Together and Rebellious:

Exploring Territories of Feminist Economics

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Text by Colectiva XXK - Feminismos, pensamiento y acción y SOF Sempreviva Organização Feminista

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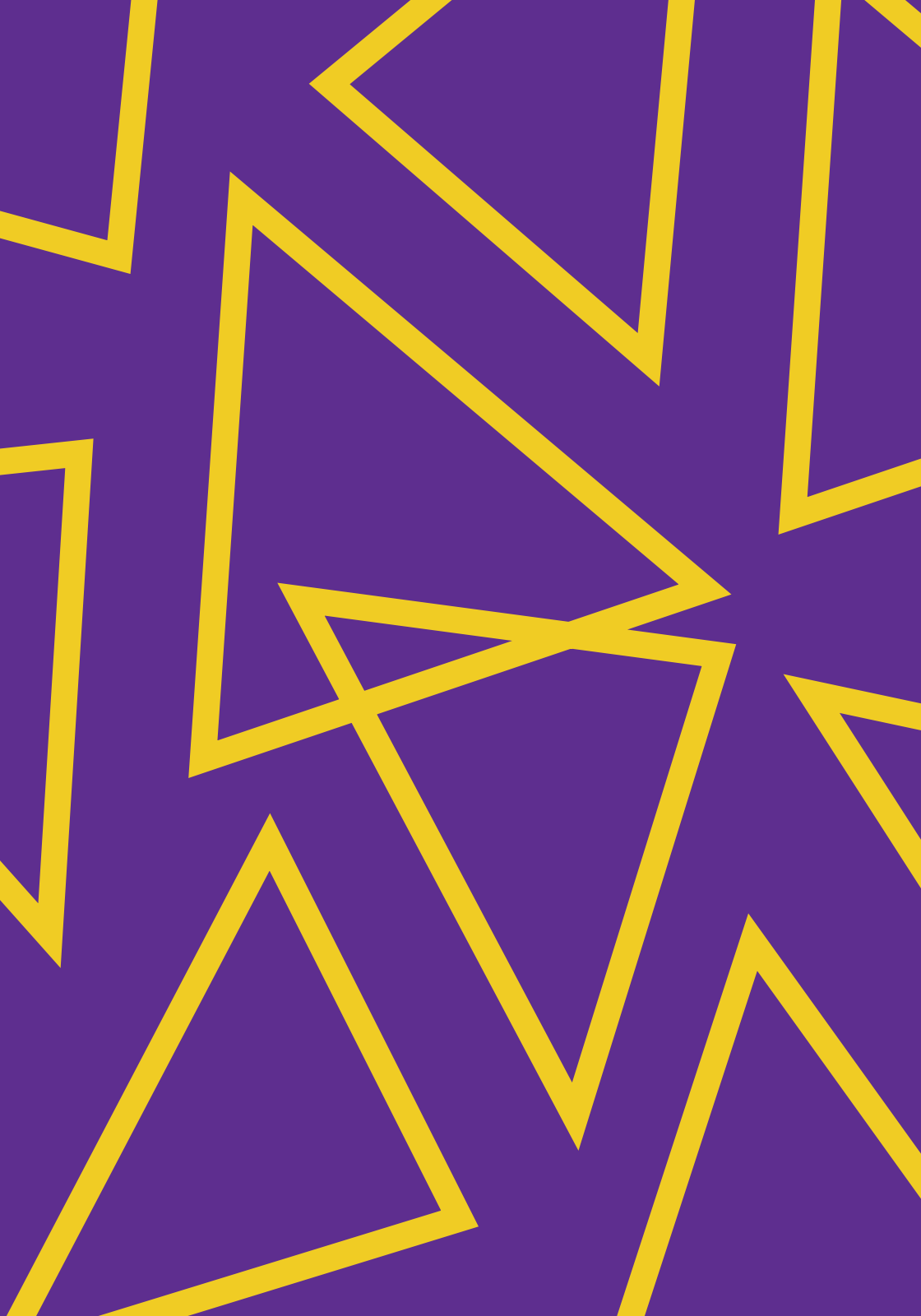colectivaxxk.net | xxk@colectivaxxk.net

1. Situating the Document

This text brings two visions of feminist economics into dialogue with one another: on one hand, the perspective of Sempreviva Organização Feminista (SOF), a feminist organization from Brazil that is part of the World March of Women, and, on the other hand, the view of *Colectiva XXK–Feminismos, pensamiento y acción (XXK)*, a project situated in Basque Country and the Spanish state that combines income generating activities with a commitment to a feminist life. Based out of our respective places in the world, we have been constructing a shared territory together.

