

THE CLIMATE IS STRIKING



ForaCimate AND
**CLASS STRUGGLE
STRIKES BACK**
ClassConflict

SUMMARY

The Climate is Striking
(and Class Struggle Strikes Back)

2

To Build a Bridge. The role of the social
union in the struggle for the environment
by Jakob (Allt åt alla Gothenburg)

5

Striking the war against climate crisis and
patriarchal attacks
by Climate Class Conflict Italy

7

What Came First, the Recovery and
Resilience Plan or the Sanctions?
by Ovid Pop and Valentin Cernat (Alternator, Romania)

9

Preliminary notes on linking housing and
climate struggles
by Mikael Hall (Allt åt Alla Stockholm)

12

We drive together!

An Interview with Friedrich Graeber (FFF Magdeburg) on German Climate
and Workers' strike

15

Local Struggles and the Transnational
Perspective

An Interview with the Climate Social Camp (Turin, Italy)

17

A new phase of ecological struggles?

An Interview with with a Parisian comrade on Sainte-Soline and the French
movement

20

THE CLIMATE IS STRIKING AND CLASS STRUGGLE STRIKES BACK



An environmental activist places a banner on a police barricade during the global climate strike in New Delhi, India. Source: The Guardian @Jewel Samad

Millions of people throughout Europe are on strike. In France, workers' refusal to spend more time on exploited jobs quickly became a spark that ignited a wave of strikes against Macron's neoliberal agenda. In the UK, social workers and rail workers, as well as teachers and nurses went repeatedly on strike to demand higher wages amid an extended crisis of social reproduction. In Germany, public sector and transport workers took to the streets together with climate activists to demand for better working conditions and greener mobility, building connections between social and climate justice claims. This connection was opposed by bosses and politicians, arguing that this was a 'political' strike,

something which is illegal in the country. A similar response was given to demonstrators in France, where politicians called workers and activists 'irresponsible' towards the future of their children. The same politicians who have endangered the future of millions of people by refusing to take steps against environmental degradation or the possible escalation of war. After all, this crisis hits millions of precarious workers, women, LGBTQ+ people, and migrants who – as the Head of the Bank of England wanted to clarify – shall see it as a possibility to meet their fate of poverty and exploitation. Still, together with worsening conditions, [a wave of widespread anger is traveling across borders](#) affirming the desire for a better future.

This issue is the result of an ongoing reflection on what it means for us to take a climate class stance in these struggles, on how we can contribute to stretch their limits and build a space for transnational communication that can strengthen our collective claims. The TSS initiative Climate Class Conflict has been the attempt to practice this political communication since our meeting in Sofia in September 2022. It went through the publication of our first issue of this journal – [For a Climate Class Conflict. Strike the Green Transition!](#) – and was widely discussed in Frankfurt last February. On all these occasions, we acknowledge that not only struggles do not appear everywhere at the same time with the same intensity, but also that they do not always take the shape we

may expect. Despite its centrality for changing dynamics in both production and social reproduction from Western to Eastern Europe and beyond, the capitalist green transition does not always appear as the main target of social unrest. Still, the effects of the green transition materially connect individuals in different social positions and in disparate national contexts. Social struggles can thus gain strength and capacity to expand by the attempt to bridge social and climate justice demands. How can we make these resonances visible and lasting? How can we build a strong base for future transnational struggles? Can the green transition be a strategic field to connect our initiatives, starting from the recognition that ecological, industrial, and military investments constitute a field for capital accumulation which is finding in the current war scenario a suitable environment to flourish? Our political bet is that it can. We call climate class conflict the attempt to politicize the green transition, that is, to oppose through a common transnational struggle its devastating effects on the working and living conditions of millions of people and the way it worsens the climate crisis. A climate class conflict is what we need to envision a way out of the green transition's unbearably capitalistic logic.

What happened in Germany in the last months, with the climate movement joining

workers on the picket lines shows that – as Friedrich from Fridays For Future Marburg puts it in his interview – «climate and social justice belong together». This is telling of what a climate class struggle shall aim to: demand a radical change in society while challenging its basic pillars, such as the assumption that the transition towards a 'greener' configuration of capitalism would leave exploitation unchanged. To accomplish such potential, though, we must acknowledge similarities as well as



differences among the contexts in which we struggle. So, in front of the possibilities opened by the presence of mass movements in some places, we also ask ourselves how to go beyond existing boundaries of social struggles, highlighting that differences in conditions pose an organizational problem to political movements. To «build a bridge», as Jakob from the Swedish social union Allt åt Alla puts it, must really be our goal and ambition, not only within struggles happening in

the same territories but also across borders. In this sense, with this Journal we certainly aim to put political experiences together, but we also want to move a step towards something more. We want to highlight those hierarchies that are enhanced by national plans for green transition, placing workers in critical positions that are connected to the ones of those struggling in other countries, even though not always in a transparent way. Investments in the green transition are now one of the main terrains of capital accumulation, which also translate into plans for better integrating new sectors and national economies in the European market seeking opportunities for enlargement in troubled times. The contribution provided by Valentin and Ovid on the relation between the war and climate policies in Romania clearly highlights that the green transition is about ownership and privatizations, while it serves the needs of a

«logistics of war» which runs from the Black Sea to Western Europe via the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). Impoverishment and dispossession are part of the process of neoliberalization of Romanian society, and green plans aim to facilitate its synchronization with the needs of the European single market, while putting workers in a connected, although different, social position to that of others in Western countries. This shows that what happens in Eastern

Europe is part and parcel of one capitalist system that organizes its value chains transnationally. But also, this calls on our side for the articulation of discourses and tools which can efficiently face this fragmentation. This transnational situation of exploitation, war, and climate degradation demands an effort towards the construction of spaces where refusals to its alleged unquestionability can grow stronger. As made apparent by Mikael's notes developed from discussions held at our last Tss meeting in Frankfurt, the green transition invests different fields and always grants government motivations to unequal policies. Even housing and urban struggles happening on specific territories with specific enemies to face, are clearly caught in transnational dynamics put in motion by the green transition, which does become also a possible terrain to unite our claims.

In Italy, feminist and climate movements have joined their struggles against patriarchal

violence and environmental destruction under the shared claim "Strike the war!". These movements have recognized the strike as a common practice to fight together for climate justice, against women's oppression, and against the effects of the war in Ukraine. This has opened a space of communication and organization through criticism of the way society reproduces itself. There is a common thread that holds together discourses about Europe as a fortress of democracy and the tolerance it shows toward governments that deny women's abortion rights and pass laws against LGBTQ+ people. The same thread runs through the anti-migrants' policies to 'protect European borders' and the agreements EU and its member States sign with African countries to import highly polluting fossil fuels now that the war has made the Russian market inaccessible. It is about the stronghold Europe has on Eastern countries to make them functional to the single market and large

investments in so-called strategic sectors. We have to recognize this thread in order to make steps forward in the organization of our rage against exploitation, patriarchal and racist violence, climate devastation, and the war in Ukraine that legitimizes governments and capital to further tighten their grip on our lives and reduce the efficacy of our political initiatives.

We want to fuel a process of organization of our claims for climate and social justice into a climate class movement that can affirm our power to change society as a whole, by bridging struggles and fostering new ones, by choosing to practice the transnational politics we need in a changing climate.

