibility of women's resistance, since women actively participate in all social movements, and increasingly, with feminist perspectives. These developments lead to the emergence of new solidarities and transnational and internationalist alliances on different issues. Additionally, technological tools like social media open opportunities for political education, exchange of ideological perspectives, and mobilization across borders.

With the erosion of 'beneficial' state functions (cuts to social services, benefits, healthcare, education, arts, and culture, etc.), including the crumbling of the welfare state in different countries, chances emerge to develop alternative solutions based on self-organization inside society. From the failure of political party politics to the loss of legitimacy of international institutions, the crisis in mainstream politics is a chance to push the idea that politics cannot be monopolized by statist institutions. Rather, politics is everywhere. Although right-wing forces have resources and often count on the state and its oppressive mechanisms, they are not very stable, due to internal corruption and incoherence. It is important for left forces to come out of defense mode, expose contradictions within the right, and launch counterattacks. With organization and commitment, we must be the people who turn the tide. Women can and do play active roles in embodying and organizing these alternatives, as their struggles weave all spheres of life together. In a time of rising fascism, self-organization is our greatest self-defense – from the homes to the streets, from refugee to student camps. To that end, we need strong collective ideological perspectives to resist assimilation into capitalist modernity and base our organization inside society, without financial or political dependency on the systems of oppression. As women located in Europe, we must fight the wars and oppression of the states that act in our name around the world. Against the imperialist feminisms that Europe exports to further its interests and to profit from war and exploitation globally, we can revive ancient and current societal cultures of rebellion and resistance, and build new alliances from below by acknowledging our different conditions and experiences without letting these become tools to divide us from our strategic battles.

Youth Identity & Resistance: Deepening on the Need of Autonomous Youth Organisation

1. Introduction to the workshop "Youth Identity and Resistance"

As the youth of the world, we are currently confronted with a systemic crisis of unprecedented intensity. The ecological catastrophe is worsening daily, wars are intensifying everywhere, nationalism and fascist movements are spreading across the globe. In order to fulfill its endless thirst for profit, the capitalist world system is destroying the environment and ultimately robbing humanity of its basis of life. We experience the consequences everywhere, be it in our personal lives or in our environment: social isolation, feminicide, poverty, misery, violence and environmental disasters. To change this world young people around the world are organizing and fighting for a better future. For us, being young means searching for the truth, for a better world and a better tomorrow. In November 2023 in Paris more than 400 young people from allover the world came together in the 1st World Youth Conference – Youth Writing History. A year has passed since then and the work of networking and exchange has been in progress in different parts of the world. We think it is time for us, as revolutionary youth in Europe, to determine the next steps we should take. In the framework of the upcoming Peoples Platform Europe, we want to come together as youth organizations, movements and activists and find answers to the question of how we, as youth, can find solutions to the crises of our time. Whether it is the resurgence of European militarism and the growing threat of war, the

ecological catastrophe or the growing danger of fascism, as young people we are the first and most affected. Therefore, we have to think about the role of organized and autonomous youth in the revolutionary struggle. How can we organize ourselves in our movements and structures, what is the role of the organization of young women and what can be common goals and projects to respond to the needs of the youth of Europe today? We know that 'nothing can stop a youth that strives for freedom'. But it is all the more important that we come together to channel this eCos de textnergy and power of the youth into the much needed change and revolutionary process. However, even if the youth organizations are increasingly growing, the problem of fragmentation among all the different youth groups and movements remains unsolved. To bring together all the existing potential and form a united and strong front of democratic youth forces remains the major task in front of us. How can we come together? What forms of organization are needed therefore? What unites us and what are the lessons we have to learn from history?

In advance of the workshop we organized four online meetings to already start the discussion regarding the topic of the workshop "Youth Identity and Resistance". With several organizations taking part in these discussions we were able to already build a ground of a common understanding of the identity of the youth, the history of the youth in Europe and shared ideas on how to organize in the future. In the following paper the content of the discussions will be explained as well as the

methodology of the upcoming workshop "Youth Identity and Resistance" on the Peoples Platform.

With this as a common base it will be very important to get to know each other well during the workshop, to deepen the discussions and to finally make joint appointments about how we want to struggle together in the future. This is going to be the starting point of a new revolutionary youth movement in Europe! From this point on we will get even more youth organizations to join this struggle for a better world. Because we have a world to win!

2. Online seminaries in advance of the peoples platform

In advance to the peoples platform we held four online meetings. They were initiated by Ronahî, the young women commune Germany, the internationalist youth communes from Italy and Germany, LDŜ from Slovenia and the Kurdish Students Movement of Germany. Each meeting was lead by one of the organizations in the coordination team.

2.1 First Meeting - Presentation of the Peoples Platform Europe and the concept of the Youth Workshop

In the first meeting the peoples platform and the procedure of the online meetings was explained.

2.2 Second Meeting - Identity and role of the youth in society

In the second meeting the identity and role of the youth in society and why we as youth organize autonomously was discussed. The discussion was lead by the following questions which were shared in advance and discussed in the organizations.

What do we think about our role in society in general and in the struggle in particular?

What is the role of the young women?

What is the current situation of the youth in our region and land?

To what extent can we speak of an attack on the power of youth through the digital media in our minds? What attacks on young people can we talk about, physically, as well as psychologically?

Content of the discussions

For deepening the need on autonomous youth organization the first discussion was about the different realities that the organizations are in. It became clear that it is important to reflect the identity of the youth on the level of mindset and biology as well as on the level of class gender and nation. Of course, youth is also partly biologically determined. But what does identity mean? Identity is connected to the society, history and culture. It is not something individually that one can choose but is something collectively and can only grow together. To give meaning to live and to find out how to live its needed to become oneself and to know where we come from. Identity means to share several societal and historical characteristics with a group of people and on this base struggle together. So its needed to search and build up a common identity as youth, to be resilient against the oppressive system and create a new way of live.

One important part of youth identity is living according to one's own values and principles. The youth in society is giving a new way to see things and is in constant change to find ways to solve problems of the time. Young people always find a way to be creative and show this in every aspect such as action, education and culture. But young people in particular have great power and great potential to tear the system apart at the seams, as they are not already firmly integrated into the system like the rest of society and therefore shows strong reflexes regarding injustice. Within the youth there is the identity of the young women as the one with the most force. Within the young women there is the strength of the women which represents, strong connection to society and nature, creativity, communality, intuition and is connected with the strength of the youth which represents bravery, curiosity and self scarification. This combination brings big energy for revolutionary change. In the very strong ecological movements, it is mostly young women who are at the forefront of the protests. They are the ones who feel the extent of the alienation of the society from the nature most intensely but is at the same time confronted with very hard and specific special warfare attacks. (Special warfare= warfare on the mind and the heart of the people, invisible and has the aim to manipulate peoples thoughts, feelings and action)

Attacks on the youth - We are at war

Butt especially because of this system-shaking power of the youth, there are also a series of attacks by the capitalist system to keep the youth small. The war in Europe is on a psychological level, the capitalist

system fights against the mind of the people, a psychological battle field making the attacks more invisible, this is what they call cognitive warfare. The NATO declared cognitive warfare, a battle for the brain, as the 6th battlefield. The aim is to manipulate peoples thoughts, feelings and actions for the own interests.

The youth is very much affected through the attacks of the digital media which affects them mentally, as well as physically. It creates a passivity in young people, builds up a virtual world disconnected to the society and prevents them from organizing. In the last years a lot of young women struggled with their natural bodies because of the picture drawn by the western hegemonic culture of beauty. Today there are also a lot of young men struggling with this. In general militarization and the reality of the third world war play a major role. In addition to young men, young women and migrants are increasingly being recruited for the police and military. It's a way to put the discipline of the system in the mind of young people. The police and army go to schools and do propaganda and they try to present themselves as the only option to a life in poverty and drugs. The military is also deepening a patriarchal picture of men such as being dominant, oppressive and violent. It puts men in the center of society and into the role of the protector of the nation state. This is seen as well amongst young women under the false pretenses of emancipation.

Another attack on the youth in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, South and Central America is the Eurocentrism which brings them to leave their home and migrate to the cities of Europe in the hope of a better future. The capitalist system has the intention to slowly empty the places from young people. Young people are not born with the idea of leaving there place. This idea is put by the capitalist system, through family, school, education in everyday life. Its one of the biggest attacks the youth receive, to disconnect it from there homeland. If you left the village or the city you are coming from, what were the reasons?

But this also happens on the level of cities and villages. In every part of Europe there is a lot of migration of the youth towards the cities, for example from the south of Italy to the more capitalized cities of northern Italy. Which leaves the villages and the islands with less and less young people which leads to lifeless and isolated countrysides. Class wise the youth is often times part of the class with the most precarious, having very low paid jobs and no job security because often young people are not taken serious in there knowledge and have no graduation and at the same time have very high energy so its seen as good to exploit for the capitalist system. Since the history of the resistance of the youth goes back thousands of years there is a lot of history (revolutionary experience) that we can learn from. Therefore it is important to learn from the elders but at the same time have an autonomous organization in order to fight according to one owns principles and way of fighting and try to learn from the mistakes that were made before. And to always find new ways of being creative.

Conclusion – Attacks against youth

In the current times, a great offensive is waved toward the identity of the youth to weaken its spirit and hinder its autonomous organization. These attacks manifest themselves in different forms and in multiple spheres of a youth's life. Whether it is the place of education or at home, work or free time, daily life or the future, the capitalist system with its liberal ideology seeks to wear down youth by bringing them into a state of passivity and survival, in which they are increasingly emptied of their creative and transformative power. In Europe, in particular, it works on the psychological level manipulating people's feelings and ideas in order to influence and direct their behavior at the societal level. The system to get out of the crisis it has been in for decades now wants to drag with it all the opposing forces, that if organized together could in fact overcome it. That is why it concentrates all its efforts on creating separation and alienation within society. Adapting to today's circumstances, the system has identified several tactics to deploy for this purpose, some of which are specifically targeted at youth. The use of social media is exemplary in this regard; they have become a weapon for disconnecting young people from each other, from themselves, from society, and in general from the reality around them. They create false imaginaries and expectations, because they are either too sugarcoated or too pessimistic but in any case inauthentic. This confuses young people, who react with passivity and no longer knowing how to identify with the situations presented to them, have lost the capacity to organize themselves accordingly. In this way, when more direct attacks are launched to alter

the lives of young people according to the needs of the exploitative system, young people weakened by their distorted view of reality do not know how to defend themselves and easily fall into the traps reserved for them. In fact, the enemy is constantly busy influencing the life trajectories of young people, who have never before been so lost. Alarming phenomena today are militarization and migration, which are increasingly intensifying with the aim of uprooting young people from their society, history and culture. A career in the army, as well as a life in a European metropolis become dreams of emancipation for young women or men, who want to escape from poverty, oppressive gender roles or environments seemingly devoid of prospects for development. This reinforces the ongoing assimilation process that the system carries out in other spheres, such as education. So young people distance themselves even more from their identity, because not only are they unclear about their role but because they become the architects of their own oppression and that of society.

2.3 Third Meeting - Experience of youth organizations

In the third meeting we were discussing the experience of youth organizations. In other words the history of the resistance of the youth.   In preparation for this meeting the organizations discussed   on the current problems of youth organizing and were identifying the roots of issues that need to be overcome in order to strengthen the youth's struggle. Therefore, a contribution from every organization following these questions was made in this sense.

• How has the youth organized in their countries in the past?

• Which difficulties they faced and how did they overcome them, where did they fail?

• What is their history as youth organization? Which lessons do they get from this history?

• How does youth organize nowadays in their current context?

Content of the discussions

Experience of youth organizations -The history of the youth in resistance

When we look around right now, what do we see inside ourselves, in the world? Everything in today's life is connected to the history of the people, The world was shaped by different societies and different oppressive systems that wanted to destroy the nature

and disconnect it from the society. The youth was always deeply connected to resistance and took an important role to fight for a holistic world where everything is connected. With wide eyes, deeply feeling the injustice and always searching for new paths to walk on the youth is not only capable of seeing problems in the world and face the trouble in there daily life but also to connect thoughts to action and organize a communal life to defend the world against those who want to destroy it. Because of this it is important to learn about the past struggles and to connect them to the history. Where can we reconnect and spin the history further to change the future? What to we reject in the past and how can we learn from the mistakes that were made in the struggles before? These are questions that lead the way to find solutions for the problems we are facing today. With a deep understanding about history and how it shaped us one can understand the world. From the mountains of Slovenia where the partisans arose during the WWII, to the cities of Germany where culture youth cliques resisted against fascist youth, to the youth of Kurdistan resisting against the oppressors and further to the 1968 movement as a global turning point, inspiring revolutionary ideals that challenge systemic norms.

The youth was very much linked to nature and found it as base for struggle and resistance. The resistance groups in history followed the resistance spirit of ecology, for example partisans had their base in nature - in the safety of the mountains, youth resistance groups named themselves after Edelweiss a symbol for courage, bravery and love. With this as a root their thoughts connected with direct action not fearing any consequences and showed strong reflexes against the oppression of the society. The young partisans were very dynamic and brave in how to organize according to what was needed. They used guerrilla tactics, such as sabotage and ambushes that allowed them to disrupt enemy operations while avoiding direct confrontation. They had safe houses and covert communication channels that were used to maintain coordination. Many youth organizers operated in the mountains, forests, and rural areas to avoid enemy patrols. Living in these conditions exposed them to cold, hunger, and disease. To overcome this the youth brigades relied on their resilience and adaptability, often surviving with minimal resources and with help of local populations. The youth was also very much linked to culture like keeping up the spirit of the fighters with

creative culture program like songs, plays and theater and always having instruments with them to share music with everyone. In the 68 movement it was the students demanding new ways of living and a fundamental changes. The were a threat to the hegemonic powers and had their own identity criticizing both the west and the USSR but it was still not a big and strong organized movement. They were trying and made some successes but they couldn't change the system. The ideological line was missing and therefore had no strong solutions. It the end the capitalist system integrated this movement using it for there own aims. This shows us the important of an ideological line where we look on everything with a new perspective, a ideology from the people for the people and with the vanguard of the youth showing the way.

How to live? What to do? Where to start?

In this time of big crisis and uncertainty its from great importance to find answers to this question. The question „how to live?" was strongly influenced by the 500 year old way of live by the capitalist system which tried to make the society homogeneous. Leaving the society with a gray, narrow view on life and thinking there was no alternative to capitalism. „what to do?" was answered by the capitalist system with: „live an individualistic live!",„only think about yourself" and „where to start?" was answered by the system with education such as schools and universities paving the way for a life in the system.