For all of us, feminist economics is a tool of struggle for transformation, combining thought and action, and linked to political subjects. We are up against a capitalist, racist, and heteropatriarchal system. Understanding that imbrication orients our struggle. Only collective

and diverse subjects, with the ability to share visions, to construct positions and strategies, and to initiate common struggles, can powerfully confront this system.

For us, feminist economics is a tool in that struggle, because it helps us clarify our critique of that system and provides us with elements for resistance. Feminist economics is fundamental in processes of popular education processes and popular organization, and also guides our alternative proposals. It helps us build counter-hegemony and feminist practices for transforming the economy based on concrete situations.

This text elaborates on some of those territories of feminist economics, which is understood as a political proposal that articulates content (concepts, analysis, and an agenda) and organizational forms, without separating the economic from the political. It is a proposal that requires a broad horizon, but, at the same time, it must be grounded in a path that allows enables us to start taking steps toward that horizon, because victories, even small and partial ones, strengthen us.

This text is a joint elaboration between SOF and XXK, but other compañeras have participated in it as well. The contributions gathered in the online seminar held on November 30, 2020, in which almost 40 women from about

20 collectives from multiple urban and rural territories of Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, the Spanish State, and Basque Country, were particularly important. Their voices are here, although final responsibility for the words lies with SOF and XXK.

By sharing and bringing together views, we attempt to understand the re-articulation of heteropatriarchal and racist capitalism in terms of threads of continuity and discontinuity between the Global North and South, between zones of accumulation and zones of dispossession. We think that it is not a matter of looking at the world based on a dualistic lenses (development/ underdervelopment, rich countries/poor countries), but rather understanding that this process of accumulation (and its flip side of dispossession and impoverishment) is constant and never-ending. Increasingly few territories and social groups accumulate, while ever more people are dispossessed, made precarious, and impoverished. Could the system ultimately strip everything away, in a process of collective self-destruction?

We also understand that this process of precarization and dispossession is not clean-cut (whether you dispossess or are dispossessed), but exists on a continuum.

This means recognizing, for example, that there are common elements, although also inequalities, between what happens in the Global South and the Global North. This places us in a complex position: those of us in the "North" must acknowledge our historic responsibility in terms of the (re)generation of global inequalities and recognize that the most violent and extractive versions of capitalism largely happen in the "South," carried out by corporations from the "North," often supported by governments from the "North" and enabling privileged lifestyles there. But, at the same time, we need to understand that this "North" is not separated from the "South," in the sense that we in the "North" do not exist in a safe space. There is also dispossession, violence, and extractivism in the "North." And the tendency is for there to be increasingly more.

The enclosure of life is taking place everywhere; the privileged center is increasingly narrow. In this text, we make an attempt to take up this perspective of threads of (dis)continuity instead of providing a dualistic vision by constantly talking about what happens in each space.

When we started thinking about this text, we posed three ambitious questions: How are patriarchal capitalism's forms of control, and consequently, the attacks

against life, being reshaped? How are forms of sustaining life being re-articulated, deepening the invisibilized, feminized, and racialized dimensions of the system? And, finally, how are forms of resistance reinvented that attempt to put life in the center in opposition to global patriarchal capitalism? Obviously, this text does not resolve these three enormous questions. But they have driven the initiation of the process of joint reflection that gave rise to these pages.

In the first section, we delve into the ideas of sustainability of life and the capital-life conflict. We think that these concepts currently constitute a sort of "common good," a shared language from which we can attempt to understand the current form of colonial patriarchal capitalism. Next, we enter a more novel terrain: the tripartite conception of body-time-territory, which we think opens up new directions, not only for reflection, but also for mobilization. Then, we explore two phenomena that we think require particular attention, because fundamental elements of the re-articulation of the system at the global level spill over into them. On one hand, we ask if we are witnessing a "scale jump" that encloses the processes of sustaining life in the narrow framework of nuclear households, emptying out the sphere of the common, at the same time as it subjects those households

to the vigilance and control of strengthened states. On the other hand, we inquire into digitalization processes, which constitute a key element of the re-articulation of corporate control. In our analysis, we insist on the material foundations of digitalization and ask what it means to articulate feminist resistance in that sphere.