Future appointments:

12 October 2023

We will hold a conference on 'War and Climate crisis' at the

[World Climate Congress in Milan](#)

27, 28, 29 October 2023

[TSS Meeting in Bologna](#)



TO BUILD A BRIDGE

THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL UNION IN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

BY JAKOB (ALLT ÅT ALLA GOTHENBURG)



Since September last year, Sweden has had a right-wing government with support and influence from the Sweden Democrats. The new government entered office during an ongoing cost of living crisis with high fuel- and energy prices along with rampant food prices and rents. For more on this, see number 8 of Svärm. But the new government has also come into power during a time of urgent ecological crises. Not a time when we can afford right-wing policies that, apart from attacking the social safety systems, also hide behind promises of nuclear power in the future while dismantling the previous government's (albeit modest) climate ambitions here and now - by replacing the funding of high speed railways with the building of new highways and ending municipal

wind farm projects.

The previous Social Democratic led government did not exactly move the climate movement to cries of joy with their track record including the decision to follow up a 15 year long locked conflict between the climate movement, indigenous communities, and the mining industry with a green light for new exploitation in Gállok, an area primarily used for reindeer husbandry by the Sámi people. But while the previous government at least sometimes met climate activism with tepid and hollow endorsements of Greta Thunberg, the new government rather wants to follow in the footsteps of the UK, meeting protests with intensified repression.

Allt åt alla has to confront the criminalisation of environmentalism along with the rest of the

climate- and environmentalist movement, with among other things, more regular protests and actions. But being a social union also creates openings for organising around and defining conflict lines that differ from those of both traditional unions and activist networks.

The idea about fusing the struggle for an equitable society with the struggle for a sustainable relation with nature and our environments is not new. Just like the capitalist drive for accumulation degrades and pollutes nature while concomitantly degrading and oppressing workers, the workers too have been forced to fight for both shorter working hours and clean air. But with climate crisis the political horizon is changing.

During our lifetime the discussion has moved from being mainly about emission rights

trade and individual consumer choices to discussions of more far-reaching interventions in eg., industry and transport policies. The more recent policies have been characterised by so-called eco modernisation, ie. attempts to decrease emissions and other environmental impacts without challenging capital whatsoever. In the wake of these discussions, demands for a just transition have been made which build on the idea that the slowing down of global warming also must observe the need for social justice. What this ‘need for social justice’ means varies depending on who you’re asking, but the difficulties with - or reluctance to - anchor the transition in a movement from below remain.

Therefore I want to explore what the role of the social union can become, both in this new political environment but also in the broader struggle for the climate and our environments. Starting in the discussion held in number 7 of Svärm, The struggle for the Environments, and perhaps chiefly the board’s text, “Klimatpolitiska avstamp” (climate policy starting points), I want to highlight two areas of focus where the social union could play a key role in merging the struggle for slowing the ongoing ecological crises with the struggles for social justice in peoples’ everyday lives.

Urban environments make up such a focus area, which is also previously discussed in Svärm. Here the social union takes up a somewhat natural space as it represents a move outside the factories to the ‘rest’ of society, where production as well as reproduction is mediated by the logic of capital. In “Kampen om Miljöerna” in No. 7 of Svärm, an interesting discussion takes place about urban environments and the future of the struggles for them. Among other things the issue of traffic policies and the struggle for mobility in urban

environments. The main reason for bringing up this example is to highlight the understanding of environmental issues as fundamentally social and vice versa. By, for instance, using militant surveys as the basis for understanding urban dwellers’ lived experiences of mobility in their environments, along with long-term campaigns like ‘Freeze the Rent’ could move beyond being just a question of emissions levels and noise to become a question of everyone’s access to the city. Everyone’s access to a city with clean air, real green areas, accessible workplaces, and community functions then becomes a democratic issue, as well as an ecological one.

The other focus area is workplaces. Because even if the “move beyond the factories” signals the social union’s interest in life and politics outside the workspace, I want to sciss out what Allt åt alla as a social union could do to bring together workers’ in industries and logistics networks and climate activists’ respective struggles.

The findings from my own Master’s thesis building on an interview study with elected representatives of the Gothenburg Dockworkers’ Union (Hamnarbetarförbundet) and which tries to stake out paths for climate-union cooperation should be read with some caution but does seem to point towards a few interesting openings.

The idea that the social union by virtue of being ‘out there’ in the lived communities could function as a bridge between these two forces rests partly on the issue of whether it is possible to identify a workplace conflict between worker and employer that simultaneously is a question of environmentally degrading practices and technologies. A recurring example from my interviews was the Gothenburg Harbour’s price winning land-supply of electricity for docked

vessels which despite (work) environment- and climate benefits simply is not used. Instead the ships’ auxiliary systems are running while docked, spitting out fumes in the terminals while Gothenburg Harbour and the municipality receive praise and certificates for their environmental work.

Here the elected union representatives expressed a perceived potential for cooperation with climate activists, partly in the form of exchange of information and knowledge but also in order to pressure employers from ‘outside’. For in these conflicts workers are often prevented from campaigning for external pressure on the employer through loyalty clauses in the employment contracts. Here, the toolbox and resources of climate activists could be useful in pressuring and mobilising against the employer, not least as this particular issue lends itself to being pursued in terms of freedom of expression. It will also be important to find out what an increased focus on the conflict between workers and employers could mean for the content of the climate activists’ toolbox itself.

Allt åt alla has an opportunity in this to really examine the merits of the social union. I think there is much to gain in exploring this opportunity for merging the workplaces and the urban environments under one movement that interlaces the questions of social and ecological change.

STRIKING THE WAR AGAINST CLIMATE CRISIS AND PATRIARCHAL ATTACKS

BY CLIMATE CLASS CONFLICT ITALY



On the 24th of February, exactly one year after the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, in Bologna, dozens of activists from the climate and feminist movements blocked one of the city's busiest streets announcing the connection between the global climate strike and the transnational feminist strike of the 8th of March. In several Italian cities, activists launched a joint week of mobilization. On the 3rd of March, hundreds of people took to the streets together with the environmental movement, denouncing the lack of environmental policies and the inconsistency of European measures that prioritized national security, militarization, and profits over investments in welfare and concrete actions against the impelling climate crisis. In this way,

they showed the link between the climate crisis and the crisis of social reproduction. The refusal to pay for the effects of the war was then echoed in the strike of the 8th of March. Thousands of women and LGBTQ+ people struck against male violence and climate crisis in the context of the war in Ukraine, that is fueling nationalistic and conservative policies and is strengthening sexual hierarchies. In this framework, feminists challenged the far-right Italian government, that through its racist and patriarchal laws is attempting to impose women and LGBTQ+ people precise social conditions, affirming family as the only way to access welfare, and motherhood as the only destiny women can aim to.

As a social strike, the climate strike – together with the feminist strike – calls for a system change as a way to struggle both within and

outside workplaces, recognizing how environmental and climate degradation are affecting the material conditions under which billions of women, migrants, workers, and LGBTQ+ people reproduce their lives. As for patriarchal violence, also the effects of the climate crisis go beyond the borders. They redefine very clearly divisions and differences which are once again following the line of race, sex, gender, and class by intensifying hierarchies and oppressions. As such, the strike is no more just the tool through which workers can block and interrupt production. Rather, for women, LGBTQ+ people, migrants, and precarious workers, the strike is the chance to interrupt social reproduction, to go beyond individual and sectorial claims and thus hit society, interrupting the chain which feeds

hierarchies, oppression, violence, and exploitation.