The first answer to these question is to struggle with all our strength against the oppressive system. Its important to search for the reality of society beyond oppression and find solutions to the problems. Its much needed to bring communality back to the center of society and fight in every moment an individualistic way of living. Since the system has a great influence on the thoughts, language and action of the people its firstly important to reject this miserable capitalist live in total and clean oneself in every pore. This begins with educating as youth and build up alternative education. The actions of the youth has to been in a organized way and always know whats the aim behind the action. At the last its important to bring back the unity of idea, language and action to unfold the energy and strength of the youth. And of course deepen the search for answer to these questions. Of course the youth faces big challenges but it makes even clearer to never stop struggling.

Conclusion – Challenges

On the other hand, youth are resisting and acknowledging these attacks; in fact, they are mobilizing against militarization, growing fascism, the ecological crisis and sexism, but they face great challenges on the road to building a strong and organized autonomy.

One of the biggest concerns solving the identity crisis of youth. The liberal mentality, characterized by a consumerist, individualist, selfish and positivist approach to life, plays a key role in this. In fact, it becomes necessary to counterpoise a holistic approach, which becomes the remedy for the disconnection and alienation that youth are victims of. Understanding ourselves and feeling ourselves as part of something greater is what allows us to rediscover our unique strength, because it opens the way to situate and recognize ourselves in our society, its history and the land that generated it. We thus have access to great knowledge from which to learn, and it is inevitable that our role is clarified as our identity is fortified. Indeed, history also teaches us that connecting and rooting ourselves to nature is necessary to build a foundation for struggle and resistance. With respect to this, however, it is necessary to emphasize that youth identity must also be understood in the national, gender and class dimensions. Because only through this understanding can we build a youth autonomy that knows how to draw strength from every diversity present within it.

Moreover, in a context such as the current one in which it is necessary to connect the struggles present in multiple levels, from the local to the global, understanding how to organize and coordinate together different forces becomes a key issue. Historically, one can look to '68 for inspiration, but it is also necessary to recognize its limitations and mistakes in order to overcome them, and above all, an effort of creativity is required to find new solutions that fit our different contexts. Related to this point, to act in the right way it is necessary to fight the Eurocentric perspective that permeates our worldview and analysis. Removing ourselves from the center will help us recognize vanguards at the global, regional and local levels from which to learn. Finally, an essential question concerns how we want to live. In this sense, it is not just a matter of devising and developing alternatives to the system, to weaken it with the ultimate goal of de-powering it. But it is about developing principles that underlie these alternatives, that correspond to the spirit of

youth and that enable us to resist and fight with our own style. It is also about having unity in thought and action, consistency and integrity, making every sphere of our lives a fighting front and preventing to compromise ourselves.

2.4 Fourth Meeting – Challenges and Unity of the Youth

In the fourth and last meeting in advance of the Peoples Platform the organizations discussed the following questions in advance:

• Challenges of the Present and Youth's Role: What are the major challenges facing young people today in the context of militarism, fascism, and ecological crises? How do these challenges affect youth activism and identity?

• Youth Resistance in the Age of Global Injustice: In what ways is youth resisting today, particularly in relation to militarism, imperialism, and fascism? How can we create a platform where young people can collectively respond and take action against these threats?

• Building Strong Youth Networks for Autonomy: How can we create and strengthen platforms for youth that are autonomous, self-governed, and connected on a practical level? What structures and methods can we use to build effective solidarity and resistance across borders and movements?

Young Women

Young Women and the Struggles of Today: How do young women experience the challenges of militarism, fascism, and ecological crises differently from others? In what ways can these struggles empower young women to lead in resistance movements?

Building Solidarity Among Young Women: What are the unique threats that young women face in today's political climate, and how can we create a platform or space that allows young women to organize, resist, and support each other?

Women Autonomy and Empowerment for Young Women: How can we build autonomous spaces and structures where young women can not only protect themselves but also grow stronger through collective action? What are the specific forms of organization and resistance that address the needs and aspirations of young women?

Content of the discussions

In our discussion, we realized that there are cross-border challenges. At the moment, militaristic propaganda is on the rise across Europe: Italy, Slovenia, Sicily, France or Germany. Young people are in a bottleneck. In the question of orientation. At the same time, however, we are observing that the core of youth remains - its change, its dynamism, its impulsiveness.

This is an apoist understanding, which was the basic understanding of the discussion. Especially with regard to the question of how militarism, fascism and ecology intertwine, we see that everything is interrelated. The destruction of nature is directly linked to the authoritarian nature of fascism. This is directly linked to the inherent violence of nation states, which seek to further expand through militarism.

Youth is the center of all nation-state developments. They are tried to be recruited, they define the culture and in revolutionary movements they are also the vanguard. They are trying to be liberalized, be it through school, university or pop culture. It is in the mirror of the special war. Also with regard to the autonomous themes: The young woman shares these two challenged identities:Woman and youth. Both identities have a history of oppression. But both also show a history of resistance. The gender consciousness of the young woman and her potential is attacked by hostile images of female, authoritarian leaders. Militaristic propaganda such as "feminist foreign policy" glorify war and conceal its brutality and daily violence, because every war first attacks the female body.

These attacks are "not only" geographically distant from us. They start in small communities. The attacks of sexism begin at home, or carry over into organizing. "We have to help to overcome our patriarchal traits. We are looking for new identities, shaping them ourselves, seeing women as our measurements and not men. We struggle the most, educate ourselves and try to make decision about the organization. There a specific attacks on women so we must organize as women only. It gives her the opportunity to free herself and others."

In this sense, we can speak of a challenging phase in which authoritarian-ization is taking place across Europe and around the world. This is taking place through a strong ideological shift. Young people are being deprived of their resources and education.

Women are experiencing more and more sexism in society as a whole.

Our organizing has room for improvement, especially in proportion to the daily violence in our lives. But with the spirit of youth, with young women in the vanguard, we can overcome this by dedicating ourselves to our "Xwebûn", our identities, and drawing our strength from this. Because our identities have a long history of resistance - starting 5000 years ago.

Conclusion - Proposals

The following proposals have been advanced to be discussed:

• against militarism actions involving society parts beyond the youth, building a front against militarism;

• monitor on local and international level the intellectual struggle;

• political education;

• question ourselves regarding how to live;

• international meeting;

• develop a common strategy and create a network;

• differentiate the ways of expressing the rejection against the system and the will to fight it;

• push for an understanding in society as a whole on how we exploited and how we can fight;

• fight liberalism through autonomy as a defense;

• set practical goals as regular meeting to discuss and be long term organized.

3. Perspective for the physical workshop

On the historical Peoples Platform we will have the possibility to finally meet in person. To come together in these times of war and crises as youth from all over Europe is something really meaningful.

Because we as youth need to find structural answers to the structural crises. The Youth Workshop provides time and space to make bonds and build bridges between all the borders of the states that divide the Youth in Europe and the whole of society. From the Youth Workshop as a starting point it is possible to build an Europe wide internationalist Movement of socialist, democratic, revolutionary and cultural Youth Organizations to develop together ideas and plans of actions. Therefore these days of the Peoples Platform where all of the participating organizations come together will be very important towards joining forces, coordinating our struggles and creating a common vision of the world we will build together.

3.1 Questions in Preparation of the Youth Workshop

For every organization that is going to take part in this workshop, it is important to discuss the following questions in advance.

• What do we think is our role as youth in society in general and in the struggle in particular? What is the role of the young woman?

• How has the youth organized in your countries in the past and how is the youth organizing today in your region?

• What are the challenges of the current time? What is the situation of the youth now and what are the main topics on which youth is under attack?

• How can we build, on this basis, a united international youth front to face the current developments?

3.2 Methodology of the Youth Workshop

We will present all the conclusions for the different seminaries, give place for discussion and new contributions to the discussions.

Bring something cultural from your region.

Building Autonomy: Self-governance, self-sufficiency and self-defense

In this workshop, we will focus on the construction of autonomous self-governing structures. How can we enable the self-sufficiency of society in the autonomous spaces we create? How can we effectively defend these autonomies against external attacks? How can we overcome the contradictions and challenges we face in our own movements? What forms of organization, initiatives and methods can we use to build a system from the bottom up? In order to answer these questions, we will bring together the experiences of various movements, present concrete concepts and develop common perspectives. This process has already started within the working group tasked with preparing the workshop. Our preliminary discussions resulted in the text you see before you. We share this text with you ahead of the workshop because we want to give you an insight into our ideological and political analyses, which served as a background for the discussion of the problems faced by our organizations. As shown in the tree analysis, we started from the systemic roots of the problems until we reached the actual situation of organizations in Europe.

Our discussion will continue in the workshop itself, together with all of you, to reach a common understanding of what it means to build autonomy, to merge the praxis of our organizations and to find solutions we could build together in future projects.

1. Ideological and political analysis

To start a common discussion, it is important to have a common basis around which to discuss. For this purpose, we wrote this general ideological and political analysis that we now share with you. In the first part, you will learn about the ideological analysis of history through the lens of the democratic and capitalist rivers; the democratic nation will be proposed as a political solution to restore the autonomy of society; and examples from the existing praxis in Europe will be outlined to further develop the framework and base it in reality.

We live in a world where the problems caused by patriarchy and capitalist modernity are becoming increasingly clear and tangible. In the midst of the third world war, the global political crisis is deepening and life itself is clearly under attack, as we see in the many feminicides, ecocides and sociocides. In the face of a collapsing world, many are asking: What kind of a societal system do we want to live in? How can we create a free and self-determined life? What are the characteristics of a societal system in which we can build an alternative model of life, beyond the capitalist system of neo-colonial exploitation, made possible by nationalist, racist and patriarchal structures?

In different countries in Europe, we see that the violence and the attacks against life are on the rise; more importantly, the perpetrators are getting younger. For example, in Germany and other European countries we are experiencing growing feminicide rates, with a woman or a girl being

murdered every other day. In addition, more young people are voting for right-wing parties, as the shift to the right increases in Europe and more right-wing governments and states become established. This also results in a stronger division of society and violent attacks on women and migrant people.

At the same time, we are experiencing the hottest summers, with many forest fires, floods and an increase in storms. Regarding health, more and more people are affected by illnesses and, above all, mental illnesses, especially loneliness and depression. We are facing big problems in the healthcare system, where capitalist modernity is making us ill, through pollution, the bad food we are eating, war, and more. All the crises are simultaneously making Europe fit for war. From schools to advertising on digital media, militarism is forced upon society, preparing us for war. We can follow along while the production and export of weapons are making billions in profits, and the finances for healthcare and education systems are being massively cut back. We watch a genocidal policy against humanity and life unraveling, enforced by a system that profits from it; be it with weapons or through ideological special warfare, the patriarchal-capitalist system attacks all aspects of life.

On the other side, society is uprising, protesting, organizing itself against the attacks and is always in search of answers, of a long-term solution. In times of chaos and crisis, there is always the possibility for change, the possibility for a revolution. But we have to organise this potential, by understanding the crisis worldwide better and creating effective actions.

The rivers of democratic and capitalist modernity

To understand what it means to build a free and self-determined life, we first need to deepen our understanding of what we are facing - capitalist modernity - and to understand why there is the need to build autonomy. Throughout history, with the avant-garde of women in society, the democratic river was flowing, and society organized itself around its own needs. With the figure of women and mothers in the center of society, society was able to govern, sustain and defend itself. It was a natural society, one based on communal values, and one with a natural autonomy that existed beyond power, nation-state and violence. The universe was orientated around the essence of women, the essence of nature was equal to the human essence, and autonomy was the natural way of organising and being of society.

With the emergence of patriarchy, the river of power and violence emerged and became stronger in capitalist modernity. Patriarchy - older men in society, including priests and former hunters - saw the importance of women, so in order to gain power with violence, these communal values were heavily attacked. Patriarchy was feeding off the strength of women - or democratic modernity - turning women more and more into slaves to the system throughout history. When we speak of capitalist modernity, we are not referring solely to capitalism and the production of surplus value, but rather to a system that monopolizes
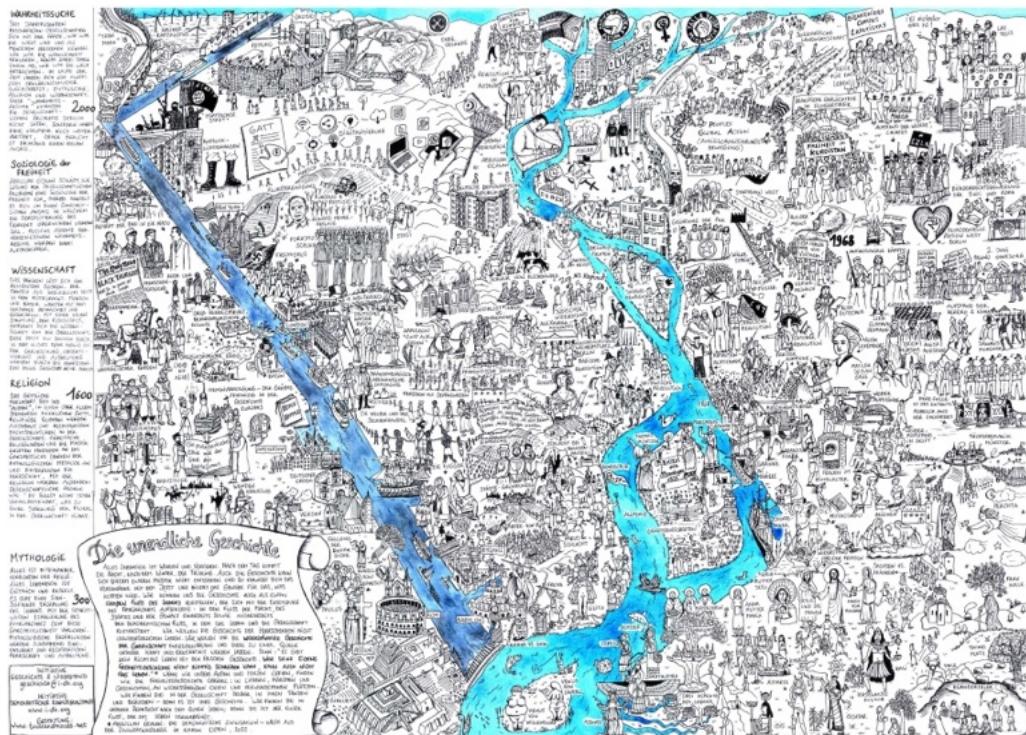
The Rivers of Capitalist Modernity and Democratic Modernity (made by the Initiative for Democratic Confederalism or IDK, Germany)

power by anchoring it in the nation-state, industrialism and capitalism. The strength of capitalist modernity lies in its ideologies such as sexism, scientism, religionism, nationalism, colonialism and liberalism, which were and are implemented through violence and oppression.