Today, perhaps more than ever, we need each other; we need to feel together and rebellious to be able to open up views and avoid the construction of walls that prevent us from seeing that the world is big and that there are many of us. These pages are an attempt to continue the conversation with those women who, rooted in their territories, but connected across distances, are trying to make collective life, and our own lives, more livable.
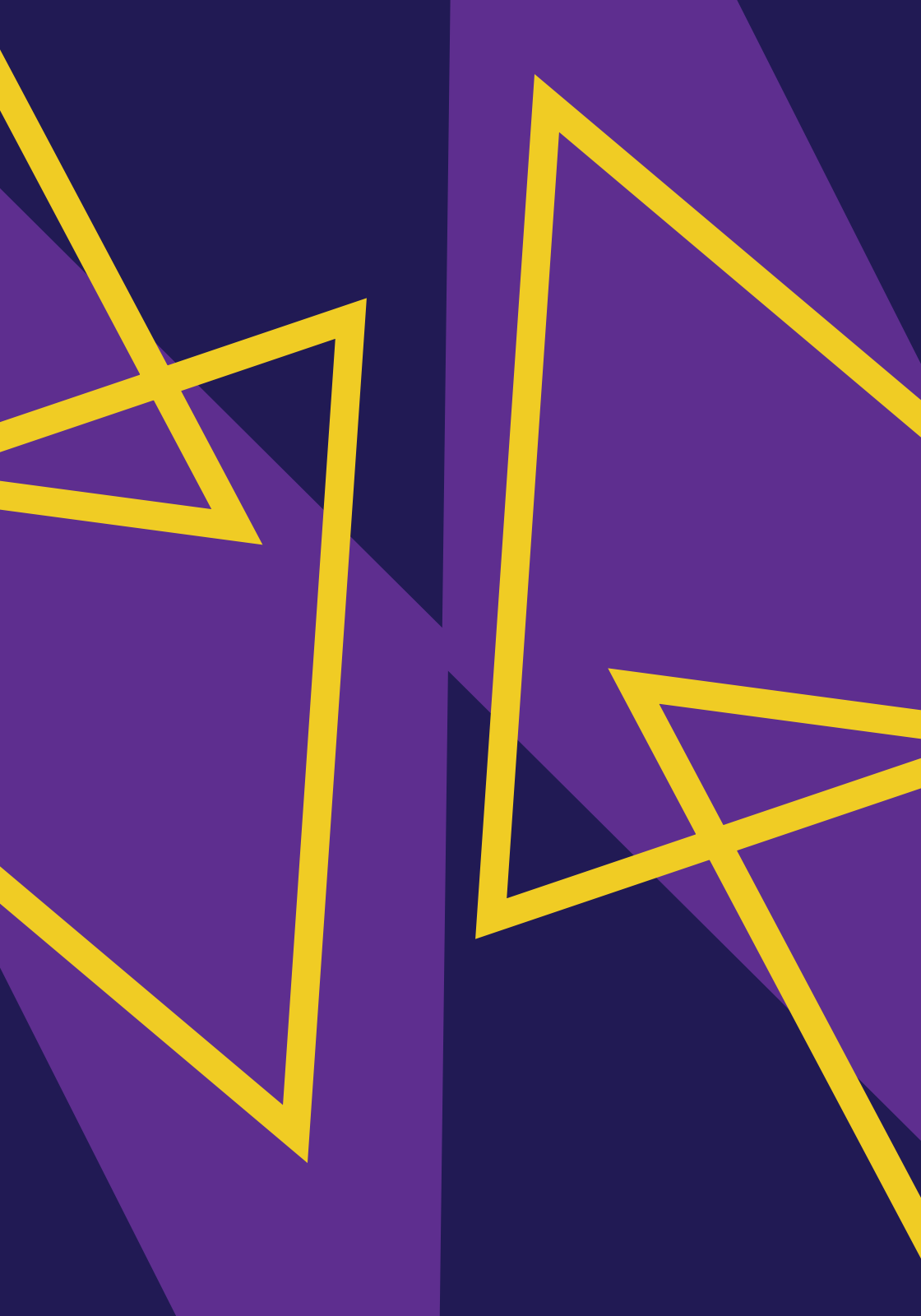
2. Starting from a Common Language

The different feminist views that we bring together in this text share a certain common language and ways of understanding ourselves. There are words that form part of a "collective good": sustainability of life, capital-life conflict, interdependence and ecodependence... However, this does not mean that these concepts are fixed or univocal. In fact, we think that they are useful for understanding ourselves and each other precisely because we understand them in a situated way, based on the context in which those concepts are encountered. Reading or speaking to one another always implies an exercise of decentering (attempting to understand what words mean when they emerge from geopolitical spaces that are different from our own) and an exercise of contagion (attempting to change in response to views with which we are in dialogue).