On the last 8th of March, for the seventh consecutive year, the transnational feminist movement took to the streets, striking against patriarchal violence and against conservative and nationalist governments which have recently found a new legitimation under the rhetoric of the war in Ukraine. A new wave of policies and strategies aimed at protecting national borders, ensuring national security and energy resources, and legitimizing patriarchal governments, is challenging the way women, migrants, workers, and LGBTQ+ people live and organize themselves, reducing the chances to mobilize and struggle together. Nevertheless, on the 8th of March in Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Greece, Italy, Turkey, USA, strikes took place everywhere, exceeding the expectations and expressing insubordination against the harshening of patriarchal violence, going beyond the workplaces, and recalling the struggles of Iranian women by shouting “Jin, Jiyan, Azadi”. In these actions, the opposition to the war represented a terrain on which to practice and produce political connections between different subjects and movements. In Italy, the feminist movement of Non Una Di Meno, together with activists from Extinction Rebellion, Fridays for Future, and other

environmental collectives launched a series of joint initiatives to the cry of “Strike the War”. Together they recognized the strike as a common practice to fight for climate justice, against patriarchal violence, and against the terrible effects of the war in Ukraine.

As environmental and feminist activists have acknowledged, in the current situation, marked by the effects of the war and the climate crisis, both European and national policies are reproducing these hierarchies. By making the green transition a matter of national security and an issue to be solved through technical solutions (digitalization and technofixes), the European National Recovery Plans strengthen the sexual division of labor, profiting from the free reproductive labor mostly carried out by women and migrants. Indeed, these Plans largely promote funding and investments in the agricultural, manufacturing, technological, and construction sectors which are mostly dominated by male workers. On the other side, sectors with a higher percentage of female workers such as the care and health sector do not see any increase in investments and funds. While concentrating strategic interests and investments in the most profitable sectors, green industrial policies continue to rely on the service sector where women, often migrants, constitute

a clear majority and where it is necessary to keep wages low. Some sectors and, consequently, some jobs are more useful for the green transition, thus the gap between skilled and unskilled workers is further widened. This has also contributed to deepen another differentiation among incoming migrants and European countries compete for attracting and securing the most skilled labour through fast-track lanes and this has also affected the management of Ukrainian refugees.

Climate activists continue to denounce the violence characterizing the extractives objectives of the green transition. In response to the energy crisis caused by the war, the same EU that until a few years ago set the goal of achieving energy neutrality by 2050, is now including coal within its green taxonomy. In March, the EU Commission submitted a proposal to adopt a law aimed at achieving energy autonomy and greater autonomy in the supply of raw materials, such as lithium, that are set to grow as they are crucial for hydrogen storage, battery construction, and wind power generation. The paradox is that mining operations with significant environmental impacts are required to obtain the raw materials needed for renewable energy production. These processes foster the externalization of European borders, moving its frontiers - and displacing the aggressive effects of these operations - far beyond the European Eastern and Southern borders. Thus, violence is legitimated and reproduced also in the entanglement of energy and migration policies. This is particularly true while looking at the Mediterranean region. Italy is among the promoters of several agreements with the authoritarian governments of Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Egypt, aimed at ensuring the containment of migration flows and grabbing energy resources.

While activists are stressing the connections between the new disorder set by the war and the legitimation of violence,



Climate and feminist activists blocking a bridge in Bologna, Italy. @Stella Chirido

governments increase repression and attacks against them. In the last months, we have seen how the police suppressed the actions of activists in Lüzérath and those of the environmental movement *Soulèvements de la Terre* in France. In Italy, the far-right government has recently approved a law aimed at reinforcing punishments for those who pursue civil disobedience. Defacing glass cases protecting artworks, pouring (washable) paint on city walls, statues, or fountains, or chaining themselves in front of buildings to raise awareness of the climate crisis - those who pursue these actions are now expected to repay the damages through hefty fines and even detention. In the last weeks, the Prosecutor of Padua has also accused a group of activists of criminal conspiracy for their actions and protests.

This securitarian turn is clearly stated in the name of the ministry responsible for climate policy. In fact, the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security simply looks at the environment as an asset to be protected and at best valorized, while he wants to guarantee energy security. In

Europe and in Italy industrial policies have been completely aligned with the new priorities set by the war. The convergence between military and climate policies is also suggested by the appointment of the former Minister for Ecological Transition, Cingolani, as CEO of Italy's leading arms manufacturer, Leonardo, which has just financed the conversion of some Fiat automotive factories to produce weapons and war materials. The growth of investments in the military sector has put environmental and climate issues on the back burner, and even environmentally protected territories such as Coltano, near Pisa, are going to be turned into military bases. The link between the war, green transition, energy security, and industrial priorities is clear: any action is justified to achieve energy independence from Russia. This priority is also demonstrated by the urgency with which the Italian government has moved to secure the construction of the re-gasifier in Piombino, on the coasts of Tuscany.

Against the speed with which these policies and attacks against women, workers, and migrants are

taking hold, the strike continues to be what allows movements and activists to struggle and organize on a transnational level. As anger in Europe continues to rage, the connection between the climate and feminist discourse allows the movement of the strike to gain a new momentum expressing very clearly the need to refuse the logic of the war, of the green transition, and of the strengthening of conservative and patriarchal governments. Feminist and climate activists striking in the past weeks made it clear: in the current context of war, the strike can be the chance to refuse, break, and go beyond the logic of opposing fronts the war is legitimizing. As for the feminist strike, also the climate strike recognizes the urgency to fight for a system change and therefore to hit both productive and reproductive processes. We should then think about the strike as a process that allows us to turn social reproduction, the effects of the war, and conservative policies, into a terrain of struggle that can allow us to connect movements and political processes at a transnational level.

WHAT CAME FIRST, THE RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN OR THE SANCTIONS?

BY OVID POP AND VALENTIN CERNAT (ALTERNATOR, ROMANIA)

The complete version of this article can be read on the [TSS Platform website](#)



It's now more than a year since the imposition of sanctions on Russia due to the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine. As we remember, it started with the festive intention on behalf of the US administration to 'turn the ruble into rubble'. The EU population is now arguably more vulnerable to market fluctuations than ever before, being afflicted by a historical 9.2% inflation rate in 2022: rising energy prices, food insecurity and an overall decreasing standard of living. We are witnessing a curious and unique phenomenon in the one century long history of economic sanctions, when the countries that impose the embargo are suffering a severe backlash effect. Against this background, the European market is flooded with money that the EU-member states receive in form of grants and loans

aimed at (we quote from the EU-commission web-platform): “restoring our nature”, ensuring “clean energy and transportation”, advancing new technology, digitalization. It’s called the Recovery and Resilience Plan. 723,8 billion Euros are to be pumped into the aging body of Europe’s technologies by 2026 in order to ensure this “green transition”. In other words, business is flourishing while the people slowly boil in anguish.

The US sanctions (backed by the EU) had as a consequence the narrowing of the supply in raw materials and other products coming from Russia. The sanctions generated a shock wave in the supply chain, creating new intermediaries along the supply lines, new gas and oil suppliers, a new infrastructure for transportation and storage, tightening Europe’s economic dependency on US-American business. Upon the sabotage of the Nord Stream 2, the logistical worlds of the two economies are becoming more intertwined. In fact, all this continues and deepens a trend which had already started during the Covid pandemic with disruptions in the supply chains. The reshuffling of the energy sector in Europe, a consequence of the war and of sanctions, goes hand in hand with the plan to renew the technology and get rid of the fossil fuel driven industry.