In Europe in particular, liberalism has penetrated deep into society and has established itself as the dominant ideology. Creating a false feeling of freedom, liberalism leaves us incapable of acting and absorbs or integrates our free thoughts and utopias into the nation-state. We surrender our ability to think freely and to act freely to a state and thus lose the possibility of a self-determined life. With other ideologies such as sexism, religionism, scientism and nationalism, the nation-state is dividing and oppressing society by splitting it in different parts and building one hierarchy on top of another.

While capitalist modernity only exists through the exploitation of women and society, democratic modernity is not dependent on capitalist modernity. A self-determined life means freedom, means a life in harmony with society and nature, the starting point of which is life itself. It means democratic modernity. We can find democratic modernity in anything and everything that opposes the patriarchal-capitalist system through its existence and actions. Despite all attacks of patriarchy, violence and power, Abdullah Öcalan shows us how democratic modernity expresses itself through many examples and meanders throughout history, like a dichotomous river since the emergence of civilization. Today, as we are confronted with the crisis of capitalist modernity, we can learn from this history. Our democratic history shows us that we can create an alternative life. For this, there is a need to research the source of a free life again, based on the democratic nation, which is attacked by the nation-state.

Approaches to alternative models of society that break with the principles of the global capitalist system are emerging all over the world. Democratic, grassroots, ecological and women's movements around the world are grappling with the crises of our time and trying to formulate answers. In many places, local self-governing structures are emerging, such as neighborhood organizations for the defense of society. These answers cannot be completely the same everywhere, but the question arises as to how we can effectively organize society together. To overcome the hegemonic system, we need to join forces, our local organizing experiences and our knowledge of the right methods.

As our working group demonstrates, we have experience in Kurdistan as well as Europe, where not only organizations, but also some societies and regions are already organizing themselves, as in the cases of Bretonnia, Occitania, or the Sapmis, Frisians and Sorbians.

The praxis of building autonomy in Europe

In the Basque Country, with the struggle of the Batzarre (popular assemblies) and the Auzolan (common work), the aim has been to develop autonomous institutions that would provide people with the instruments necessary to develop their own sovereignty: popular festivals, ikastolas, Basque language teaching centers for adults, sexual hygiene clinics (including abortion clinics), trade unions, student organizations, organizations for the liberation of women, gaztetxes (social centers self-managed by and for young people), etc.

In Italy, in Pisa, the social housing neighborhood area can be taken as an example for self-organization. This political project includes the self-recovery of public houses left empty and abandoned by the municipality, and the confrontation (which we could define as "antagonistic bargaining") with the responsible institutions; self-management of life in the residential buildings; working with children; working for women's autonomy; solving the problems of daily life without outsourcing them; and the coexistence of different cultures.

In Greece, there are different methods of organization with society. The anti-authoritarian movement proposes principles which ensure a communal structure without hierarchies, based on direct democracy and the non–occupation of power. We find many more examples of neighborhood organizing around the needs of society in Greece, but also in Catania, Catalonia and Germany, where communes around the ideas of democratic confederalism are created to build autonomy at a small scale. The projects involve different initiatives coming together to run neighborhood kitchens or other common activities, but also to achieve self-sufficiency through sharing food and clothes. As a next step, these initiatives developed a system of councils and cooperatives to organize together.

In Germany, there is a process of self-organisation of

society independently of the state and according to society's own needs, which can be both material and immaterial (e.g. isolation, racism, problems with repressive bureaucracy, housing). Initially, these are individual initiatives in neighbourhoods or small towns that come together and build structures of mutual support or political movement. The focus is not on individual problems, but rather on long-term social developments, which is why cultural and social aspects play a key role in their work. For example, some local groups regularly organise public kitchens as a central moment for the neighborhood to come together and exchange ideas.

Aiming to challenge the patriarchal, capitalist and colonial system, autonomous feminist organization is another important aspect of organizing in Germany. It is an important mechanism of self-defense against patriarchal dynamics and both internal and external attacks. So, for example, in one region they organize what they call "a regular neighborhood activity for women and gender dissidents", as well as autonomous assemblies of the women in the mixed neighborhood organisation. The vanguard role of women and mothers is especially obvious in neighborhood organizing, where they are the ones keeping and creating society in the neighborhood.

A third key aspect in the development of grassroot processes in the neighborhood is education. In particular, education that aims to understand the causes of the problems/difficulties faced by society. Knowledge of history is particularly important here, and it should be conveyed with a strong connection to the local experience. Understanding the background to current problems and solution processes based on events in our own region can be very powerful. Other educational formats should aim to develop common values among the initiatives or collectivise learning processes on specific issues in the field of mutual aid (e.g. dealing with repressive bureaucracy).

In one city, a "council from below" (Rat von unten) has been created, where democratic forces, political organisations and also individuals can meet in an open assembly to share their ideas, needs, campaigns and discuss local political topics. In this format, it is possible to network with other democratic forces, bringing together the fragmented leftist organisations to form a united political movement within the city, which is also accessible for individual citizens ready to become active.

Why is this so important? To show that building autonomy and free spaces is not dependent on a state, to create knowledge about a common enemy and to give perspective rooted in the strength of community and hope, offering a way to a solution. Building autonomy in our practice means bringing together different progressive/leftist/democratic forces.

Self-sufficiency

Organizing in the neighborhood requires concrete things, like spaces in which any activity and assembly can take place, so another important step of building autonomy is the participation in the creation of these spaces together with local groups. This means to support the creation of new spaces or the reorganisation of existing spaces in order to make them more accessible, so that they provide the right conditions for grassroot initiatives to grow.

Material self-sufficiency is an important part of democratic autonomy as the Dunja Social Center in Skopje, Macedonia shows. Movements looking for alternatives should imagine new ways of raising funds that dismantle the capitalist market of supply and demand. Dunja's donation system works well for the small needs of the collective, but ambitions to grow the movement are not realistic without rethinking material self-sufficiency (i.e. collectivizing private resources, communal living, etc.). There are a range of autonomous health and land projects which both reclaim folk knowledge and work to decolonise the land, and intervene in the unjust access to health care.

As Abdullah Öcalan analyzed, like Maria Mies and Murray Bookchin before him, industrialism is one of the central problems of our time. The effects of climate change are already clearly noticeable and in the coming years we will also be increasingly confronted with the destruction and death of nature, the basis of our existence, an ecocide. This is because patriarchy exploits nature to the last moment, even if this costs the ecosystem its ability to function. Our economy is dependent on the exploitation of societies and nature worldwide, which is why we need to establish an ecological alternative. Eco-industry works within the limits of the needs of society and nature. By building a communal economy through communes and cooperatives, we can create an economy that is not dependent on the capitalist market and society can thus provide for itself.

Self-sufficiency is important for building autonomy

which does not depend on a nation-state, but involves all aspects of life. Through the establishment of capitalist modernity about 500 years ago in Europe, we have lost our connection to the ground, to the fields, and slowly turned from peasants to factory line workers.

As we analyse where we lost our possibility to sustain society, we have to find new ways to build up our own eco-industry. Examples such as Bakur or solidarity agriculture in Europe are showing us that even the smallest cooperatives can already create a communal economy with effort and love for the ground.

Self-governance

The concept of democratic confederalism allows an openness to different multilayered political structures, in which all cultural, ethnic and national identities have the right to express themselves politically. For Abdullah Öcalan, politics is the art of freedom, and democratic politics is the true school in which freedom is learned and lived. As much as social politics produces freedom, power and the state are areas where freedom disappears. We can see how morality was replaced through laws in the nation-state and how politics was stolen from society through a big apparatus of administration.

Democratic confederalism is created by society with the purpose to organize, sustain and defend itself. While capitalist modernity is trying to preserve its power through administration and bureaucracy, democratic modernity governs by actually creating politics in life, allowing society to express itself and become a political force. Through the strengthening of democratic modernity by building our own institutions and changing our mentality, and with the help of the formula state + democracy, we can push the nation-state away. The aim of the democratic nation is not to destroy the state physically, but to destroy the nation-state thinking in our minds and our mentality. To create a free life without the influence of the nation-state means to strengthen the democratic river with the line of democracy, women and society and feed it with water again, while patriarchy and capitalist modernity lose their power and slowly dry up. The model of democratic confederalism is being practiced by the Kurdish society in Europe, through the TJK-E (Kurdish Women's Movement in Europe), KCDK-E (European Kurdish Democratic Societies Congress) and the Kurdish youth movement.

Different autonomous societies, ecological movements and cultural movements are already showing us that the ideas and the philosophy of a free life, that include a democratic civilization culture, are universal. However, on the other hand, we also find examples of autonomies and organizations which are monopolised by liberalism and integrated in the nation-state. This is why we need to analyze more thoroughly our history and our own biographies, to understand where and how the nation-state was established over the last hundreds of years with violence and oppression against society and nature, taking away our possibility of self-governance. This is precisely why a deep definition of the perspective of the democratic nation is of great importance for Europe.

Europe is facing a massive destruction of cultures and ethnicities, while at the same time people are disconnected from their land and ground. With the establishment of the nation-state, people lost the connection to their land, to their society and to their identity. The nation-state thinking is so anchored in the mentality that there is no deeper understanding of the history of the nation-state or any recognition of self-organized communities within the nation-state. The democratic nation is based on democratic self-governance and is not defined by a common language, culture, religion or borders. The democratic nation is a mentality of solidary coexistence of pluralistic communities of free and equal citizens. The democratic nation means that the people constitute themselves as a nation beyond the nation-state, power and violence.

Since capitalist modernity was established through patriarchy, the women's question and women's liberation is central in solving social questions and building autonomy. We agree with Öcalan's perspective that women are the first colonised class, as he describes in his book "The Sociology of Freedom", and today we see how this exploitative politics continues with numerous physical and psychological attacks on women in a seemingly liberated Europe. We see how the woman was cut from the land, from society and from the reality of herself. Because patriarchy is influencing every aspect of life, it is crucial that women organize themselves autonomously in all aspects, to discuss ways to free themselves from patriarchy. This is also important for the democratic structures of democratic confederalism - only if the woman is freeing herself, society is also freeing itself and a freeing society is a democratic nation.

Self-defense

Self-defense is part of the system of democratic confederalism. When we talk about self-defense, we mean the defense of life, which can express itself in various dimensions. As in nature, all living things have an urge to survive and protect their existence against potential attacks - it is an essential function of life; without it, life is not possible. We can understand self-defense like a rose that can only preserve its beauty and life through the existence of thorns. Self-defense does not only mean the physical defense of life, but also ideological self-defense, defense of our languages, cultures, and traditions which paves the way to a free mentality. It means to develop a mind with an awareness and knowledge of ourselves. Only in this way is it possible to defend ourselves and to create our tactics and strategies, tools and organizations, based on the interests of the community, against all attacks of capitalist modernity.

If we look at history, the concept for which the most blood has been shed is the concept of freedom. Freedom is achieved through self-defense. Self-defense means protecting, correcting, straightening the existence, while freedom means spiritually renewing, differentiating, giving birth to, multiplying the existence we protect/defend. If existence expresses the unity of the dialectic of essence and form, self-defence and freedom are another way of expressing this dialectic. Especially in Europe, we are exposed to strong attacks of patriarchy and capitalist modernity on our mentality through special warfare and liberalism, and only through a strong ideology, education and communality can we become aware of this again. For this, academies are the places to come together, deepen our understanding and create politics with an awareness. On women the special warfare is even stronger because she is the key to a free life, as she is the one who experiences the most oppression. As women are organising autonomously in all aspects of life, it is also important to become aware of the attacks of patriarchy through autonomous academies and self-defense units. We analyse these attacks in more depth in the following section.

> Overcoming the class society, overcoming the society based on wars, overcoming colonialism and imperialism which are the source of this, overcoming the economic-cultural backwardness and widespread exploitation are the goals of the women's revolution.
> – Abdullah Öcalan / 27 January 1994

2. Analysis of problems and perspectives

Once we set the general ideological framework backed by our own work with society, the second part of the working group's discussion focused on the problems of our organizations and perspectives. For this purpose, each organization used the tree method to analyze the attacks by capitalist modernity. Then, a combined analysis of all trees was conducted to create our common tree of the problems.

In our previous analysis, we already addressed some of the difficulties that we are facing in building democratic confederalism in Europe. With this text, we want to dive deeper into some aspects. We especially want to address the way women's liberation is considered in the analysis of the hegemonic system, the problems that keep us from building up a strong organization anchored in society, and the lack of ideological clarity. Through questions, we want to motivate our common search for solutions.

Women's Liberation is the center of our struggle

Abdullah Öcalan defines the 21st century as the century of women's liberation. The woman is the center of life and freedom. It is she who naturally organized society, provided for it and defended it, it is she without whom a society cannot function. It was the woman who naturally took a leading role in the construction of autonomy, which was and is the center of life, creation and existence. She is the vanguard in building autonomy and society and that is why she was attacked.