What do we each mean when we talk about precarity, crisis, food, or household work? How do we understand shared responsibilities in care work, different ways of valuing that work and one's own life? Based on our own situations, we exchange, we dialogue, and we try to recuperate forgotten knowledges. Our use of these concepts is also situated because it is defined in function of the political objectives that we seek and with whom we want to establish a conversation.

We share a concern for how feminist and ecological concepts, which enable us to name our views and political commitments, are often captured. We are especially concerned with the term *care*, that is suffering from a process of emptying out and misrepresentation that causes it to lose the critical power that it had when it was initially launched into public debate by feminist movements. The use of this conceptualization by supranational institutions exercising tutelage, such as the United Nations, for example, is a clear example. The capture of concepts is linked to the capture of resistance. Thus, for example, so-called sustainable agriculture initiatives are selectively appropriated from agro-ecological practices and misrepresent agro-ecology's holistic proposal.

To resist this decaffeination[1], it is fundamental to take into account the plurality of concepts that draw our visions and proposals in an articulated and inseparable way, as some of them are more difficult to capture (such as the idea of the capital-life conflict). Furthermore, it is precisely their combination that speaks of the agenda of the struggles for which they must useful. We wager on concepts that are useful for understanding and transforming, that emerge in relation to a political subject, and that are constantly being updated because the political struggle is ever-changing.

Here we share two concepts that we think are central as tools for political struggle: the sustainability of life and capital-life conflict.

2.1. Sustainability Of Life

The sustainability of life approach is an analytical and political wager that seeks to decenter capitalist markets. That is, we try to make it so that markets are no longer the focal point for understanding the world and making

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1   Decaffeinization is an image that we use to refer to processes that remove the essence of something that, in appearance, seems unchanged. In relation to gender, for example, it occurs when the term is used in a descriptive way, dissociated from the social relations organized around conflicts of the appropriation of women's labor, body, and subjectivity by men as a social group and by heteropatriarchal institutions.

political proposals. But, going further, this approach is a way of naming a commitment to transformation that includes a radical rupture with the biocidal system that we have today and to constructing a world otherwise in which all lives, in their diversity and within a living planet, are important.

When we talk about the sustainability of life, we are referring to all the processes, territories, and relationships that regenerate life, understanding vulnerability as a fundamental condition of human life. There is power to life, but it can only take place if we create its conditions of possibility. And we can only do so collectively; we cannot live in isolation nor are we self-sufficient. Life is possible through giving and receiving care/labor/times/knowledges/affects... Because we are vulnerable, we depend on one another: interdependence is a basic condition of existence. The question is how that interdependence functions: do we give and receive in relationships of positive reciprocity or is there someone who accumulates and dispossesses? We must also recognize that life includes more than human life. Ecodependence is another basic condition of human existence: our life is only possible within a living planet, we are part of nature. It is the wide flows of reproduction of human and non-human life that

we want to understand, respect, liberate from the imperatives of capital, and, in the case of nature, recuperate.

The perspective of the sustainability of life is a feminist proposal for approaching the economy and our sociopolitical organization. We are interested in what happens in capitalist markets, but in a derivative way: it is not an issue of understanding commodity processes for their own sake, but of understanding their impacts on vital processes. Here we are confronted with a difficulty: how to decenter markets when trying to understand a world in which markets are in the center. We trip over this stumbling block again and again.

Speaking from the point of view of the sustainability of life helps us refocus our struggles. It enables us to make everyday and embodied life be the first and last territory in which we corroborate our political wagers. It is the concrete, material, and subjective conditions of existence, in the here and now, that make the struggle worth fighting. We don't sacrifice our life today for a distinct future, but rather we want to construct a radically different future wagering on the life that already exists.

Speaking from the point of view of life also allows us to democratize the political discussion, because we all know about and are experts in everyday existence. And it allows us to ask ourselves what life we are aspiring to, what

we mean by well-being, beyond what is imposed on us by neoliberal, patriarchal, and colonial logics, and without separating the material and subjective conditions of existence. It is not a matter of talking about life in a vacuum, but of understanding the disputed meanings that we give to life and the value that different lives have in this system.

By inquiring into how we sustain life, we shine light on all the work necessary for that to happen. This perspective is connected, therefore, with attempts to recuperate labor as the foundation of collective reproduction, while also enabling us to expand the idea of what constitutes labor. This comprehension helps us understand the capitalist economy as a specific form of economic organization that is hegemonic and that has a commodifying impulse that tends to encompass, control, and incorporate economic processes and vital relations whose origins lie outside of capitalist logic.