So, a question arises: would the sanctions have been implemented without the disbursement of the European Recovery and Resilience Funds (ERRF), the plan that was launched just a few months before the war escalated? Or from a different angle: were the investment funds in the green transition feasible for big business without limiting the supply offer in one way or another? Judging by the enthusiastic statements given by

the private investors who salute both the ERRF and the sanctions with an almost religious fervor, we would conclude that no, they wouldn’t be feasible. Something is at stake. Corporate business is enthusiastic because it finds in war a good opportunity to elevate its industrial base to a new stage, which presumes to be friendlier on the environment, but the real stake is to be more competitive on the global market. EU corporate business needs to maintain that technological edge, insofar as it still has it in the competition with the US and China, while maintaining its grip on the political process. The ERRF provides exactly a legal and financial framework which ensures that power remains concentrated in the hands of the troika and big business. For green independence does not change the matrix of the neoliberal state: public money for private corporate exploitation. And this regardless of the internal skirmishes European capitalists are caught into regularly, when their specific interests collide; their political arrangement needs to stay in place, keeping the status quo.

Meanwhile the currency loses purchasing power due to inflation, which means that more labor is squeezed out of the working people across Europe, for the same amount of products they consume. No wonder that popular anguish and anger boil over. Protests, strikes and sit-ins erupted in most western countries from the UK to Spain, from France, to Germany and Czech Republic. Following a tragic railway incident, weekly protests are organized in different parts of Greece accusing the state of criminal privatizations.

41% of the European Recovery and Resilience Plan (ERRP) for Romania is allocated to secure the green transition. Most of the money is spent on railway

modernization, €3.9 billion. Smaller amounts are delivered to urban mobility (electric vehicles infrastructure), €1.8 billion, and energy efficiency of the buildings (construction sector), €2.7 billion. However, the smallest amounts are allocated to repair the wounds caused by the comprador capitalism of the last 32 years: clean energy production €0.8 billion and biodiversity and environmental protection €1.1 billion.

If one is still convinced of the good intentions of Europe’s business class, let’s look at the railway infrastructure in Romania. In 1989, the last year before the collapse of the socialist regimes, roughly 82% of the country’s product was transported by train. Today the percentage is nearly 20%, still much higher than the timid 8% of the EU average quantity. The neighboring socialist countries – Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria – show similar performance and trends. However, railway transportation is the greenest transportation as it has very low impact on the environment, and the EU committed itself to raise the percentage of railway freight transportation to 35% by 2035 and to decrease the road transportation by half by 2050. But first, corporate business needed to destroy the socialist logistics and in the first two decades, between 1990 and 2010, its main concern was only how to dismantle the railway infrastructure on claims that it was inefficient and technologically outdated. In a rage of primary accumulation everything that was out there for privatization – train cars, warehouses, maintenance facilities – was privatized, sold out, devalued, concentrated in a handful of private owners. The workers were laid off and the strongest trade union in the country, the railway trade union, was fragmented into smaller

units and then dismissed. Parallel to this, the road infrastructure was extended and adjusted to the intermodal mode of transportation that links the container ships and liners to the trucks on the highways. Within a bit more than ten years, the so-called logistics revolution turned the infrastructure in Romania upside down. By 2010, almost 70% of the product was transported by road. Before even starting discussing the perspective of transitioning toward green, corporate business needed to ensure that the modes of capital circulation corresponded to their interests – profit maximization. And that the ownership was snatched out of the hands of the State. Also, the political danger that the big infrastructure is charged with, as was the case with the socialist railway infrastructure, needed to be diffused, despite its environmental edge. In other words, there is always something for the present buried under the ‘communist’ rubble in Eastern Europe.

Coming back to the European Recovery and Resilience Plan: let us turn our attention to the expenses allocated and used in the

transport infrastructure. Here we see that important sums of the total amount allocated for the green transition go for the construction of highways and road junctions, the modernization of railways, as well as investments in logistics centers and infrastructure in and around the Port of Costanța on the Black Sea. The purposes and uses of these investments are multiple. First, we note that the funds allocated from the ERRP in Romania for the green transition carry on and further develop an older plan through which transport infrastructures are built, rehabilitated and expanded now linking the Black Sea coast in Eastern Romania with the Western European logistics net, the so-called TEN-T, Trans-European Transport Network. The same is happening with the modernization of the railway system. Once absorbed into the neoliberal orbit, the railway is at last ripe for investments. Now that the investors are certain of their lion’s share, the network is ready for entering its green phase clad in this brand-new bride dress. When would it be wiser to use these European funds if not now when they serve both the militarization

(i.e. the interests of the US military industrial complex) and the Western corporate elites!?

All these investments contain “environmentally friendly” elements that can be seen for what they really are: renewal of technologically outdated systems, renewal of car fleets with German electric vehicles, LED lighting and photovoltaic panels in logistics centers, charging stations for electric cars, low-consumption automation in freight transport, technology compliant with the latest European standards. But the same ‘technological advancement’ obscures the political-economic purpose of the green transition, which remains thus hidden to the naked eye. That States are put in the service of capital, that the economy is gradually militarized, that trade monopolies are consolidated through this process of re-technologization, all this is hidden behind a foggy screen of environmentally friendly measures. The effects of this transformation are felt by the European peoples in the ever-growing costs of living, which merely shows us how class warfare is waged today through financial and market mechanisms. What we need is a green revolution. A radical change of the political principle, after which the technology will follow suit. Revolution is the sustainable principle for the planet, not the transition. As a matter of fact, the peoples of Eastern Europe have a vivid memory of the word transition, which in every ear evokes the most savage plunder of the collective wealth and the impoverishment of the people. For the first two decades after 1989 transition was the word that stifled our public life leaving behind a wasteland on which the current class system arose. Now when the real wages in Europe are shrinking and the collective ownership over the technological development is under attack there is again talk of transition. This should sound the alarm.

**MAKE THE
ECONOMY
SCREAM!**

**THE IMPOSED
ECONOMIC HARDSHIP
IS ALWAYS AFFECTING
THE POOR**

PRELIMINARY NOTES ON LINKING HOUSING AND CLIMATE STRUGGLES

BY MIKAEL HALL (ALLT ÅT ALLA STOCKHOLM)

During the TSS meeting in Frankfurt this February I participated in an enlightening panel on how social strikes and transnational struggles are relevant for the climate movement. Me and the other participant from Förbundet Allt åt alla (the Association Everything for everyone) were asked to give some input on how we were conceptualising the link between housing struggles and the struggle against climate change. We especially discussed the conflicts between different parts of the struggles and how the so-called green transition strengthens socially harmful housing policy. In this text I'll try recapitulating some of the points we made and what we learned from the discussion and expand on some points.

But first I'll lift one of the most revealing and rewarding aspects of the panel. By input especially from comrades from Kirgizstan and Kongo it became clear that the way the "green transition" works, is by reproducing the same colonial and exploitative global resource chains and patterns that has fuelled fossil capitalism. Kongo is to supply the rare earth minerals for wind turbines, Kazakhstan, Namibia, and Niger the uranium for European "green" nuclear reactors. Latin America is once again the source of gold for the European economies but now in the form of lithium for "green" electric cars. Even in Sweden the old colonial patterns are reproduced. Not only by benefiting from resources extracted by subsidiaries in the



above-mentioned countries but also through intensifying its vast mining operation in the Sami lands (Swedish indigenous people, today mostly known for reindeer pastoralism). Poisoning lands and waters and building wind farms to produce electricity for the southern parts of Sweden. Recently the PR organisation Den Svenska Gruvan (*The Swedish Mine*) owned by the main mining consortiums launched a futuristic advertisement campaign with the title "No Mines, No electric cars". One could only wish the title was literal. In relation to this the transnational struggle against both fossil and green capitalism is vital as it once again becomes apparent how capitalism works across borders as much as within them.