In our organizing work, we see again and again that women's organizing is lacking and that there is no deeper understanding of the meaning of women's liberation. Especially in organizations with a strong Marxist and leftist orientation, class and women struggle are considered as separate issues, and the women struggle is thought of as subordinate to the class struggle. But the opposite is true - women as the first oppressed class should be at the center of any class analysis. Separating women's liberation from the class struggle leads to a shallow analysis of capitalism and class society, and a superficial
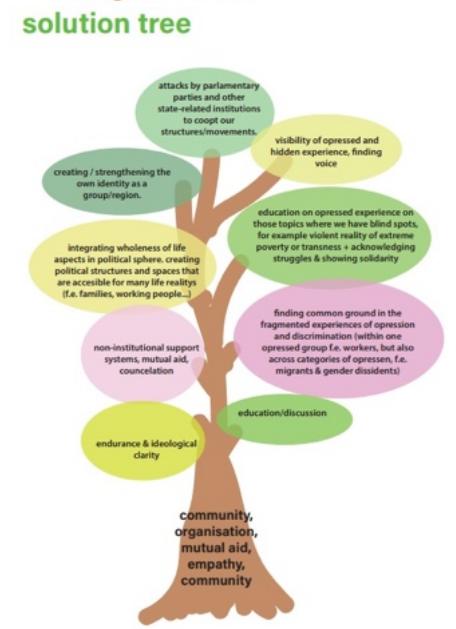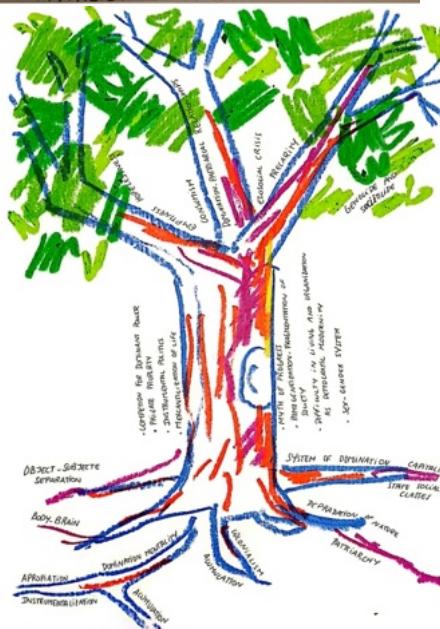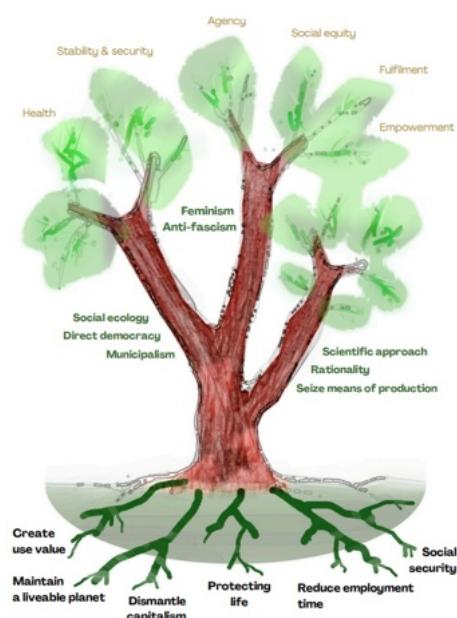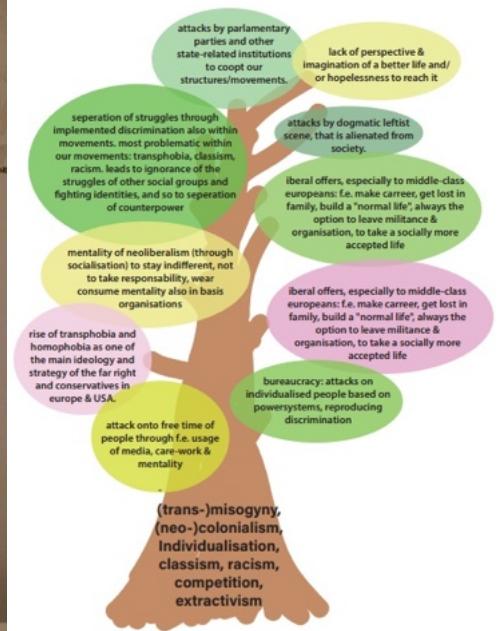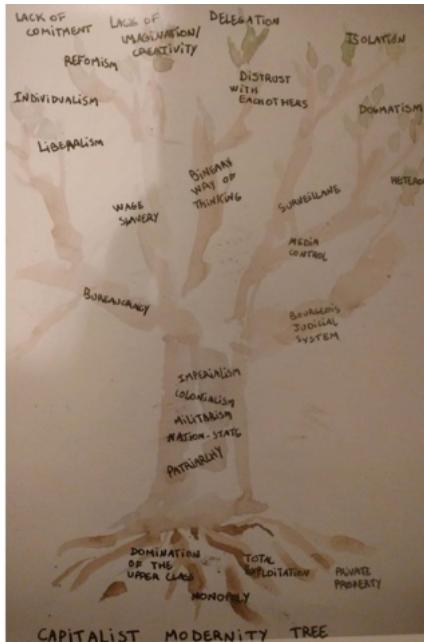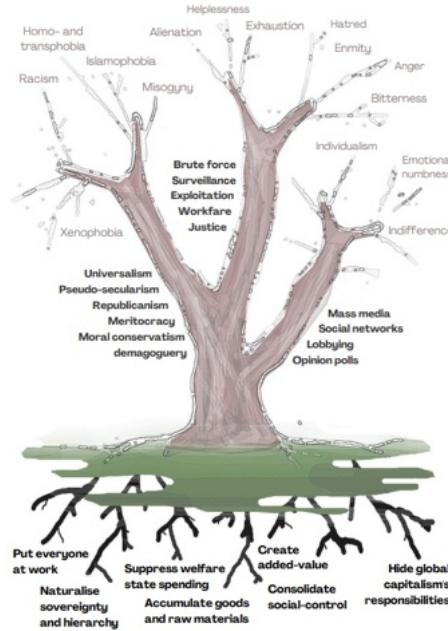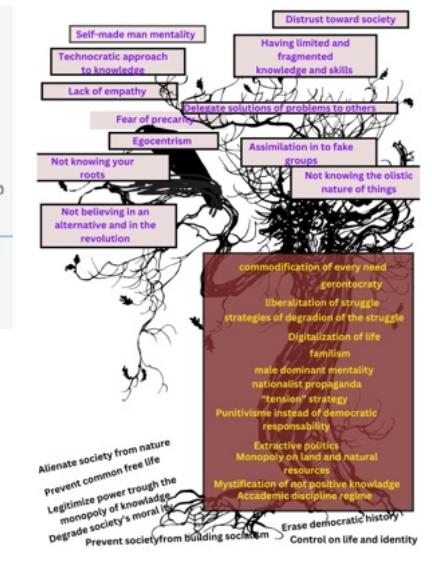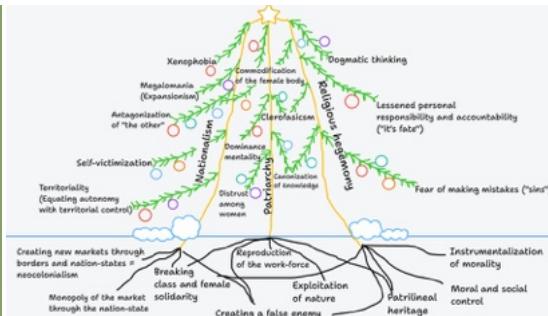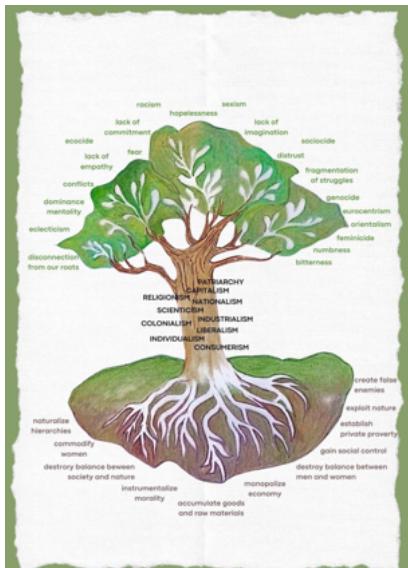
Tree models used to generate analysis on problems and solutions.

understanding of women's liberation. It does not see the deeper roots of capitalism and imperialism in the rise of patriarchy and class society 5000 years ago. Patriarchy and capitalism cannot be separated, as both are built upon the oppression and exploitation of women. This is why, in order to get closer to a free society, we need to focus more on the vanguard role of women and youth, their truth, expose the patriarchal mentality and make women's liberation the starting point of our struggle.

In Europe we see how strongly the role of women and their existence have been attacked and how the liberal patriarchal system emptied the meaning of being a woman. We can see how this continues in leftist organizations, by not analyzing the root of the problems. Without a strong ideology and understanding, we will only organize on the surface. This is why attacks of patriarchy and liberalism in organizations are common. The importance of autonomous organization, or the question of why and how to organize as women, needs to be solved for a revolutionary movement, liberating all women of the world.

Problems of ideology: To create a free life, we need to free our minds

If we don't develop a strong ideology and a communal life, then liberalism, individualism, dogmatism, and sexism will be destructive and will put a burden on overcoming the political and organizational weaknesses of radical movements in building a revolutionary perspective/process, leading us directly to heteronomy and subservience. We have often seen the focus to be driven away from the essential collective needs and based on mistrust, internalizing fear, and reducing to individual projection the continuous denial of being in the process of finding solutions.

This also leads to the disconnection within us, with our own history, with our own knowledge. It doesn't allow us to develop a power able to cope with the direct attacks of repressive forces (constant surveillance, criminalization of the struggle,⋯), to fight against the capitalist system as a whole and develop our own revolutionary processes.

In this sense, it is essential to point out that the attacks of capitalist modernity against society have resulted in the underdevelopment of the imaginary and a lack of imagination and creativity. Again, this can only be remedied by developing autonomy, liberating and regaining space of collectivisation, of

self-education and by seeing with our eyes from the smallest to the biggest steps that something else is possible.

After the collapse of real socialism in Europe, hopelessness has sunk deep into society and its anti-systemic forces, with the spread of the concept of "there is no alternative" to the growing strength of liberalism. People no longer believe in real change, all hope seems to be lost and we are fighting just to keep things from getting worse. With the attacks of the special war, this often leads to fatigue, inertia and a permanent burden of political activism. It is the attacks of the patriarchal-capitalist system that isolate us, rob us of our strength and separate us from our history of resistance. Although the third world war is gaining momentum, the voices of rebellion are quiet. But if there was no hope for change, why is the system in such a crisis? We have a moment of chaos that we can harness for ourselves, that holds the hope of change and that will lead us to success with each person's effort. However, for this a clear ideological line is needed.

Nowadays, the left in Europe is characterized by different ideologies. Post-structuralists claim to overcome the old, but they usually deconstruct everything so that nothing remains of it. At the same time, there is a lack of understanding of why an ideology is so important for the struggle against the enemy and why the enemy has secured its hegemony in the system through its ideologies. Eclecticism keeps organizations from developing a clear, coherent ideological line. In simplified terms, eclecticism means putting together a world view from different theories so that it fits into one's own world view. For example, a concept such as criticism and self-criticism is often used in different contexts without a deeper examination of the meaning and depth of this method. This results in a liberal approach and the methods are not able to develop their full effect. It is not a question of not making reference to different struggles, as Abdullah Öcalan also did in his defense writings, but picking concepts of different theories, as is often the case in the left, prevents clarity and the ability to analyze. In Europe, liberalism is very strongly anchored in society, and we think we can always choose anything we want, but for a revolutionary change we cannot work with these individual choices of theories and concepts; instead we need a coherent ideology.

We are also limited by Eurocentrism and Orientalism, which prevents us from developing a

 truly internationalist struggle. Eurocentrism is expressed through skepticism and distance towards revolutionary forces outside of Europe and, even if not obvious, giving priority to our own perspective in Europe. Although this is discussed time and again, there is often a lack of viewing one's own struggle critically in a wider international context. At the same time, if the struggle is not strongly anchored in one's own society, and there is an excessive focus on the outside world, then the struggle can not be fought with one's own identity and social character. This is a problem, as it prevents local issues from being discussed. An orientalist understanding (considering especially the Middle East as "the other", not related to processes in Europe) also stops us from giving the right meaning to internationalism and to see our internationalist responsibility in these historical times.

In Europe, we realize above all how much our culture and identity have been shaped by a nationalist view. In the places where we grow up, we are usually unaware of our history, and especially of society's resistance to the system. Where once thousands of different languages and cultures existed in Europe, we find a cemetery on whose graves a new liberal, capitalist way of life has been created. Even if several peoples in Europe have protected their ancient cultures, languages and clothes until today, often they have been deeply integrated into a nation-state. Especially today, there is a strong assimilation policy of these cultures, so that much of their knowledge and languages are in a fight against the uniform culture of the states. It is therefore very important for us to develop a culture of democratic modernity, together with the autonomously organized peoples, cultural movements and different ethnicities of Europe.

We need to create a complete struggle, which connects and combines an ideological, theoretical, philosophical/scientific approach with organization and action. For this, education plays a central role. In Europe organizations lack a deeper understanding of the importance and meaning of education to free our mentality, and to answer the question: who am I and how to live a free life? Without a clear mind and understanding, it is impossible to organize a successful action according to our ethics and aesthetics. For this, education does not only have a tactical but a strategic importance. Education is the key to fight against the patriarchal mentality, but also to build democratic modernity and autonomy in practice. In order to solve the problem of disconnection between theory and action, we need to fight against the positivist mentality.

Organization is needed to face capitalist modernity

The way we organize is central in facing capitalist modernity. Because organization is so central, it is also attacked in many ways. This analysis should only give a short overview of the different ways and problems of our organizations.

As we are organizing with each other, there is a deep sense of distrust. Distrust is something based in capitalist modernity, where the world and people around us are only looking out for their own interest and profit. Throughout history, we see how the system was trying to spread distrust in society to destroy rebellions. For example, in the times of the peasant uprisings distrust was spread between the newly built colonies in North America, where peasants and slaves from all over the world were organizing together. Or we can take the example of the witch hunt in Europe, where distrust was spread between families to attack the wisdom of women and betray them to the authorities.

This distrust also creates conflicts, which can stop groups from working together or even split and destroy organizations. Often, the reasons for the conflicts are small, but because there is not a common ideological basis or way to analyze the problems and find solutions collectively, conflicts are a big danger for organizations. Conflicts often result out of a dominance mentality, which cannot accept and have empathy for different strategies and discussions.

While we are confronted with a mostly well-organized system structured by nation-states, patriarchy and capitalism, we can repeatedly see the opposite in our left-wing, feminist, ecological, and anarchist movements in Europe. We see many isolated collectives, but it is difficult to consider them as one organized structure. Fragmentation is dividing our movement in lots of small groups, so that we cannot face capitalist modernity together. We tend to focus on the differences between us and see them as something negative instead of seeing the beauty of our diversity. Since we cannot come together at the local level, we are unable to develop

a common strategic approach with a concrete goal and program for an alternative at the global level.

