

Beyond borders

Above all, we prefer that our struggles do not know any limits. That is why we search, during their development, to grasp where their limits are, their borders, to then be able to unsettle them. This intention can also be translated onto a «geographic» terrain as well as onto the plain of «content». If we engage in a struggle, often we cherish, perhaps secretly, the desire that this struggle will have echoes beyond a specific neighbourhood, a city, or a region. In the same way, we consider a specific subject or a concrete event which share a struggle simply like a reference point: we hope that others who want to fight will overcome these limits to always question and attack more aspects of power. In other words, a desire for struggles that do not know borders. However, if we look at social conflicts or at revolts that take place in a far away land, or when yet again a comrades approaches us with an internationalist hunger, the answer to the question of what we can do about it here and now is not all that obvious. Beyond the notion that also in other parts of the world, there must be some madmen with anarchist ideas, it often seems that we have walled ourselves up with our own activities, and an interaction with the activities that take place on the outside of these walls seems impossible. The efforts that go in the direction of that kind of interaction are usually quickly suspended, in the most cases given the fact that one cannot really compare the local situations, that each situation is different and requires a singular approach. Which is true sometimes. In each local situation there will always be different aspects that will make each reality unique. Different axes around which exists a conflictuality, different forms through which authority manifests itself more overtly, different tension points, different sensibilities etc. And it goes without saying that we want to pay the more attention to it as possible during the development of our local activities. Even more, no internationalism in itself will bring this out with a tap of a magic wand or replace this effort and these necessary capacities.

This will always remain a challenge that we will always find ourselves in and that we cannot therefore confront but within ourselves. Even so, a lot of things still need to be told. Having in the back of our heads everything that is said the loudest, i think that an internationalist dynamic can exist which goes beyond in some way the local projects of each one, but that at the same time can influence them and advance them. The careful reader has without doubt surprised me in advancing this quite easy statement, because such a dynamic already exists. Maybe the question is more which shapes such a dynamic can take and what could this generate if we deepen and intensify it. And there all easy statements will be out of place. What will follow will be nothing more than a few modest reflexions and summaries with the goal of contributing to a discussion, a mental exercise, an attempt. In the search of a dynamic that always leaves behind more borders.

Some big and small moments (of which the upcoming encounter in Switzerland is one) where comrades of different countries find each other, offers – beyond the always limited goals of these encounters – occasions to develop affinity. Some can begin to get to know each other within a certain context and take the first steps, be them modest, towards a reciprocity on the grounds of knowledge, ideas, aspirations. Others could have already discovered this reciprocity in the past, and therefore any encounter becomes a moment where the existing affinity can be deepened.

But this doesn't address the question: why? Why does it seem interesting to us to nourish and sharpen the ties beyond borders? A small part of the answer seems to me to be found in the activities already elaborated which travel through different regions. Moments of discussion for example, traveling under the pretext of a struggle, of an event or of a publication, and where experiences and ideas are exchanged between different people and different places. Or sometimes, and somewhat we ask ourselves why we don't take advantage of this more often, there are some moments when a «local» conflict can literally be lived together with people of different regions or countries. Because these moments are intense episodes and therefore captivating within a struggle; or simply because some extra sets of hands are all the more welcome.

It would be certainly interesting if some individuals were more often participating in these occasions. However (even the multiplication of) these practices could still not say everything about their possible perspective. In hindsight, we could always wisely stow away these occasions in the arsenal of experiences made to never look at them again. Or... we could attempt to introduce them in the activities that we, each one in their own specific context, is busy elaborating, in a way for these experiences to become points of reference and sources of inspiration. But how then? Maybe it becomes necessary to dare to ask ourselves the questions that arise by elaborating local struggles, with and international approach. And starting for example with an analysis of reality. Looking ourselves around and trying to understand what's going on and what's at play. After this, searching for common points within the different analyses made in the different contexts. What has changed in the last decades? How should we analyze power that becomes more frequently decentralized, the dictatorship of the economy that attempts to colonize life in an increasingly deeper way, the repressive infrastructures always larger which the States are busy developing, the delirious rôle of technology etc?

These are tendencies that easily overcome national borders and which, be it at a different pace or through different ways, are felt everywhere. And finally, which moments can succeed to undermine the established order, or what can the absence of such moments mean to us? With analyses of reality in our pockets, we can also venture on the terrain of the future. Not only by trying to make some hypotheses that go beyond our local situation, but also asking ourselves what can these hypotheses teach us in relation to anarchist intervention?

Which possibilities can emerge if we engage the discussion also beyond our context or our close accomplices. This can generate an interaction that leaves few things out of the discussion; analyses, means, methods, and why not, perspectives and possible «goals»? An interaction that is not only deepened during moments of discussion and actions that we physically share, but which can be also brought back to our own projects, our own initiatives in struggle, our own attempts of rupture within the reality of its context. For a dynamic that can grow where the activities of all corners communicate more and more, inspire and reinforce each other.

[Zurich, 10-13/11/12]

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