Back to the points we made about how we try to connect the housing and climate struggle. Without going into the details about the Swedish housing system, the central point is that while first hand rental contracts are very hard to come by, especially in the large cities, once you have a first-hand contract the

protection is quite decent. The rent is bartered by the social democratic tenant union, as long as your apartment hasn't recently been renovated or is newly built the price is reasonable with small differences between central and more distant locations. In these apartments the only way for landlords, often municipally owned public housing companies, to increase rent is to renovate or as we like to call it renovict the apartments. This consist of renovations that are supposed to "increase the standard" by installing new utilities such as towel driers and dishwashers. Renovations to maintain the standard of the housing is supposed to be included in the rent, but almost all necessary renovations bring with them unnecessary "upgrades" with the accompanying rent hike.

Most of the housing struggles in Sweden are related to the need for renovations of the Million Programme (sv. Miljonprogram). The Million Programme was an enormous state founded building project that aimed to construct a million new housing units over

ten years between 1965 and 1974. The project was successful, resulting in the creation of a large numbers of council estates (sv. miljonprogram), with significant amounts of rental apartments. Through successive deregulation and privatisation of the housing market they have become among the few areas working class people can afford to live, with an extreme segregation of the cities as a result. What causes this spike in renovations and housing struggles is that plumbing replacements (sv. Stambyte) are necessary. This in turn creates excuses for the landlord to “upgrade” the apartments. These renovations often entail extreme rent hikes upwards of 100% that most people can’t afford, leading to displacement and overcrowding.

My first example of such a process, that is also in certain ways related to the question of climate struggle, is in the Stockholm council estate Hagsätra where the Ikano groups, owned by the Kamprad family known for IKEA. Ikano bought 1200 apartments for around 80 million euros in 2012 against the tenants wishes. The money was of course borrowed from their own Ikano bank and the apartments were then rapidly scheduled to be renovated in a way that would raise rents drastically. Among other things by installing lacklustre IKEA (same owners once again) kitchens instead of keeping and refurbishing the fully functioning and much sturdier existing ones.

Together with the tenants Allt åt alla organised a large campaign against this called “Deprivatise Hagsätra”. An important moment in the struggle was the decision to occupy a sports hall that was not in use. By doing this the tenants were able to unify and the hectoring of the tenants became so apparent that Ikano was shamed into postponing the rental hikes for five years. Even

though the struggle wasn’t characterised as such at the time, it already contained seeds of a potential alliance of climate and housing struggles. Related to the fact that a large part of these renovations weren’t necessary and often entailed switching existing high-quality installations, for new low standard ones that must be replaced much earlier. This is, as one says, a feature, not a bug, as it motivates new renovations and rent hikes just a few years down the line.

While the Hagsätra case shows that there are links between housing and climate struggles that could have been utilised in that case. The link is reoccurring in Swedish housing struggles because they are concentrated around renovations. My next example shows how the “green transition” is used to legitimise gentrification and renovations. The struggle took place in a then working-class neighbourhood Valla torg that is adjacent to the much more affluent Årsta neighbourhood. All the housing was owned by the municipal housing company Stockholmshem and was selected by the EU project GrowSmarter, to be part of a “green transition” project. These green “upgrades” were timed with the beforementioned plumbing replacement and would involve rent hikes of over 60% for the tenants. Together with tenants we occupied a small cultural venue that was to be evicted in relation to the “GrowSmarter” project. While it was harder to gather the solidarity of the tenants here than in Hagsätra, we were successful in pressuring the landlord to lower the rent hikes to somewhere around 30%. What is significant about this struggle is the way the state and capital used the “green transition” to enable further accumulation. While the Landlord officially was a public company, they must according to

the “allbo-law”, work in a businesslike manner. To add insult to injury this project was done at a time when the Left party was in power, and responsible for housing in the City of Stockholm. During their time in opposition they had been an ally in housing struggles.

In summary it’s clear that there is work to be done both theoretically and practically in understanding the relation between housing- and climate struggles. Past housing struggles have shown both how they, especially related to renovations, can align with climate struggles, but also how the “green transition” is used to motivate renovations. A venue to be exploited in the future is how many renovations entail replacing fully functioning furniture with sub standard replacements. This approach could be useful, especially when renovations are done under the guise of climate friendly upgrades, to exploit the hypocrisy this form of displacement entails.

I think it would be fruitful to further investigate how questions of the right to the city, the climate struggle and the “green transition” intersects with questions of transportation, commons, utilities, energy, logistics and industry. In every one of these domains there can be serious tensions between environmental and workers concerns, that must be investigated and without doubt played out in actual struggle.



INTERVIEWS

WE DRIVE TOGETHER!

AN INTERVIEW WITH FRIEDRICH GRAEBER (FFF MAGDEBURG) ON GERMAN CLIMATE AND WORKERS' STRIKE

We interviewed Friedrich Graeber (Fridays For Future Magdeburg) who told us about the convergence between workers in the public transport sector and climate activists and their joint strike. The idea that the struggles for climate and social justice “really belong together” has shaped the common demand for radical change which fueled the strike’s movement. We are facing more and more economic and ecological crises, which are global not only in their geographical extension, but also because they affect the whole system of social reproduction. While the war has reshaped the “green transition” and worsened the working conditions, inflation and economic crisis are also impoverishing workers’ lives. In Germany, workers and climate activists are asking for more money from the federal state to be invested in public transportation, in order to have better wages and cheaper and greener means of transportation. More international involvement is still needed, but although we face similar crises in different places, we also have to take into account different conditions. How to connect different struggles and how can we find common claims for different circumstances? Although we don’t have any ready-made solution, the strike still happens to be our strongest weapon which, as Friedrich says, has been able to produce a long-lasting connection between workers and climate justice movements.

March 3 has been a global day of climate strike. Thousands of people all over the world have taken to the streets. The climate strike has become a process to oppose the green capitalist transition and demand climate and social justice. In Germany, this process has taken a peculiar shape this year, thanks to the open connection between climate strike and public transport workers’ strike. Can you tell us how this

encounter happened? Is the process still ongoing?

FRIEDRICH GRAEBER: We, from Fridays for Future, struck together with workers in the public transportation in several places. We also went to the streets, demonstrated together and joined the picket lines. All this goes back to three years ago when we approached the trade unions in Germany and we asked them if they were interested in working



together, because, as you said, we have to connect climate and social justice fights. We got an answer from public transport workers, which were interested in working together with us, and since then we started to build an alliance in more and more cities in Germany. Last year we had a meeting together again in Berlin where people from all over the country came together and decided to support public workers in their next big strike waves. The first one was now in March, it was for the public service, and next year our plan is to strike again together, at the start of the year, when there will be negotiations for working conditions for all public transport workers in all Germany. So, we will strike together all over Germany and shut down public transport in order to get better working conditions and higher wages for the workers and also more money for transition, for more capacity.

Which are your common claims?

Our claim is more public money spent for the public transport sector, as this money is needed for higher wages, better working conditions, because they are facing right now labour shortages, so they are desperately needing new workers but, if they don't increase the wages, they can't find more workers. We also want a transition of transport in Germany, a transition away from individual car-based mobility towards a more public transport sector affordable for all people. Our demand is to double the capacity of public transportation by 2030.

Few months ago a huge struggle in Lutzerath was held by activists joining the German movement from all over Europe to prevent government from furthering its plans for coal extractions. That case has shown how the war in Ukraine is used to support investments

in polluting resources, as well as for worsening working conditions. Wages have been eroded by inflation and rising costs of living, while in many 'strategic' sectors workers have been prevented from striking as it would have affected the national security. How do you think the war in Ukraine is influencing plans for green transition, and so also affecting workers and climate struggles?