In Europe, we find it difficult to organize, to structure ourselves beyond a certain bubble and to become a mass movement which can sustain itself in the long run. Liberalism and individualism lead to a false understanding of organizing. How can we organize ourselves, what does a democratic way of life look like? The discussions about this are always based on individualism and any form of organization is quickly dismissed as generating hierarchy. Nevertheless, it is of course very important to discuss a common form of organization. This should be approached with a critical discussion in order to be able to learn from each other.

We should also clarify our understandings of leadership and hierarchy. What does a democratic leadership mean? How can we create a democratic leadership in Europe and what can it look like on a practical level?

Through conflicts between ourselves we become our own barriers. Abdullah Öcalan says that 95% of the battle is within ourselves because the system is also deeply embedded in our own personalities. It is therefore not surprising that personal conflicts repeatedly arise in groups and organizations, leading to the destruction of entire organizations. As we are unable to deal with our own personality problems and defend ourselves ideologically, patriarchal attacks occur time and again. These conflicts manifest as superficial disputes, but are actually the expression of an unequal spirit of organization, such as the lack of commitment, which stops the process and prevents us from finding motivation in the work that we are doing. But how can we address this lack of commitment without falling into the trap of the excuse of capacities?

Organizations are also struggling because of the numbness and fear of persons in the group. The fear of what is happening, the overload of news of the third world war, their own contradictions with the patriarchal-capitalist system and so on. This leaves us without an alternative and we become weak, so we have to understand that these are precisely the attacks of the system meant to weaken us. It is not the single person who is afraid or numb, but a global system trying to focus on the individual, so that we don't find our strength in the collective. To just see our own weakness and to focus on our own needs will not build up an alternative. To overcome fear and numbness, we need to show that we can do it

beyond the state, violence and power; we need to work on the alternative.

We also need to clarify the relationship of our organization and the state: we often lack a deeper understanding of organizing democratic autonomy within the state system. State and democracy are not one and true democracy is anti-state, yet, on a daily basis, we are confronted with state institutions that we cannot destroy immediately. But when is the moment to enter into confrontation with the state, what does militancy mean in a deeper sense and how do we deal with the institutions of the state in our neighborhoods? Can we ignore them, can we exploit them for our own interests? How can we show society that the state is the one that has taken away our ability to organize, provide for ourselves and defend ourselves? Especially in Europe, we see how strongly the state mentality is also reflected in our organizations, and at the same time how necessary a clear alternative and perspective other than the state is also sought. We should not forget: strengthening democracy means drying out the state. Another problem we are confronted with in Europe is marginalization. If we are not connected and anchored in society when building up organizational structures and communes, we cannot analyze and understand the problems of society and will not reach a solution. Society should not be seen as an object that can be molded from the outside. Rather, ==society itself is the subject and the power for change already lies within it. This does not mean accepting reality as it is, but rather looking for the potential in society and actively working for a change together.== ==With this anchoring in society, there is also the question of organizing around the material needs of society.== Lots of movements are circling around the question of money, how to finance themselves and how to be politically active without being in the need of money. How can we sustain ourselves financially and materially? How much do we depend on money from the state and what does this mean for our political projects? ==We need to move towards a communal economy and create structures through which society can support organizations with material and donations. Recognizing our own capitalist and material practices and needs, and freeing ourselves from individualized ways of life is therefore important to build up autonomy in practice, which will dry out the nation-state.==

Society as our basis to struggle internationally

While understanding the history and the struggle for women and society, we need to understand what it means to realize self-government, self-sufficiency and self-defense. We need to restore the meaning of this word and learn from experiences around the world. What does society think, what do other organizations do, what is our perspective? There is the need for a solid and structured network that allows this exchange of knowledge, that allows the growth of vanguards and that self-organizes as an example. Organization on an international level in Europe is of great value to share experiences, act strategically and realize autonomy. With the People's Platform of Europe, there is the possibility to plan and realize a future plan. For this we want to share concrete plans and proposals after the platform. One idea would be to deepen our understanding about building autonomy, to write a brochure and also to combine our ideological and theoretical approach with praxis and right action.

We have already written a lot about the current times, how the chaos and the crises are intensifying, which also leads to a search for answers and solutions in society. In Europe, the anti-systemic forces were not organized well enough to create a voice in society and due to the many problems discussed above, no mass movement could be created. If we are looking for an alternative, for a free life, we have to answer these questions.

Often in our movements, there is no strategy as to why something is being done, there is a lack of ideology, organizing is rejected, and actions are done only from time to time. So what are our answers to these questions? What stops us from building autonomy?

3. Workshop concept

After the ideological discussion and the problems of our organizations, we created the following workshop concept to combine our discussions with the actual day of the workshop. This workshop should be the continuation of our discussion and focus more closely on our realities to find common strategies and methods.

First day (14.02)
(The first day will focus on different organizations in Europe and their experience and understanding of building autonomy)

15:30 – 15:40 General Input about understanding and process of working group [ADM]

Over the last weeks and months, a lot of discussions and methods were used to create and prepare this workshop. The workshop will open with an introduction to the ideological basis and the discussion process of the working group.

15:40 – 18:00 Presentations of organizations (pt. 1)

Six organizations will present their work focusing on their praxis in society. These organizations are the representatives of different struggles around Europe, which already have experience in building autonomy. Based on their presentations, the discussion around the practice of building autonomy through the work of these organizations will continue on the second day.

The following organizations will be presenting in the first half: [15 min / Organization]

1. Spazio Antagonista Newroz – Pisa and Piattaforma Soluzioni Abitative (Italy): Organization struggling for housing, but also against male violence. They're looking to resolve the housing problem for young people in cities and address their loneliness.

2. Democratic Confederalism: Democratic confederalism is lived for years in Kurdistan, Europe and also as a model system in Rojava and North East Syria. The concept was created by Abdullah Öcalan and allows different cultures, ethnicities, religions, women and youth to participate in political structures. It is based on an equal life with its three pillars: direct democracy, ecology and women's liberation.

3. La Sao (Catalonia): Aiming to build a democratic nation of Catalonia and a democratic confederation of democratic nations. They are rooted in different neighborhoods and towns and are looking to make the struggle their life.

16:40 – 17:00 Break
17:00 – 18:00 Presentations of organizations (pt. 2)

The following organizations will be presenting in the second half: [15 min / Organization]

4. Squatted center Prosfygika (Greece): Self-organized community of around 400 people and more than 20 languages in Athens, with many more involved in the project, which has existed for 15 years. The basic pillars of the framework on which they building autonomy are based on horizontality, common property and solidarity through a structure of confederalism.

5. IDK (Germany): Initiative for democratic confederalism building structures and processes in various German cities based on Öcalan's paradigm with the aim of building democratic confederalism.

6. L'Offensive (France): Communalist organisation primarily based in Lille. Its purpose is to create a large confederation, strong enough to compete with capitalism and ultimately implement social ecology, as theorised by Murray Bookchin.

18:00 – 19:15 Dinner

Second day (15.02)

(The second day will focus on continuing the discussion started by the presentations and creating a common perspective)

9:00 – 11:50 Discussion in the form of a world cafe

The world cafe will consist of three discussion desks moderated by different organizations.

1. Self-defense: Neighborhood - Organization (Italy): This organization tries to build up democratic processes based on the view of democratic modernity. The organization has been developing an ecological approach to promote the creation of people-led institutions rooted in women and youth autonomy, both in the city, in the countryside and in the mountains.

2. Self-governance: Anti-Authoritarian Movement (Greece): The Anti-authoritarian Movement is a network of three assemblies from different cities (Thessaloniki, Athens and Ioannina) working on three basic principles - direct democracy, anti-authoritarian character of context and non-occupation of power.

3. Self-sufficiency: Jineolojî: Part of the jinwar committee in Europe, this group is trying to build health as a new branch of jineoloji (science of women and life) at the European level. At the local level, they organize educations for the Kurdish community in Switzerland around the topics of sexism, self-defense and self-organization.

In the beginning, each desk will offer a short introduction into the topic. There will be three rounds of questions and the participants will choose which discussion desk they want to visit in each round depending on the question. For example, the first question is around suggestions for the presenting organizations. If someone has suggestions for how these organizations could defend themselves, they will go to the self-defense table. There, they will discuss for 45 minutes and move on to another desk for the second question. The discussion from the first round will first be summarized for the new participants and then the discussion around the second question will continue. After 45 minutes, the last round of discussions will happen around the last question. These are the three questions what will guide the world cafe:

1. What suggestions do we have for the existing organizations/the organizations that presented themselves?

2. What can we learn from the praxis in Europe? How can we create the brain of praxis and action?

3. What forms of organization, initiatives and methods can we use after the platform to create a common struggle with a common perspective and a strategic organization approach?

11:45 – 12:00 Break

12:00 – 13:00 Sharing conclusions of the discussions (from the desks)

In the final part of the workshop, the conclusions from each discussion desk will be presented in order to discuss the future steps and plans around the question of "How do we unite our concrete struggles with a common perspective?". This common perspective, born out of the world cafe discussion and the final conclusions, will later be presented in front of all participants in the platform.

Activism & Organization: For a Long-term Struggle Rooted in Society

Opening the work of the 7th workshop, we present our reflections around its core topics and clarify the meaning of some concepts we decided to adopt. The reason is to avoid those misunderstandings that can come out in the discussion from using different definitions for the same word.

What do we mean when we talk about militancy?

We do not use the word 'militancy' lightly. To us, to be a militant does not mean devolving a few hours of the day to a cause. Neither is it a matter of the number of hours one spends acting altruistically. Choosing militancy is taking a historical responsibility before society to dedicate oneself as best as possible to help it reach freedom. It means being part of society, knowing society, the roots of its challenges and its strengths. It means feeling the deep connection and love that it needs to be deeply committed to something – here, to the future of your own people, all peoples and every living beeing. We cannot understand militancy as a hobby but a life spent embodying certain values and principles that help to feed our love and commitment. Therefore we understand militancy as deeply connected to the will to change and educate oneselves as well as to work on our own personalities for that we are able to support the revolutionary process of society the best.

Which values and principles are the foundation of ethical militancy?

Revolutionary militancy defends social life, namely, it is defending those shared values and principles rooted in the history of society. Those values that actually defend life. The interpretation of militancy must be shared between militants and society. A militant, though, should be part of society dialectically, avoiding its objectification and embodying communal values in the firmest, most loving way possible. Love in this sense means to bring everything and everyone into the position to empower their own life, to defend life, to sustain the values and actions that we think of when it comes to hold eachother but also to push eachother to the best we can be – as an individual and as a collective, a people and as peoples.

In the experience of the Kurdistan Freedom Movement, specific characteristics of the revolutionary personality should be developed according to the context. They answer questions such as: How should one behave towards society and comrades? How should be life and struggle? Which aspects must one develop and constantly strengthen during the struggle? How do we want our society to be? How should the relations in society look like? How can patriarchal relations full of violence and power be turned into free ways of living together? To be militant means to have an ideological stance pointing a way out of the lack of truth in capitalist modernity that favors indi-

vidualism over society. Being militant in the sense of democratic modernity therefore means to understand ourselves as truth seekers in answering the fundamental questions: How to live? What to do? Where to start? The answers that we find for these questions will shape our lives.

A revolutionary process is demanding a lot. It demands from each individual and each collective. It demands cautiousness, joy, long term struggle, hope – and also giving, sacrifice. Revolution as a shared process of a people is built on everything that every individual is giving and therefore sharing. We can also name that as sacrifice. Sacrificing in a revolutionary sense doesn't mean that we are loosing something. Instead we gain because our people can breath, can learn and live. In European context sacrifice is often seen as something dangerous and frightening. We need to learn that giving is one important part of being alive. A militant will give with joy – because we know that this will nurture our future.

What is the role of the organization?

Firstly, we distinguish between the vanguard organization and the organization of the society. Both are closely connected with each other. The self-organization of the society is the actual goal of a revolution; the organization of militants, instead, can be seen as a tool in this sense, and not as a goal in itself. The vanguard organization serves as a guide for its members and provides them with a compass for the struggle, as well as the basis for constant critical reflection. In a revolutionary process centred around the aim to empower society for self-organization the vanguard organization is not having the task of taking decisions in the place of society but together with society. Even the more it is holding the task to defend hope, motivation, long term strategies build on the shared values and principles. Therefore, the development of a democratic personality and personal initiative is crucial. A cadre without initiative and without bringing democratic values into life can only merely be a task fulfiller for a movement, while revolutionary personalities emerge from self-organization and shared principles. Intensive self-education must take place to develop the self-confidence of militants in thought, emotion and action. It is the only path for an organization to grow healthily and organically. Nobody should join an existing movement to avoid the challenges of self-organization because any movement should encourage each individual to self-organize and search for change for their own and their people.

What is the relationship between organization, leadership, and democracy?

To organize is to grow stronger, as the possibilities of a coordinated group are incommensurably more than the individual ones. That means that being part of a democratic organization is to increase personal freedom and should not be seen as a burden. The most effective militants are the ones who are well organized and carry out successful actions. Just as they know that they cannot survive without water and air, they must understand that they cannot live without organization and, accordingly, they must develop an understanding of the need for organization. For a militant, disorganization should be the worst problem. In the same sense a militant will create living and equal relations as part of their society and people. They will encourage democratic values within society, will prevent hegemony and will find new and creative ways of struggling.

Yet, as far as we are talking about 'vanguard' and 'cadres,' it is crucial to problematize why there can be a negative association with those terms in some circles. Some interpretations of the Marxist-Leninist paradigm understand the vanguard as the ones that walk ahead of society, embodying the risk of authoritarianism and disconnection from society. This completely justified critique, however, leads leftist circles to avoid the discussion around the question of leadership. The liberal thinking that followed the collapse of real socialism, based, for example, on the "end of history," was not only directed against the idea of socialism and the belief that another world is possible but also proclaimed the "end of the era of vanguard socialist parties and organizations." Concepts such as party, organization, leadership, vanguard, and unity have been branded as enemy symbols, partly because of the mistakes made in the name of socialism. However, on the one hand, one must insist on overcoming state-oriented parties, and on the other hand, it is necessary to devise new theoretical models for parties or organizations as fundamental instruments of struggle. Because social construction is only possible with organized power, the form of which varies

according to the temporal and local context. There is an urgent need to find democratic, but well thought and structured ways of organising in Europe to be able to challenge the current developments of fascism, destruction of nature and rise of patriarchy. A vanguard needs to show how to live a life that is overcoming the liberal comfort zone, aiming freedom and already bringing freedom into practise while struggling for it.

