

THE VIRUS OF INEQUALITY AND THE WORLD WE NEED TO BUILD

The coronavirus pandemic has had a wide and rapid impact on the ways we relate to each other, how we live with each other and work with each other. It is clearly not only a health emergency and its impact on the hundreds of thousands of human lives that have been lost. It is the crisis of a civilization that questions the very foundations of the present economic, political, social, cultural and environmental present model.

This crisis has shown the very essence of capitalism, its need to ensure the accumulation of wealth, power and political control through the super exploitation of labor and the destruction of nature. It has revealed to us how interconnected it is with patriarchy, racism and colonialism, expressed in poverty, inequality, misogyny, homophobia, lesbophobia...symptoms of the merciless attempt to continue a type of development "ad infinitum" that consecrates -unviable- ways of life, not only for humanity as a whole, but for the survival of the planet.

The pandemic affects all persons

But not the same way. It has revealed the enormous inequalities of the world, among regions, among countries, among persons. The inequalities that characterize and burden Latin America and the Caribbean, became wider with the pandemic. Its impact on those sectors of the population that have suffered historic exclusions and deprivations, who live in precarious conditions and greater vulnerability, with those who work in the informal sector, those who, because of their age, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnic origin see their possibility of reacting increasingly limited and their rights more and more restricted.

Despite the progressive weakening of the States promotion of social and collective rights, the effects of the pandemic have demonstrated that they are fundamental to deal with the crisis and ensure the provision of basic services and social protection. Nevertheless, its resources have been overwhelmed by the sanitary emergency and eroded by the progressive reduction of its regulating role and the reduction of the budgets destined to public health, education and employment. In many instances, the absence of effective mechanisms of control and accountability, have revealed the lack of efficiency and the corruption of politicians and businessmen who restrict the rights of the citizens to the demands of the market.

The pandemic has been used as a pretext to move towards a more authoritarian state. The presence of policemen and armed soldiers in the streets as biopolitical measures that strengthen the control of the virus, include the risk of their remaining once the pandemic has come to an end. In various countries, they have been used to repress social movements and protests thus restricting human rights and widening the mechanisms of control over the population of already weakened democracies.



It is very easily said

The quarantine has been selected as one of the most efficient measures to fight against the virus, but “Stay home” has a different meaning for those who do not have a home, for those who cannot stay in it because the family depends on a daily income obtained in the streets.”Wash your hands” is very easily said but it has a different meaning for those who do not have drinkable water, electricity or other basic services and cannot learn at a distance because they do not have a computer, or a smart telephone or internet.

It is easy to say, “Stay at home.” But home is the least secure place for thousands of women, girls and boys: most of their aggressors are in their family environment.

During confinement, some countries have seen the number of their domestic violence cases double as well as an alarming increase of women killed and sexual violence during confinement.

The insufficient efforts of the governments to combat gender violence have become evident: the rights of women are not a priority for the authorities during “normal times” and even less during pandemics.

The quarantine has been used as a pretext to suspend services of sexual and reproductive health gynecological care the provision of contraceptive methods, contraceptive methods and it is almost impossible to have an abortion, even in the cases permitted by the law.

Fundamentalist sectors have taken advantage of the conditions created by the sanitary crisis to relaunch once again attacks against gender equality and retrieve conservative views contrary to the rights of women and non-hegemonic sexual diversities. Sexual workers and trans women dedicated to sexual work have become more vulnerable.

Gently led by the hand of symbolic violence, the fear of contagion has exacerbated and widened the discourses of hatred, reproducing prejudices and discriminatory practices against afrodescendants, native and sexually diverse persons.

The care of work. The work of caring

The world of work is being restructured in order to maintain its system intact, substantially racist and patriarchal. In the context of pandemic and closure, this entity expands itself and leads towards a sharper exploitation of the working time and the subjectivities of the working class, especially those of women working longer hours, frequently adding “productive work” and “reproductive work.”



Caring activities never stopped. It is clear that un-paid domestic work holds the heart of daily life and has an economic value that ought to be measured and recognized. This work has been unjustly assigned to women, a historical responsibility imposed on them, done gratuitously in the home, or under-remunerated, when they do it in the home of other persons.

Paid domestic workers, in general exposed to precarious labor forms, in the context of a pandemic are subject to abusive practices, from the loss of the job to the confinement of their employers, with their labor rights violated.

In this crisis, the absolute importance of work, and therefore of the working class could not be more evident and the importance of domestic work is revealed with total clarity.

What kind of normality are they speaking?

The state discourse wants to take us to a “new normal”. But what kind of normality are they talking about? Is a system that gives priority to consumption and profit over people’s needs, normal? That incalculable fortunes do not pay taxes? Is it normal that hundreds of millions of people live in utter poverty? Is it normal that women have fewer rights than men? That the earth we inhabit is so expropriated, that neither the air we breathe nor the food we eat are “normal”?

The present crisis becomes a unique opportunity to construct another type of life, another type of state and institutions. It implies a debate about the kind of world we want. It invites us to confront a patriarchal, racist colonial capitalism to create new collective imaginaries.

The social movements, among them the feminist movement, in its plurality and in all continents, has denounced the process of mercantilization of politics, making holes in the hegemonic perspective that reduces democracy to an electoral process and ignores the others multiple dimensions of social relations. Feminism has placed daily life as a dimension of democracy, as a form of organizing social life. It requires narratives, actions, proposals, created in the plurality of practices and the concrete experience of all, women and men, marked by inequalities of class, race, ethnicity, sex and gender.

We must move towards a democratization of democracy, a democratization that its sense of justice, equality and liberty for all persons and places at the center of politics, the sustainability of life.

We do not want “a new normal” that maintains the inequalities and privileges of old but with facemasks. We want politics that can produce transformations capable of generating structural changes.



We must think about a model that situates social relations and nature in a central dimension; that favors solid changes in policy, questions the redistribution of wealth and the dynamics of consumption, that prioritize the common good and not accumulation, and guarantees the freedom of sexual and reproductive life as a dimension of citizenship. A model where the “natural” and nurturing role of women becomes the most important and necessary work and productive and reproductive work become shared as a social practice free and full of meaning. Caring is proposed as a universal right, transversal and intercultural, it opens the possibility of recapturing such notions as solidarity, reciprocity and interdependency among human beings and human beings and nature. To invent new forms of living, dreaming and preserving feminist life.

As feminists, we declare our determination to advance in the struggle of the women’s movement to transform a world that requires urgently:

- Universalization of co-responsible care systems
- Recognition of Non- Paid Women’s Work and its incorporation at the National Account System
- Universal Basic Income
- Free Medical Patents
- Food Sovereignty and Sustainable Production and Consumption
- Ensure the Right to Territory
- Protection and Access to Common Goods and Nature’s Preservation
- Universal Guarantee of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Public Health Systems and Social Security
- Eradication of all Forms of Discrimination and Violence Against Women
- Elimination of racial discrimination
- Full Enjoyment of Sexual and Reproductive Rights.

**OUR VOICE IS NOT
IN QUARANTINE**

**WE DEMAND THE END
OF ALL FORMS OF POLITICAL
CRIMINALIZATION.**



ARTICULACION
FEMINISTA
MARCOSUR

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