As you said very well, we face several crises of the economic system, not only the inflation but also the energy shortage. We still feel the consequences of the pandemic. All this affects very clearly our labour struggles. A lot of people are desperate for more money because they cannot afford to live on their wages, they can't afford to live with their wage from public transportation for example, and if they don't earn enough, they need to search for another job. That's the opposite of what we want, we want more workers in public transport, and that's why we work together. The two struggles for climate and social justice really belong together, not only since the war started, but even before, we fight the same root of the problem which is the capitalistic system we live in. So it totally makes sense to unite the fights, we fight for the same goals.

France is now hit by a huge wave of strikes and demonstrations. The anger is fueled not only by the reform of the pension system, but by a more general crisis of social reproduction, which is also an ecological crisis. This was clearly stated following the activists in Sainte-Soline, which have claimed that social and climate struggles are the same struggle. Do you see the possibility for a transnational connection of the political struggle in Germany you described, with those that are

going on in other places?

I think this is possible and that is what we aim at, it is the global economic system that is causing the current crisis, which is also a global ecological crisis, so our answer must also be global. We have to try to unite our struggles also internationally, this is exactly what we try right now. We are speaking to you, but we also spoke with other international media and with activists of our movement in other countries. We set up meetings with other activists not only in Europe but also beyond, to share our experiences and to exchange ideas and plans. We have similar situations in different countries, we see the cost of living crisis and we see the immediate impact on the ecological side. So, we always have these two kinds of classes which are there, and which have the same problem which unites their fights, It makes sense also because with the increasing ecological destruction and the increasing impact of the climate crisis we will face more and more social inequalities as well.

Going back to what has happened in Germany. We've seen different tactics in the climate movement, how did you come up with the strike? According to you, is the strike gaining new importance and power? What is the situation right now?

We always talk about "diversity of tactics" in the climate movement, but I've always had the feeling that there was something missing, which is the economic strike, because the strike has the most economic impact on the capitalist class and it costs the hugest economic damages as well. So, there was one tactic missing in this repertoire, and I don't want to say that other tactics are less important or less valuable, but the strike is one huge possibility to increase the pressure. That's the reason why we came up with

the strike and we thought we should try it out at least. Also, the workers in the factories, at least in Germany, they never really perceived themselves as part of the climate justice movement, which is really strange in a sense because they are one of the groups that are the most affected. The example of mobility transitioning will have huge effects on the mobility industry, for example on German car industry, and a lot of workers will lose their jobs if we don't intervene and say that we want to keep these jobs, but we want them to be green and sustainable jobs. This is also the reason why we try to connect these fights and try to include the workers' strike into the climate justice

movement.

Just few days ago, the biggest union called Ver.di, where there are a lot of transport workers, had an agreement with the employers. They agreed on the hugest gain of wages in public sector since at least WWII, and they achieved a raise of wages in other industries, such as the metal one. But the agreement means that strikes in the public sector are over for now. They will ask now workers to vote. If 25% of the workers agree, then the deal is done and strikes are over. However there a lot of controversies among workers now, because the rise of wages is not as high as workers demanded. There are mixed feelings, and some want to

continue to strike and go for a longer and more severe strike. As climate justice movement we are waiting to see what workers decide and we are aware that workers won an historical fight. We saw in the streets that the fights were more severe than last years, there was more determination and this paid out. Others in the public sector are still negotiating, such as railroad workers of Deutsche Bahn, so there might be more strikes coming up, but the huge strikes are over for now. They will come again soon, since for us the most important campaign is starting next year, when all workers from public transportation will fight and negotiate for better working conditions.

LOCAL STRUGGLES AND THE TRANSNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE CLIMATE SOCIAL CAMP (TURIN, ITALY)

The Climate Social Camp was born in the summer of 2022 when climate activists from all over the world came together in Torino, in the same days of the Fridays for Future European meeting, to discuss about the social dimension of the climate crisis and the need to organize within it. Today, the Climate Social Camp exists as a local collective, active in organizing around the problem of drought, which is particularly felt in the Turin metropolitan area as well as in the countryside and the mountain valleys around it, but also in connecting climate struggles with the Non Una di Meno feminist movement and with the struggle against the war. In both cases, as the interview shows, the strike has been the fundamental political tool that allowed them to build a connection among different organizational paths and to fight simultaneously against patriarchy, the climate crisis and the war. In order to further enhance our struggle, it is therefore crucial to understand how can we elaborate common perspectives, common claims and a common discourse moving from specific conditions that can allow us to organize on a transnational level.



What is the Climate Social Camp and how did it come about? Did it immediately have an international dimension? What made that urgent and necessary in your view? Do you continue to have comrades from other countries with whom you engage in common struggles?

CLIMATE SOCIAL CAMP: The Climate Social camp is an idea born during last winter when, after an initial blockade caused by the pandemic, it was decided to organize Fridays for Future's European meeting again here in Turin. It was a project planned for 2020 and once the Covid-related restrictions were over, the meeting started to be organized, and we decided to expand this event beyond Fridays for Future, making it an international meeting of different collectives that deal precisely with climate-ecological issues with a social perspective and approach. That is, we wanted to involve those movements that look at the issue of climate

change by emphasizing its social impacts.

The dimension of the meeting was indeed global: there were indigenous collectives, collectives from Indonesia, the Philippines, Brazil, there were activists from Central Africa like Mozambique, Nigeria, others from Mexico, and many collectives from Europe as well. After this camp we realized that in our local organization we did not have the strength to sustain such a broad international dimension; so, without taking a step back from internationalism, which is central for us, we have started to work more on the local level, keeping a systemic look and a focus on the international level, with the ambition to be able to really support it. So we still keep in touch with collectives like *Soulèvements de la terre*, *Ende Gelende*, *Climaximo* (a Portuguese reality), we are keeping in touch with various networks from Vienna and Eastern Europe that are organizing on the gas issue and around the centrality of gas in this conflict in Ukraine.

Recently you organized an assembly to address the problem

of drought and its effects on the lives and work of so many people in Italy. What forms of struggle have you envisioned to make the problem and its causes visible? How would you like to involve the workers and laborers who are most affected by it? Do you plan to build bridges with comrades who are mobilizing from climate change issues in other countries?

What we conceived during the drought assembly we held in Turin moves along two axes. The first is about the need to train ourselves to produce collective knowledge that we can use to create awareness and mobilization. The other concerns the people we want to discuss with and the areas in which we want to move. One area is the city, where we would like to discuss, through seminars, with young university students who are already mobilizing on climate issues, with an interest related to their own future, climate change, and environmental devastation. The other two areas are the countryside-plains and the mountains, and here the discourse changes a lot, because there are