Avoiding such reflections paves one the one hand the way to informal hierarchies: in groups pretending to be 'totally horizontal,' patriarchal personalities find the doors open for their domination. In these groups, one struggles to trust each other in giving and taking responsibility. On the other hand it prevents us in overcoming our separation from each other. That is why it is important to openly address the discussion and distinguish between power-based and democratic organizing as well as leadership. A democratic leader is an example for the comrades to educate and organize themselves, to overcome individualism and to act according to the revolutionary purposes as well as values and principles.

What is the relationship between militant organization and paradigm, theory, program, strategy, tactics, and action?

Any revolutionary organization aims to solve the problems of its society; to accomplish its duties, it needs to actively develop principles of revolutionary life and organization.

By consciously choosing a paradigm, we mean that an organization needs to have the necessary way of thinking and faith to endure, resist, and find solutions under any condition. Peoples deprived of a holistic paradigm can be easily exploited and controlled by those groups that shape the dominant worldview. To act strongly, one needs a comprehensive and solid world-view, as the ability to interpret, explain and understand things is a fundamental tool for bringing about change. For a militant, it is about internalizing a non-positivistic paradigm and allowing it to become the decisive criteria for thought and action.

The next step is to develop a solid theoretical understanding of the fundamental facts and problems of the context and their possible solutions. The theoretical work doesn't lose its importance: the more the revolutionary practice grows, the more this field of work will become an indispensable need. The intensive development of the theoretical and ideological level of all militants is thus an enduring necessity.

When we have a scientific understanding of the present conditions, we are still not in a position to change them. Our practice will easily crash if we do not set clear and broad goals and clarify where we want to get to and how. A revolutionary program means to give a clear answer to what needs to be changed, how, and what we need to build instead. If militants do not understand what they are fighting for, and if they only carry out actions without knowing their goals, they will be constantly busy with practical work, but they will never understand the aim of their practice. If they think it is enough to describe their goals with abstract concepts, they will not be capable of setting a consistent alliance policy and attitude toward the enemy. Without defining our boundaries, one cannot achieve the established goals.

To realize our programmatic goals, we must clarify a basic strategic line. It involves identifying the main friendly and hostile forces during a specific revolutionary phase. Strategy changes as the revolution proceeds but remains essentially unaffected throughout the entire period of a given stage of it.

It is the struggle that carries out this line by replacing the old forms of struggle and organization with new ones, the old slogans with new ones, by combining these forms. Tactics put the strategy into practice. It addresses the questions: What plan of action will enable us to implement our line? What forms of organization and actions correspond to our strategic line?

It is important to see the connection between these elements as grading with increasing flexibility; it means that in front of a high rigidity in internalizing a non-positivistic paradigm, militants should be highly flexible in changing forms of organization and actions according to the present state of objective and subjective conditions. Problems arise when one counterposes these elements with each other: when militants focus too much on just one or a few of them, rejecting or postponing the process of developing the others. They are holistically connected; militants cannot start with one but must focus on all of them. Nevertheless, there can be moments where we must stress one more than the

others. There is a dialectical relationship between them: lessons learned from the concrete struggle must feed into theoretical reflections and lead to ideological development. Continuous criticism and self-criticism and seeking to prevent dogmatism should help us pursue unity between theory and practice.

What is preventing us from developing an effective struggle in Europe?}

In Europe, we are used to building many forms of organization, from campaigns to small collectives, cooperatives, and parties. Still, we can see our organizations lacking one or more of the seven previous principles or misunderstanding them. Ideological rigidity and political flexibility would be the approach that is supporting the revolutionary process. However, we see many leftist groups pursuing the opposite: ideological flexibility and random rigidity in policy implementation. For example, we face increasing left-wing support for liberal and orientalist theses while engaging in endless polarized discussions around the ill-posed question 'Which are our practices?' and divide themselves into groups according to the different answers.

A challenge that we are facing regarding this is the existing liberalism and individualism. We experience them as a strong attack against the organized will of the people. As liberalism and individualism is pretending that the fragmentation of society is something that is bringing us as individuals more "freedom" is one of the strongest lies that we are living in the 21st century. As method to overcome this we need strong methods of education, critics and self-critics as well as good forms of being organized that help us overcoming this fragmentation. We need to learn that we need to organise to be happy, we need to organize to be free – we need revolution to live.

The lack of a deep-rooted holistic perspective that we see today leads to particularistic struggles featuring periodic campaigns that do not involve continuity and long-term perspectives. Activism specializes in singular topics, shying away from connections with other problems of society. Groups and activists thus tend to isolate themselves, acting, thinking, and feeling as if they exist on an island whose practices do not connect to the rest of the world. In this way, they try to build closed communities that could defend them from the alienation of modernity instead of representing an example of a solution for social problems.

These are the outcomes of specific attacks from capitalistic modernity; when one is convinced to be powerless, one loses the possibility of seeing the organization as a subject in the political field. That is why European militant and organizational agendas often follow that of those in power. They lack awareness about their exploitation, which takes place every day in various ways. It leads to a Eurocentric and metropolitan chauvinist attitude. Since people here feel 'free' they assume to be in a position from where they can only show solidarity with movements in the Global South without reflecting on their own lives. Instead, true life is resistance, and free people are those who fight, whether in Kurdistan, Palestine, Abya Yala, or Europe, while living unaware of their oppression in the center of capitalist modernity is closer to slavery than freedom. We lack precise methods to address the different layers of oppression. There is no clear answer to how to tackle colonialism and patriarchy without remaining in complaints. The absence of clear stances on the question of the state is a cause for these problems. It runs movements into appropriation by state institutions, into assuming social engineering methods and culture, and generates an NGO-ization of resistance.

The same alienation from European reality appears in the leftist lack of accounting for the richness of previous socialist experiences in Europe; we must conduct ideological critiques, yet there is a lot we can learn from those experiences. For example, the centrality of values and principles; while liberalism persuades us that a shared moral would hinder the free expression of the individual, we can see how morality is what holds the social texture.

The deep alienation from the own people that we experience in political organizing is letting us detached from the potential of our peoples. How can we fight with our people if we believe the people is fascist, conservative or liberal? Fighting for the freedom of our society requires being deeply connected to it, knowing its difficulties and potentials and by that loving it. It means knowing its history and understanding where we come from and what has brought us here today. If a revolutionary is not having this knowledge but also the deep connection to their own people there will be no

reason to fight for it or even nothing what to fight for. It would mean to end in humanitarian support of struggles of "the others" and even repetition of colonial approaches instead of bringing revolution forward.

In every society - either in historical or recent matricentric ones or in the patriarchal societies of capitalist modernity - women are responsible for giving and maintaining life and community, protecting and transmitting values. Today, this is framed under the term care work. Many revolutionary women were teachers, mothers, and deep connoisseurs of nature, plants, and animals. We have to give more consideration to this work, whether it is continuing self-education in a theoretical sense and putting educational work at the center of organizational development or the ability to give and maintain life, knowledge, and connection with the living world around us.

Ideas to overcome this situation?

Whatever the type of organization, we should push a higher culture of militancy as a responsible lifestyle choice that is not just limited to that specific organization but aims to build democratic modernity. That will demand creativity, long-term struggle and overcoming our own comfort zones.

The reasons for the weakening, or even the collapse, of leftist groups, are often related to patriarchal mindsets. Therefore, it is necessary to internalize the principle of women's liberation. in the deep sense of pursuing a paradigm shift from positivism to a paradigm that defends life by embodying the liberation of all genders – as well as the universe and nature - through women's liberation with the tool of autonomous organization. Indeed, a woman-centered perspective can bring us to a political culture that emphasizes similarities, not differences, to counteract our fragmentation.

From there, we must develop clear definitions and implementations of the principles of revolutionary life, mainly focusing on translating theories into programs. So, we could start focusing on positive rather than negative tasks. Instead of just protesting against the elements of capitalist modernity, our organizations could then build their alternatives within the system and start to organize society more humanely. From the experience of the Kurdistan Freedom Movement, we can see how strong

autonomous organization of women and the youth – both in the ideological and organizational sense from the grass-roots – and mechanisms such as co-presidency are significant to lead long-term struggles. To implement these, we thus need to internalize a correct understanding of autonomy from the outset, which does not mean independence from wholeness.

What do we need to build the Peoples' Platform Europe?

It is the goal of our forthcoming discussion, and here we want to suggest a few points to start it. We think a revolutionary personality should grow rooted in one society but aim to act self-confidently across borders. We see internationalist exchange as strategic to learn and be inspired by other experiences and gain hope and strength for everyday practice.

In the present state of things, Europe of states plays a role as a whole without really solving its internal contradictions. We will probably face times when the capitalist powers will turn the European nations against each other while they will increase their domain over us all. Therefore, we need a joint program to counteract future scenarios. In the current European situation, there is no possibility, nor the need, to develop a common ideology; yet, we can start thinking and writing down a coordinated draft about how we imagine a democratic Europe and a way to exit the present state of war. We could set regular meetings of delegates to develop a joint political situation analysis and develop an academy to ensure a Europe-wide exchange. By sharing and deepening knowledge about our respective regions, we could build a deep understanding of what is attacking us and how to resist.

In creating a framework at the European level, we would like to account for the experiences of the past decades. There have been various approaches and attempts to establish forums for social movements. However, they had theoretical and structural shortcomings: we should learn from past mistakes. We can conclude that adherence to certain principles is a prerequisite for participation and co-creation in such platforms. The minimum consensus should be anti-capitalism; we can build common denominators and alliances based on this principle. Then, if we pay attention to the differences between

social institutions' networks and vanguard organizations' ones, we could more easily develop our organizational purposes. Just as in every local and regional context, a European platform could also develop a perspective in "organizing, education, and action" as areas of responsibility.

Methodology and timing of the workshop day during the conference

Day 1 : Problems of organization in Europe and perspectives for solution (2h30)
• Welcome / introduction (10min)
• Some participating organizations present their answers to the questions of the questionnaire (45min)
• Input about organizational crisis in Europe, and organization as essential need for an effective struggle (by ADM) (15min)
• Break (10min)
• Discussion tables around perspectives to resolve organizational problems in European context (1h):
We will make tables with each question and people gathering around the questions.
– What connections do European militants establish between paradigm, theory, program, strategy, tactics, action and organization? How can we develop a coherent, holistic connection between them? (importance of having an ideology, education, collective understanding of these different aspects)
– What role does autonomous Youth and Women organizing play in our context? How can we strengthen our understanding for both?
– How can we overcome the barriers that keep us from having a strong commitment as militants part of an organization ? (question of personality, comradeship, education)
– What are the reasons for the disconnection between militant organizations and society in Europe? As militants, how can we overcome this separation? How can we develop a democratic leadership/pioneer role for social liberation and self-organization of society? What does the relationship with society look like?
– How to live as militants? How do we sustain ourselves collectively, on a material level? Is there a disconnection between personal material choices and our militancy? How can our political principles guide us in our choices of life?

To make sure written trace of the discussion remains, every table should write down keywords, and have someone taking minutes.
• Conclusion (10min, short)

Day 2: International organizing and organizational proposals for a peoples platform Europe (4h)
• Welcome and short summary of the day before, planning for the day (10min)
• the groups from the previous day can present their key words and ideas, and ask in the assembly if people want to add something, or if they have questions. Discussion. (50min -> 10 min discussion)
• Break (15min)
• Input about examples of internationalism in the past / present (15min)
• plenary discussions about perspectives/ideas: How can we realize our internationalism in practice? What is needed for a transnational European framework – the Peoples' Platform Europe – to develop a common program and shared strategies? (30min)
Topics:
– Education : How can we continue to come together to learn from one another and advance ideologically in our struggles ?
– Organization : How can we constitute an organised force in Europe? How can the platform organize local, national and international struggles together?
– Action : How can we achieve more than just an exchange of experiences ?
– Concrete ideas / proposals ?
The moderation will gather the ideas and ask the assembly to constitute small groups of 4-5 people: the people who are sitting next to each other can form these groups spontaneously, and then discuss how to develop the ideas further. Every group should develop a proposal as concretely as possible, and then present it to the others.
• Presentation of their proposal by the groups (not every group has to present, depending on the time)
• Conclusion (remaining time): back as assembly, opening up the space for impressions, anything important that people still want to add, general reflections that emerged throughout the workshop.
Throughout the whole workshop: A whiteboard / poster could allow everyone to write their ideas, offers a different format from group discussion.

Against Genocidal Politics: Opposing the Genocidal Politics of Capitalist Modernity

The need for a broader analysis of Genocidal Politics

Genocide defined as the "crime of crime" is not a spontaneous event, but rather an intended continuing process that contains various stages. Raphael Lemkin that coined the term in his 1944 book Axis Rule in Occupied Europe, underlines it's gradual character: "Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves."

The essential foundation of life includes diverse characteristics like political and social institutions, culture, language, belonging, religion, economic existence, personal security, health, dignity. To limit our understanding of genocides to their most explicit phase, namely mass murder and physical extermination, would be incomplete and prevents us from truly understanding the construction and implementation of these policies. Genocidal policies are not decided, legitimized and perpetuated only by politicians and the military, genocidal policies require an army of intellectuals, journalists, industrialists, logisticians, and of course silent masses.

Genocide survivors are often victimized, they are deprived of their subjectivity and shaped by a culture of tabooization. They are constantly confronted with trauma, fear and the continuation of oppression. Communities are being fragmented, groups are being pitted against each other. In order to overcome all of these difficulties, people targeted by genocidal politics need to organize themselves, find common and profound analyses, build internationalist networks and find direct responses to the system oppressing them.

As we write these lines, the Palestinian genocide is continuing and intensifying. An erroneous yet widespread view is to date its beginning on October 7th 2023 – and to blame it solely on Netanyahu's person or his government. In his defense writings, Abdullah Ocalan warns us of this approach and calls on us to unmask the systemic dimension of these crimes: "Placing responsibility for the crime on a few dictators like Hitler is among liberalism's most disgusting acts of propaganda. The truth cannot be discovered if the system that nurtured Hitler from cradle to the grave is not elucidated; this would be nothing but a betrayal of truth."

As Hannah Arendt states in her book Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil, the recognition of the banality of evil in many genocides is based on the fact that it is ultimately a matter of certain behaviors that are by no means limited to the genocide of the Jews between 1933 and 1945. On the contrary: whenever responsibility is passed on to others, this self-inflicted moral immaturity opens the door to the banality of evil. Resistance and action are necessary to prevent evil from becoming the norm in totalitarian systems or genocides.