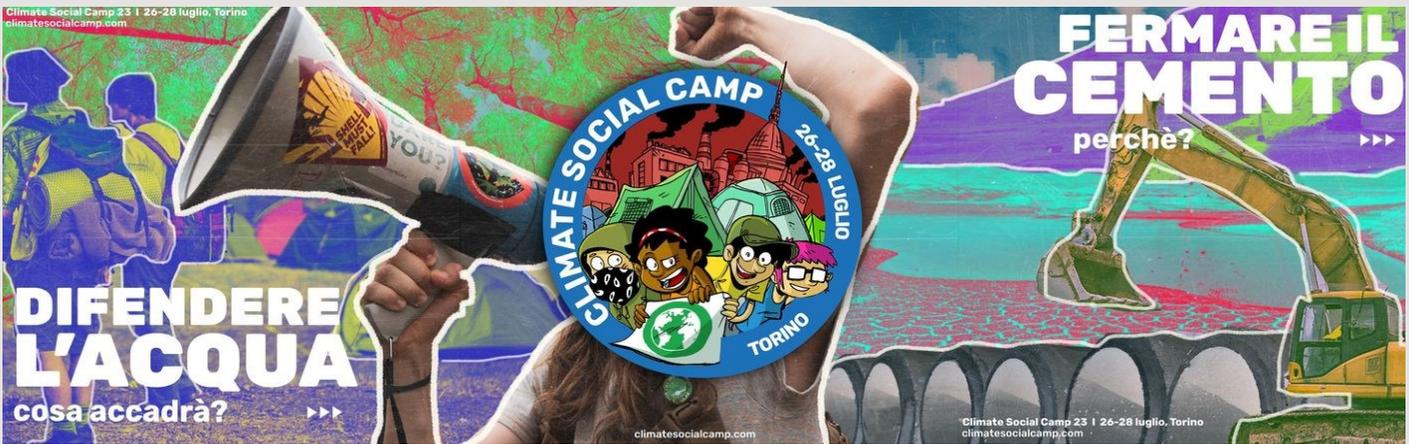
workers and people who inhabit those territories and are already impacted in a very material way, and yet they often have less sensitivity to the macro-issue of the climate crisis. In Piemonte there are small farmers who have lost 60 percent of their harvests, there have been drops in production on small livestock farms of 70 percent, mountain refuges that were already without water in February. In some valleys there was already water rationing for the inhabitants since January. In these places we would like to build moments of discussion. This should give us the tools to then define a more long-term strategy. We would like to see autonomous assemblies that organize on the ground and flow into a broader network.

Certainly, among our counterparts we have state management and regional juntas, which have corporatized and privatized water management. And the water industries, with big capital, which are given the opportunity to use major water resources.

This year we will organize the Climate camp again; we want to



France: third general strike in a row reaches



give local struggles an international perspective and involve European collectives dealing with shared problems. One of the central issues, given the work we are doing on the ground, will be drought. The main causes of the drought are deforestation, climate change, but also poor maintenance of aqueducts, which bring water to hydro industries. However, the problem is not just ours, so we want to compare ourselves with other international collectives that are facing the same problem. For example, the French ecological movement is mobilizing and has recently mobilized in Sainte-Soline on the issue of water and its exploitation by large infrastructures or reservoirs that privatize it by making it inaccessible. We would then like to involve collectives from Catalonia because they are also experiencing very serious levels of drought in Spain.

Italy was one of the few countries where the climate strike and the feminist strike were launched together. What moved the climate strike this year? Can you explain what connections and points of convergence you built these mobilizations on?

The convergence of feminism and ecologism in the strike in Italy has occurred because of the peculiarity of Italian grassroots politics, where organized groups have created connections and relationships over time. The process, therefore, is a long-term one. Specifically, in Turin the organization of the Camp took us a big step forward because in its construction we immediately involved both Fridays for Future and Non una di Meno (the feminist movement), so when we launched as Climate Social Camp the assembly on the March 3 and 8 strikes there was a big participation that allowed us to make a common path from the very beginning. This is not to say that identifying intersections was easy. We talked a lot about the livability of the city, where very high pollution causes 1,000 people a year to die from respiratory-related diseases. It is an ecological issue, but those who then have to take care of family members, and also those who usually have the worst fallout tend to be women. We talked about radical ecological transition and its relationship to decolonization, and these are issues that also challenge women. The concrete construction of strikes that made the demands of both movements visible was not easy, but for example on March 8, we went together in front of Iveco, an industry that has outsourced some services

and various women workers through cooperatives, where many are on strike through the union, but also denouncing the sexism, harassment, and threats they face as women. On March 3, we also did an anti-war action together in front of the Polytechnic University, which is a university that collaborates with Italy's main arms industry, Leonardo, and we made a big sign that said "University of War."

You referred to the action you took against the war. How did you discuss the effects of the war on environmental policies and the ecological transition? Was opposition to the war among the issues that produced mobilization on March 3, that is, during the climate strike?

We looked immediately at the role that energy resources play in this conflict in Ukraine, but also in all the conflicts around the globe right now, particularly in the Middle East and Central Africa, and the power relations between states in the global North and South that the war has reinforced. There are interests related to the extraction of energy resources, in this case gas, and in fact it is no coincidence that several NATO countries are reopening all those gas projects involving the Middle East, particularly Turkey, Israel, and then several northern African states with which Italy is making new agreements. Italy, by the way, has a central geostrategic position, and in fact that is why we have been discussing a lot about the militarization of our territory, the construction of military bases and at the same time the construction of regasifiers. The government's intention is to turn Italy into a giant hub for gas to be brought from the Middle East, from North Africa to the rest of Europe. However, we do not want to reduce the issue of war to an energy issue although it is certainly central.

We have also discussed a lot about the militarization of territory and thus what it means to build opposition to war on one's own territory. In May last year, in Madrid, during the NATO conference Turin was identified as a strategic hub for aerospace-related weapons production. In particular, the feminist movement Non una di Meno was the first network that mobilized against the war, with a broader, global look at the violence that war increases on bodies and territories.

A NEW PHASE OF ECOLOGICAL STRUGGLES?

AN INTERVIEW WITH A PARISIAN COMRADE ON SAINTE-SOLINE AND THE FRENCH MOVEMENT

In recent months, French squares have been crisscrossed by a great anger that has united women and men, LGBTQI people, workers, students and precarious workers together in a large movement of opposition to the pension reform. The ecological struggle has been an integral part of recent organizing and mobilization processes, especially targeting ecological transition projects. The turning point imprinted on the French movement by this original communication opened in France between ecological and social demands prompted Interior Minister Darmanin to announce the forced dissolution of the Soulèvements de la Terre group. We discuss this with FX, a comrade from Paris who has been involved in the mobilizations and organizational processes of the ecological movement in France for years.



FX: I would really start with the Soulèvements de la Terre, because in my opinion it opened a new phase of ecological struggles in France. In recent years they have been mostly territorial: in a specific territory a struggle focused on a *zone à défendre* (ZAD) and against a project that was going to affect it. The Soulèvements has a very different logic. Soulèvements was born in 2021 and is organized in two moments: the first, the interlude, is a moment of two or three days of collective discussion to find strategic points where to strike

and carry out mobilizations. The second moment is the *saison*, the season, that is, the organization of a cycle of demonstrations. For example, in Sainte-Solines there were multiple demonstrations, each of which had specific strategic objectives. The logic is no longer that of the territorial but that of the "earthly". This means that ecological problems are not thought of on a particular and local scale, but more general and thinking from the complexity of ecological systems. The issue of water in Sainte-Solines, for example, follows the water cycle: it is not possible, following the

cycles, to organize only in a ZAD. One has to follow the movements of the cycles. Therefore, a new phase is opening, where many people entering in the movement want to organize according to this logic: of refusing to think ecological struggles as something only territorial.

So can we say that there are now processes of national organization?

Yes, for example, to organize the struggle against new highways for trucking, you cannot deal with it at the local level. You have to organize at the national level

because that is the level of the construction plan. To give an example, last weekend there was a demonstration in Rouen: here I'm pretty sure they were against the same highway project for which there were other demonstrations two weeks earlier in the Southwest of France, near Castres, on the opposite side of the country. And 'interludes' are a moment of organization that needs to be thought of at a 'higher' level than the local level, that is, the national level ... or even better, the level of the earth.