From Tamil Nadu to Artsakh, from Tigray and from Palestine to Kurdistan, the world we live in today

has been radically reshaped and transformed by the dominant political and economic forces emanating from the West over the last few centuries. And genocide is one of the genuine by-products of this system of capitalist modernity. To be able to oppose those genocidal policies effectively, which is the objective of our working-group, we need to have a correct analysis of history and build clear, plural and coordinated perspectives.

The Development of Civilisation and Capitalist Modernity

In the historic formation of the so called civilisation, wars are fought on the basis of the expansion and systematization of the class society, the maintenance of power – and the implementation of Capitalist modernity. In the process in which capitalist modernity attempts to systematize itself, it has legitimized the use of violence against those who oppose, reject and fight against it. Seen from this perspective, it is clear that the establishment of capitalist modernity could only be carried out on the massive destruction of people and the whole society. The global spread of capitalism has historically been linked with imperialism and colonialism, which involved both economic exploitation and genocidal violence. In order to develop capitalist accumulation, monopolies of power need to extract resources and labor from dominated peoples and societies. Capitalism is based on processes of dispossession, where first the indigenous peoples of the Americas were systematically stripped of land, resources and political power, to then expand this system of exploitation through the transatlantic slave trade and the enslavement of millions of African people. They were exploited for the European colonial project of generating extractivism and capital accumulation. During this process of the European Industrial Revolution, that began in Britain, genocidal politics were normalized. Portuguese and Dutch Empires and companies enslaved local Tamil and Sinhalese people through warfare, conquest, and capturing prisoners. Between 1834 and 1917, over 2 million workers from India were recruited and transported to British colonies in the West Indies, Africa, and Southeast Asia to work on sugar, cotton, and tea plantations, as well as on rail construction projects. We can today see how the exploitation of women and children is still a major source of benefits for European economies. They forbid it on their territories while at the same time being the main beneficiaries of this enslavement system in their new colonies, where their companies outsource and export this exploitation. On the one hand, they destroy the societies they exploit, and on the other, they take hostage the European populations that have the illusion of enjoying a good standard of living at the expense of the exploited populations.

One of the most significant German infrastructure projects in the Ottoman Empire was the Baghdad Railway, a large-scale railway project designed to connect Berlin to Baghdad, passing through much of the Ottoman Empire, including Armenian regions in nowadays Turkey. The displacement of Armenians and the confiscation of their properties facilitated the expansion of German interests, particularly in sectors such as railways, mining, and infrastructure, represented mainly by the Deutsche Bank and its affiliates like Deutsche Reichsbahn (which later evolved into the modern Deutsche Bahn). The Ottoman Empire also relied heavily on German military technology, and companies like Krupp were involved in supplying the Ottoman Army with artillery, weapons, and ammunition necessary to achieve the Armenian and Syriac genocide. The disruption of those communities and the seizure of their property and assets contributed to German economic growth and its influence in the region. Today Krauss-Maffei, the producer of Leopard 2 tanks, KMW and Rheinmetall test, equip and supply their products to the Turkish state, which is massacring Kurdish populations throughout Kurdistan. On European soil Volkswagen, Porsche or Bayer & BASF T, which are among the world's largest industrial producers, built a big part of their capital and growth on the forced labor of tens of thousands of prisoners during the Nazi regime.

When looking at the list of the biggest arms exporters of today, it also becomes evident that those states, preaching for democracy, freedom and human rights the loudest, are the ones carrying out destruction and suffering the most. It is these very states that dictate the people how to live and how to guarantee a life in safety. The production and export of arms can never lead to more peace, but rather to a further escalation of the spiral of violence.

The expansion of the arms industry, rising militarism and the carrying out of genocides can best be justified through periods of crises. In times of

economic downturn, that lead to mass unemployment and social instability, the working forces are deprived of their wages. They are pushed into a survival mode where they are looking for the ones responsible for their misery. It is in this exact context where monopolies of power defame certain ethnic, racialized or political groups to deflect attention from the ongoing economic crisis. On the basis of many historical experiences we can see how these processes then lead to militarism, chauvinism, racism and social sexism and open the way for destruction of populations and the renewal of capitalist accumulation. When the Ottoman Empire was confronted with one defeat after another in the beginning of the First World War, they needed answers to come up with. And quickly they constructed the Armenians as scapegoats for the military losses. They created an inner enemy and legitimized the genocide of 1.5 million people. At the same time the regime of the Young Turks used the property and land of the Armenian, Syriac and Pontos-Greek people as seed capital for the founding of a new Turkish ruling class. It was under these conditions that the Turkish nation state could establish itself a few years later.

The colonization, exploitation and plundering of the livelihoods of various peoples and the associated enslavement of people by European nation states in other continents is treated as if it were a "necessary means" for the progress of white Europeans. But really all these genocidal methods should be considered as part of a profit oriented system that would eventually lead to the First and Second World War. These did not only result in the devastation of entire cities and the death of millions of people, but also shaped the system of the nation state. A system, in which the interests of the ones leading the wars are of importance. In the post-war order, the use of violence, emanated from the state actor, is considered legitimate – as we can currently observe in the Genocide of the Palestinian people.

Nation-states and International Law

The world system of the nation state is not a structure based on the plurality of different peoples, religions and cultures, but rather is formed around the interests of a nation or a certain section of the population. Although nation states have formed as a result of a conflicted world and the devastating effects of two World wars, with their international umbrella organization being the United Nations, it is evident that our world is much richer than the division of borders, expressed by 196 official states. Despite the dozens of ethnic identities, religious and cultural groups living within the borders of many nation-states, they are often marginalized, excluded, forced to assimilate and subjected to violence by the dominant nation. These practices are considered lawful because they are legitimized by the United Nations. The principle that the state has the monopoly on the use of power plays an important role in this context. Violence exercised by nation states against various ethnic, religious or cultural groups is justified according to its own laws, masked by terminology like "internal affairs", "security concerns", "internal enemy", or "the fight against terrorism".

Categorizing people through the concept of "terrorism" and on the basis of abstract and constructed fears is one of the most dangerous strategies the state ideology makes use of. It is with the use of this very concept that the Turkish state justifies its constant genocidal attacks on the Kurdish people in North and East Syria. At the same time, in announcing that it was coming to the aid of refugees, the European Union financed Turkey to the tune of 6 billion euros since 2016, without any accounting follow-up. The Turkish state, which is one of the main protagonists of the war in Syria and therefore largely responsible for the flight of the population from this territory, presents itself as a land of refuge, while in fact feeding the exodus of this population and trapping the refugees in an open air prison on the doorstep of the European Union.

International law and international organizations do not offer sufficient protection to persecuted ethnic, religious and cultural groups because usually only states are subjects of international law and the barrier to interfere in the internal affairs of a state is difficult to overcome. It is said, that the international obligations of the nation-state are based on the law of states, with the domestic law of a nation-state being compatible with international law. But reality shows us a different picture. If we look at the destruction, the wars and genocides that took place in the first 24 years of the 21st century, also known as the Third World War, we can see that international law is not a law that works in reality. It is always subordinate to and serving the ruling class and the system of capitalist modernity. The right

given to nation-states to have access on the monopoly of power is not based on international law, but rather on inter-state interests and the political and economic calculations associated with them.

How else could the recent attacks on the people of Palestine, Artsakh, Kurdistan, Baluchistan, Sápmi, Tigray, Sudan, Ukraine and many more be explained? When a state formed around a nation carries out genocidal politics, international state systems merely condone what is happening and at best call for "urgent and concrete steps to reduce tensions".

Actions, ideologies and laws that aim to secure the interests of the state can never guarantee security for the society, as we can also see by the ongoing genocide in Gaza today. European states are questioning their commitments to the International Criminal Court, half-heartedly condemning the genocidal policies of the Israeli state – while providing logistical, military, financial and diplomatic support for the extermination of Palestinians. In Capitalist Modernity genocidal mentality is normalized and imposed on our consciousness. The true path in emancipating a society has to contain an alternative understanding of what it really means to live in safety and freedom. Mass mobilization and internationalist organization over the past decade have shown that a network beyond states is possible, as in actions calling for international sanctions, boycotts, and justice for war crimes.

How genocide is expressed

Genocide takes place in the form of ethnic cleansing, forced migration, exclusion from social and political participation, assimilation, exploitation of resources, forced labor, detention in concentration camps, pogroms, systemic rape, torture and extermination – and the persecution of those who oppose all these forms of oppression. What is relevant here, is the intention of destroying a group. This can take place by disconnecting the members of a certain group from each other, cause mental harm in the form of inflicting fear or destruct cultural belonging as the basis for meaningful existence. There are various characteristics and stages through which genocide is expressed.

The term "Ethnocide", also known as cultural genocide, refers to the attempt of destroying the cultural identity of a particular ethnic group, without killing its members. This is achieved by banning and/or destroying the respective language, culture, religion, economic system and form of rule of the ethnic group in question. Instead of the old one, a new cultural identity is imposed on those affected with the use of threats and repression. The reason for such efforts is usually a sense of superiority of dominant societies over minorities of other origins, fed by racism, nationalism and capitalist greed. The aim is to accelerate the integration of the minority society into the majority society by abolishing cultural characteristics.

As "Linguicide" we understand the prohibition or massive obstruction of the use of indigenous languages (e.g. in schools) and the forced introduction of an official language of the state or the occupying power. This can be expressed through the renaming of places or the theft of children and their temporary forced internment in schools, monasteries and boarding schools, where they are forced to learn the language of the oppressor. In the Turkish state, there is heavy repression when the Kurdish people are speaking and expressing in their mother tongue. Recently musicians were attacked for singing in Kurdish, a clear sign of intimidation and oppression.

Another criterion that is essential for genocidal politics is the specific attack on women. They are systematically targeted as subjects that hold together societies and play a pioneering role in the struggle for a better life on all fronts. Women are oftentimes exposed to sexualized and gendered violence, e.g. when their reproductive rights are attacked. This was the case when the IS committed a genocide against the Yazidi people in Shingal 2014. IS terrorists killed up to 10 000 Yazidis, kidnapped and enslaved more than 7000 children and women. The female victims were labeled as "spoils from the war with the infidels" and sold by IS.

But it is not only the people, who are targeted by genocidal politics – it is the earth and the environment too. This can be seen, when we become witness of how the indigenous people of the Sàmi are attacked in their very livelihood, namely the earth they're living on. The Scandinavian states are destroying the forests and stealing the soil they live on, to use it for their own profit-oriented interests. The Sàmi people are refusing the artificial borders, that are arbitrarily build through nature, they are refusing to give up their indigenous

languages and they are fighting for their right of self-determination.

Peoples, religions or cultural groups that have no state of their own are specifically targeted by genocidal politics. Today, there are countless ethnic, religious and cultural groups in Europe and its nation-state union, that no longer have a collective existence due to cultural genocide – or what is often referred to as assimilation. When speaking of genocides, people tend to think about people in the Global South – and oversee the fact how Europe itself has become the biggest graveyard of cultural life.

Europe as the setting for Genocides

Europe had to homogenize its own people in order to create the perception of another that is different from their religion, nationality, race. In the Shoah process, people were seen as materials, and industrialism was enforced as approach to life and production.

In the winter of 1995, after three and a half years, the Bosnian War, one of the armed conflicts following the collapse of Yugoslavia, came to an end. Around 100,000 people died in the course of the war; in July 1995 alone, more than 8,000 Muslim Bosniaks, men and boys, were massacred in Srebrenica within a few days. This massacre in Srebrenica is regarded in Europe as one of the greatest crimes against humanity since the end of the Second World War. Everyday relations between ethnicities and religions in the Balkans were a pattern of coexistence. There were many practices of mixing religions, Muslims celebrated Christian holidays and vice versa. The nation-state trap dissolved the coexistence of ethnicities and religions in the multi-ethnic state of Yugoslavia.

Policies of forced assimilation, such as those experienced by the Basques in the Spanish state or the Roma and Sinti in various European countries, have led to the destruction of cultural traditions and local communities. So-called "minority communities" have often lost access to their mother tongue and cultural practices, which have been replaced by the dominant national state culture. This destruction of the targeted populations under the name of a unified, homogeneous state or "society" can unfold in various forms, such as ethnic or religious purification, territorial consolidation, and the imposition of a dominant ideology or national identity. The destruction of cultural heritage is a powerful means of erasing the historical and existential diversity of communities composing a society. The infamous Albigensian Crusade against the Cathars, and the annexation of Occitanie to the Kingdom of France, is a perfect example of dispossession, extermination, forced assimilation and religious persecution, which will be seen again and again in the European nation-states and in the states that take them as an example by setting themselves up as developing countries. Looking at the people living in France, it becomes clear that there are many ethnic, religious and language groups differing from the French majority society, including Occitans, Corsicans, Bretons, Basques and Africans – not to mention the people living in the colonial expansion of the French overseas territories. France - along with Turkey and Greece - has not yet implemented or even ratified the Council of Europe's 1995 Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

Opposing Genocidal Politics

Resistance against genocidal politics is happening already on different fronts. Although the genocide of the Yezidis in Shengal could not initially be prevented by the Iraqi nation state and the Peshmergas who were in control there, the survivors could be evacuated by the Kurdish freedom movement through a security corridor from Shengal to Rojava after the attack. The HPG/YPG/YPJ organized resistance against IS, which succeeded in pushing them back from Shengal. Together with the survivors, a self-defense organization YBŞ/YJŞ was founded to protect the population. Autonomous structures were created in which the Yezidi population now organizes itself politically and socially. As a result of these actions, many states had to put this genocide on their agenda, and many recognized the events as genocide.

To oppose, resist and organize against genocidal policies, while supporting the struggles of people worldwide, it is imperative to adopt a global (or at least multi-scale) strategy that addresses the roots of oppression, consolidates solidarity and forms movements capable of challenging state brutality, corporate interests and associated entities. It needs to be recognized that genocidal politics are not

isolated events but part of a broader system of exploitation, oppression, and inequality.

The people affected by genocides are pushed into an essentialized and static victim group, defined by the perpetrators. In the common narrative regarding the Shoah, it is oftentimes ignored or downplayed how Jews organized and defended themselves against the fascist forces. If the Palestinians are getting massacred today, it's because they did not accept to disappear (be assimilated) in a soft manner and they are resisting the genocidal politics imposed upon them. It is essential to overcome this constant narrative of victimization and make use of one's own agency and power.

The people no longer accept to be condemned to only spectating, staying in a position of powerlessness, resigning to verbal protests or state solutions like genocide recognition – just to then mourn in retrospect. What moral, democratic, political and concrete contribution could progressive people make, coming from a tradition that is committed to preserving the diverse planet, whether autonomously or in cross-border networks? With every destruction and annihilation we witness, human conscience, ethics and consciousness are also destroyed. It is therefore necessary to act together to preserve the dignity of people, nature and the diversity of our planet.

Although democratic forces in Europe repeatedly advocate solidarity in the fight against global injustice, there are a number of problematic approaches that can hinder effective resistance, such as Eurocentrism, Savior complexes, appropriation of the struggles or the hierarchization of suffering. The result can be a form of "charitable solidarity" rather than genuine solidarity rooted in mutual respect and common struggle. The problem lies in not perceiving that the aim of genocides is to destroy this society. Even if not carried out physically, this can be achieved by the fragmentation into individuals, that do not challenge processes of assimilation.

In our discussions, we realized that talking about genocidal politics required a holistic approach and not just the classic liberal historiography. We understood that we needed to continue our research sociologically and that oral testimonies & transmission is one of the best sources, bringing us closer to experience than to external or spectatorial observation. The effects of genocidal politics are not limited to their overt actions, but resound from generation to generation, from year to year in our families, our silences, our self-perceptions, our identities, and are an integral part of who we are. As far as we consider that our moral and political duty is not only to interpret the world but to actually change it, understanding genocidal politics is just the first step towards developing tactics, strategies and coordination to ultimately oppose them.

Methodology

The first Workshop session (on Friday the 14th), will contain a short input and joint discussion about our understanding of genocidal politics, as well as the discussing of strategies that we, as organized forces, can develop to oppose them. In the second Workshop session (on Saturday the 15th), we will split into four different working groups, with each of them focusing on a specific subject. We will then come together and discuss common strategies in opposing genocidal politics in more detail.

Democratic Media – The Battle for Hearts & Minds

In addition to bullets and bombs, the battle for hearts and minds is on the rise. As global wars escalate, the so-called "cognitive warfare" is in full swing. Beyond the physical battlefields, contemporary wars are increasingly fought through media to shape and control human perception. There is a battle between various liberal-globalist and national-conservative power elites for the hegemony of truth and perception. Multilateral propaganda is increasingly visible in the media landscape, leading to distorted narratives and confused minds. Whether it is the Green New Deal or right-wing populism, these battles are not about the fight for a new system, but for supremacy in the existing capitalist power system. Both camps are just two sides of the same coin. They are united in their insistence on capitalist exploitation, patriarchy, environmentally destructive industrialism, and belligerent nationalism. Both rely on oppression and the weakening of social self-organisation.

While asserting themselves materially with force and hard-power (political, financial, etc.), hegemonic forces, states, and their institutions also mobilise for war through soft-power in the cultural and intellectual realms: from schools to the entertainment industry. For this reason, we have to reclaim the initiative and counter their narratives with our truths.

To fight effectively against war and for a more peaceful world, we need to expose how the dominant system influences our beliefs and challenge its claim to be sole possessors of truth. It is clear by now that societies are kept in the dark about world-historical events. It would be significantly more difficult for society to accept warmongering and authoritarianism without the support of information and knowledge institutions—such as traditional news media, academia, and think tanks. These institutions are often aligned with state institutions, intelligence services, the military industry, and corporate power.

Antonio Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony illustrates how states and dominant forces maintain their authority not only through coercion, but by embedding their ideologies in cultural norms and practices. Cultural hegemony enables the ruling powers to secure societal consent and make their dominance appear natural and inevitable. In the information age, the media serves as a crucial institution for propagating dominant narratives, often sidelining alternative perspectives and reinforcing the status quo. For the US, cultural dominance is a key component of its global hegemony, with other nations emulating its values and ideologies. Similarly, other powers such as the EU, China, and Russia use cultural initiatives and state-aligned media networks to shape perceptions and advance their interests, demonstrating the multi-faceted nature of cultural hegemony on global stage. This interplay of cultural influence and media control creates a landscape in which cognitive warfare thrives, as the manipulation of information and narratives becomes a key tool for maintaining social control and suppressing dissent.

The media, controlled by monopoly capital and state powers, bombard individuals and society with their

ideologies, eroding the moral and political fabric of society, making individuals more vulnerable to manipulation, and distracting society from genuine political engagement. This leads to what Abdullah Öcalan calls "sociocide."

These days, especially in Europe, propaganda is not as obvious as it used to be. It is often subtle and decentralised. From the rise of the "combatting disinformation" sector to the use of women, queer, and non-white identities to legitimise militarism and imperialism. For instance, through hegemonic media, women are shown as objects and used in advertisements as oversexualised to sell products or ideas. Youth and women, as the most vulnerable parts of society, are bombarded with information that makes them become isolated from each other and detached from real life, which affects their psychology and decisions. Information pollution makes it more difficult to develop critical and independent perspectives and positions. It is thus paramount to analyse the situation well to resist locally and globally.

We must bring democratic socialist ideas back into the social mainstream by organising democratic media from below. Political civil society - women, youth, workers, and the oppressed - and it searches for truth, democratic politics, and discussions about a just and good life is our base for this. Building free democratic media and grassroots communication networks amplifies marginalised voices and empowers communities to reclaim their narratives and assert their identities. This democratic self-organisation is crucial in countering capitalist media monopolies, as it enables our societies to assert our own social values and critically engage with the daily attacks through nationalism, sexism, fundamentalism, and positivism. At the same time, democratic media should be a platform for healthy social and political debates to foster society's autonomy, self-consciousness, and engagement to solve social problems.

Democratic politics can be broadly defined as the existence of a democratic atmosphere and the political formation of society. Without various institutions and activities - such as public demonstrations and assemblies, parties, co-operatives, councils, and media - the practice of democratic politics cannot flourish. The primary role of these institutions is to facilitate exchange and decision-making on common issues. Without such discourse, social life cannot function effectively, leading to chaos or dictatorship, which remain the fate of undemocratic societies. In such an environment, the development of a moral and political society is inconceivable. Therefore, the primary goal of the political struggle is to cultivate a democratic society and manage public affairs through democratic debate and decision-making. Democratic politics requires ambitious activists, media, political organisations and parties, associations, and continuous social education. A respectful approach to social differences, a focus on equality, and consensus-building are essential. A richness of debate, political courage, and a holistic approach are also essential characteristics of effective democratic politics.

The latest forms of communication have always been the key tools for resisting power and driving social change. They have been used to recruit, share and disseminate information, and mobilise support. Think of the pen, the printing press, the telegraph, radio, television, the internet, artificial intelligence, and other digital technologies. However, the recent digital revolution and the role of the capitalist media industry in shaping public discourse pose significant technical, methodological, and moral challenges for us as a society, and in particular for contemporary democratic media and journalism.

In this context, democratic media are essential for strengthening the moral and political fabric of society. By providing platforms for diverse voices and fostering open dialogue, they enable active participation in social decision-making, thus countering both the social fragmentation in social media and the uniform hegemony imposed by corporate media. Instead of social engineering a narrative from above, free media facilitate a social consciousness and consensus from below. Democratic media challenge dominant ideologies and cognitive warfare by offering alternative narratives that reflect the diversity of our societies. Developing alternative perspectives is essential to the ongoing struggle against sociocide and the strengthening of a vivid, democratic society.

Our democratic media needs to create an atmosphere in which people can start imagining a different world again. It needs to prepare the soil for social movements to grow while also playing its role as critical control function around power tendencies, centralisation, and other deviations within our movements and communities. As Rosa Luxemburg once said: "The only way to rebirth is the school of

public life itself, unrestricted broadest democracy, public opinion".

While those fighting for radical change are severely under-represented, their daily challenges, debates, successes, and experiences find little space in the established mass media. The liberal side can rely on the traditional media, but nationalist and right-wing populist forces have also gained influence in the new sphere of digital media. This is changing the social discourse. Society is torn between different strategies of manipulation and propaganda. Both the old style of state media, with its absolute positivism and selective narratives, and the style of the New Right, with its post-factual narratives and constant attacks on the moral compass of society, leave no room for a deeper understanding of the context and the interests at stake.

The emergence of "social media" in itself implies a democratisation of mass media and the weakening of state and private media monopolies. Technically, the difference between media producers and consumers has narrowed exponentially. Everyone is both consuming and producing. This has also shaped the exercise of power and resistance to it. We now live in a world where people can be fired from their jobs for posting inappropriate pictures on Facebook, while victims of police brutality use the same technology to film their attackers in action.

However, leaving the ownership structures untouched, a true democratisation doesn't take place, as private companies still maintain the power to control and censor the flow of information for the interests of profit maximisation. They control the flows of data and metadata to feed the pervasive surveillance complex that has emerged at the intersection of secret services and private corporations. You are no longer reaching for the medium. It reaches out to you!

They create virtual and real "microphysics of power," as Foucault called it, where the way power over a network reaches into every nook and cranny of our private lives. Individuals do not simply circulate in these networks; they are capable of both submitting to and exercising this power.

The attacks on social consciousness are not just an attempt to destroy trust in the respective enemy actors or to misinform the public, but a calculated strategy to disrupt social cohesion. Liberalism, with its bombardment of information, has severely limited people's reflexes and need for action. People see the injustices in the world, but do not feel addressed and have little impetus to act.

However, there are a large number of radical journalists, newspapers, free radio stations and new digital media technologies, as well as a long tradition of alternative media on which we can build for a much-needed renaissance of free and democratic media. To achieve this, we must recognise the information and media world as a strategic battlefield for us. We must systematically organise the media as a tool to amplify the voices of workers, women, youth and all the oppressed, to counter the narratives of the rulers and warmongers, and to catalyse the democratic discussion of political civil society.

That is why our workshop also wants to address the question of what we want to build up at the Peoples' Platform Europe in regards to media. How can we, as democratic media, create the ground for social movements and what is needed for this? What foundations do we need to create so that people can even imagine a different world? How do we move 'the window of what can be said' or 'imagined'? How can we put digitalisation at the service of the democratisation of the media and build alternative digital media networks for this purpose? How can for example independent democratic media federations be found?

We want to build on our relationships and find ways of sharing resources, keeping each other informed about initiatives, plan joint efforts and, most importantly, strengthen our unity.

We're at a turning point and we need to unite our efforts to be ready for the future and win together.
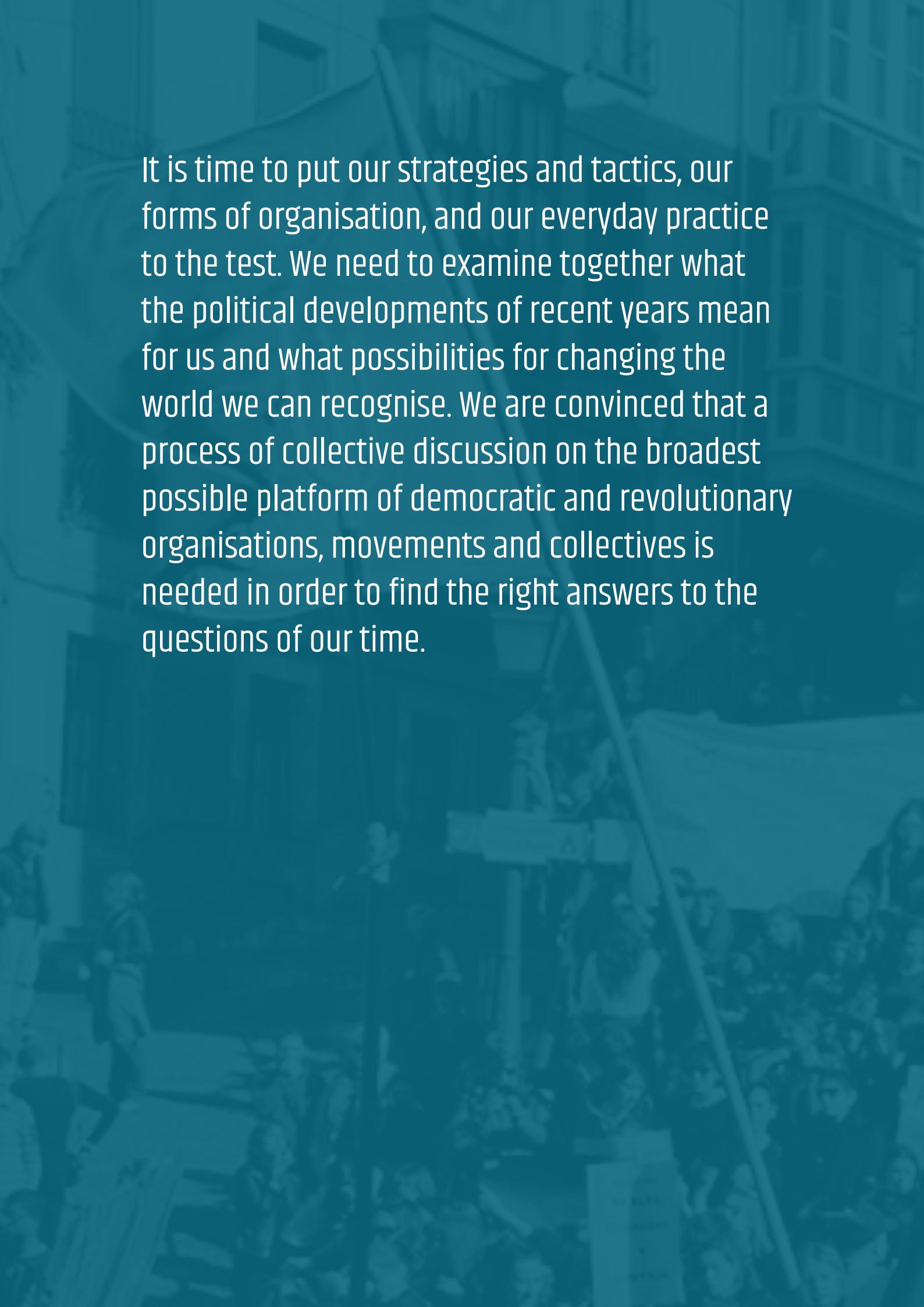
It is time to put our strategies and tactics, our forms of organisation, and our everyday practice to the test. We need to examine together what the political developments of recent years mean for us and what possibilities for changing the world we can recognise. We are convinced that a process of collective discussion on the broadest possible platform of democratic and revolutionary organisations, movements and collectives is needed in order to find the right answers to the questions of our time.