The dynamic you describe reminds us of AWI (Amazon Workers International), in which Amazon workers began to organize transnationally to match the level of Amazon's organization. You say that here we are moving from the territory to the Earth, but don't you think that in this leap, the level of the transnational is missing, as a place where environmental, ecological, energy and transition policies are determined? What do you think is the relationship between transnational and the earth?

The earth in Soulèvements's political theory is a bit of a peculiar thing and full of almost metaphysical facets. I think Soulèvements, when talking about Earth, refer more to the ecological theory of the Earth system and Gaia. On the other hand, the transnational organization poses political and institutional problems. So the level of the Earth is both a transnational level and, not quite local perhaps, but regional for us. The water problem is about floodplains and about specific hydrological regions, so this level is also part of the struggles against capitalist ecological transition. There is the issue of logistics you mention, of course, but these are two issues (terrestrial and transnational)

that need to be thought of together because if Amazon, in order to get around the strikes in one warehouse, has to move the flow to another warehouse, then the issues of territorial planning in a new place arise. We need to go back to some regional logics as well. In my opinion it is a problem of cartography: we cannot see ecological struggles only at the level of continuous flows and displacements. This works well for struggles in logistics, but it does not work for struggles against land transformation projects. If we look closely, in France, we have had two major types of movements in the last ten years: the French-style "social movement," where there is a more or less united trade union front against a neoliberal reform to attack society, and these struggles against more or less generalized large-scale projects at the territorial level. The Gilets Jaunes movement can also be read in this sense: when you are in a non-urban space in France and you don't have a car, or gasoline is expensive, it also becomes impossible to survive because there is no public transportation. The whole issue of the 'traffic circle movement' and the gasoline problem can also be read as a movement that posed the problem of organizing the territory. Traffic circles are a good example: in France there are traffic circles everywhere, they are built and maintained by a co-partnership between local companies. These partnerships have become the way the French state organizes the territory.

What is the relationship with the current strike movement? We ask this also thinking about when Darmanin tried to disband the Soulèvements. Now, as you were saying before, the French social movement depends on unions, the organizational forms that are not unions are small and tied to the territory. Instead,

the Soulèvements seems to be something different and new in the French non-union movement: is there an autonomous attempt at organizing, at least nationally, and coordinating various issues, groups and subjects?

In 2019, during another phase of the struggle against pension reform, a link began to be built between environmental activists and trade unionists, particularly those in the waste sector. The connection started at that time and we see it well as this discourse of reducing working time has become central. There was a radicalization of the ecological movement, but there was also a greater integration of the problems posed by the social movement. I do not want to say that the process of bringing positions together is closed, definitive, or that it has automatically led to strategic goals or common claims. Some things have been there, though. For example, the coming together of ecologists and trade unionists led to the creation of Plus Jamais Ça during the lockdown (now Alliance Ecologiste et Sociale).

This also calls into question some contradictions with respect to class-based ecological struggle, particularly for unions: what if there are workers who are inside polluting companies (such as those in certain types of energy) and risk losing their jobs because of the transition? This is something we have also seen in Poland with respect to the claims and the organization of the struggle of coal mine workers' unions.

The struggle of the garbage workers is exemplary for the issue you raise: it is about making waste visible in the metropolis, organizing as workers to strike, but also carrying out the blockades with other people who can help. This



French demonstrators during strikes against Macron in Paris

is the logic of eco-syndicalism from below, and it seems to me that it is certainly a difficult method, but a very effective one. Mateau, the secretary of the CGT in Bouche du Rhone (Marseille), comes from the chemical industries federation and has been among the toughest and most radical trade unionists in this strike. He did some incredible interviews on television: he said that at the first requisition of industries by the prefect they would set the whole city on fire, and not in a metaphorical sense. He played a bit of a radicalizing role in the movement. But, on the other hand, he also made a speech at the CGT congress saying that there were no problems with Plus Jamais Ça and that alliances could be made with everyone, with the ecologists, Attac and even with the naturists of the Toulon beach... In short, I think that such a general, generic call to everyone cannot work. We know it well: if we want to have struggles within the ecological transition, we have to identify strategic terrains. The issue of energy in general and nuclear power in particular are crucial.

Can you tell us something with respect to the next steps the movement plans to take?

I think a lot will depend on how this enlargement process goes on. Starting with the assembly we had just after the announcement of the possible dissolution by the government, there has been an enlargement and the Soulèvements is healthier than before. The enlargement has been both of

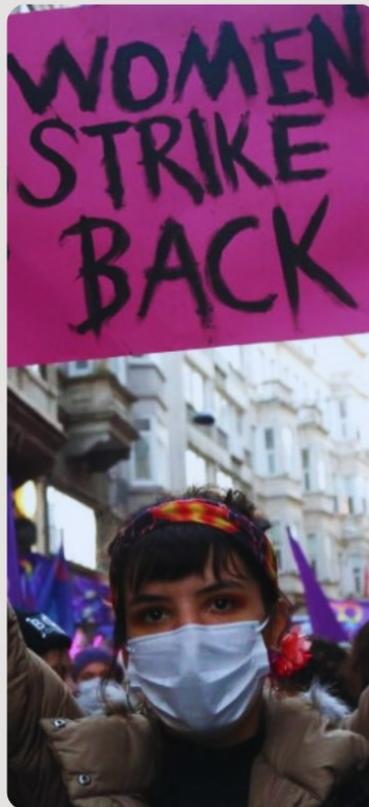
participation and instances, there are assemblies all over France organized by local Soulèvements groups. I think that after the mobilization of the Gilets Jaunes, with these more offensive forms of struggle in political ecology and but also those that have economic, social and institutional reasons related to the crisis and change in the French labor movement there is the idea that traditional social movements are not working anymore. It seems to me that there is also an assumption that we are no longer focusing on the question of fighting neoliberal reforms in the full French style - partly as a consequence of the weakness of the labor movement and the repression of the state against the Soulèvements - and going back to the struggle against these public-private works projects. In my opinion this is what is happening.

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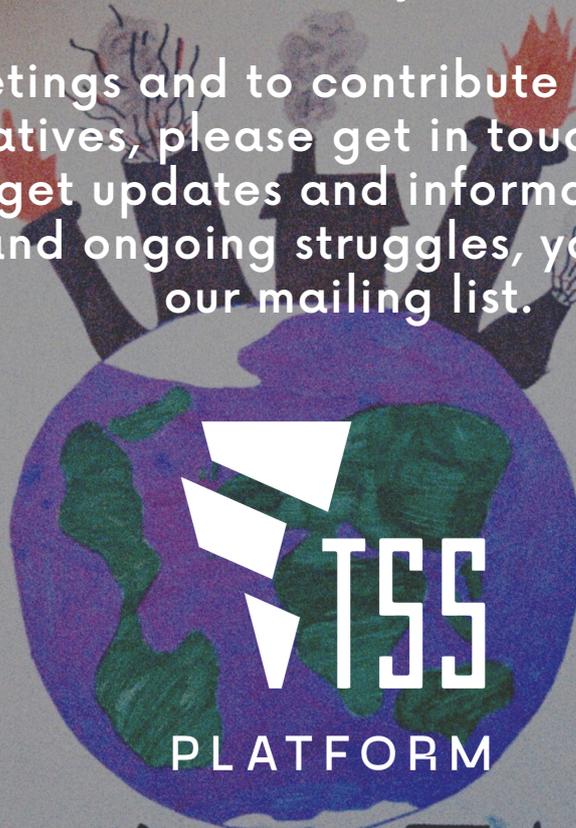
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