However, we can also identify the existence of a diversity of economic practices, "economies otherwise" that exceed capitalism and constitute territories in dispute, even though they take place in capitalist society. We are interested in how these diverse forms create wealth (understanding wealth in vital terms) and how they are articulated with exchange value (the capitalist notion of wealth) in a subordinated, instrumentalized, or opposi-

tional way. Labor in nature to produce food and care work are essential for life and, at the same time, they are socially devalued. This work is mainly carried out by women and racialized persons, who have developed extremely useful knowledges based on practices, experiments, and exchanges, yet, they are placed in positions of subordination. These vital experience have a fundamental power to question and transcend the capitalist economy.

Relatedly, we think of the sustainability of life as the main terrain on which we build processes of popular organization and economic transformation rooted in territories. By putting the sustainability of life and its processes in the center, we posit changes in the whole system of production, distribution, and consumption: we raise questions of what, how, and for whom to produce, what we consume, and how those products get to our communities and households. All of this is fundamental for systematically confronting dispossession, extractivism, the exploitation and expropriation of labor, and the commodification of life itself.

Is "putting life in the center" our political proposal? Yes and no... We think that this framing is being used with increasing frequency and we are worried it will become an emptied, good-natured slogan, without any transformative or critical capacity. It is essential to fill it

with meaning and ask ourselves what life we are talking about. For our feminist approach, putting (the sustainability of) life in the center means constructing other economic forms that value all lives, in their diversity, and are rooted on a living earth. This means wagering on rupture with the dominant socioeconomic system, precisely because this system is built on an attack against the living, an issue that we capture with the nation of capital-life conflict which we go into below.

2.2. Capital-Life Conflict

While the concept of the sustainability of life is a lens that can be directly translated into the register of a political commitment, the notion of capital-life conflict, on the other hand, is diagnostic. It enables us to denounce the system that is imposed on us and that, to different degrees, we also (re)construct. More than a concept, it is a framework that allows to organize struggles and alliances from different political subjects in resistance.

We understand that the capital-life conflict is the irresolvable structural conflict that characterizes the system of multiple domination (the "scandalous thing") that we inhabit. We attempt to develop a complex vision of this biocidal system, understanding it as a socioeco-

nomic system that creates hierarchies among lives in an intersectional way. In opposition to a flat and binary vision that counterpoises "capital" (which would not be situated in bodies?) and "life" (something pure or immaculate that floats in a vacuum?), we attempt to understand the complexity of social relations of privilege/oppression that are activated when we fight against racist and heteropatriarchal capitalism.

We want to "put a face to capital": reveal which lives are the few that, for and in this system, are highly "valued," and learn about their material and subjective conditions of existence. Here we find the subject in which the axes of inequality converge in their register of privilege, dominating the process of capital accumulation. That subject that holds corporate power is the white, bourgeois, urban, heterosexual male[2]. In the context of a disputed process of capital concentration, there are increasingly few of these subjects. The capital–life conflict emerges because the way through which they meet their vital aspirations is through accumulation, dispossessing the lives of others and the life of

2   In the Spanish original, this subject is referred to with the acronym 'BBVAh,' which also corresponds to the Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria, the multinational financial services corporation, originally founded in Bilbao, emphasizing the link between this white, bourgeois, urban, heterosexual male subject and corporate and financial power. – Translator.

the planet, turning modes of collective reproduction of life into private modes of the "production" of capital.

In opposition to those few "highly valued" lives, lies the bulk of people who, expropriated from the means of reproduction, are valuable to the extent that they can be of service for that privileged subject, which they are useful for in different ways: as paid or unpaid workers, as consumers, as desirable bodies... Their living conditions are very unequal, depending on elements such as their purchasing power or the market value of their labor and, in broader terms, their position within the system of multiple domination (racist and heteropatriarchal capitalism).

Furthermore, a margin is opened up for the relative exercise of privilege and for the establishment of relations of servitude within this bulk of lives. Greater proximity to the circuits of accumulation leads to the fewer responsibilities to carry out invisibilized work to sustain life and lower rates of exploitation. But the fence is narrowing.

Constant attacks on living conditions have put an end to the horizon of labor with rights. Thus, we turn to the situation of Black women as the reference point that capital seeks to generalize. Black women's situation of precarity and labor informality has now become the sit-

uation of the majority in the labor market in Brazil. The normalization of informality is reinforced by the discourse of "entrepreneurship" and the transformation of each individual into "human capital".

What are the threads of (dis)continuity between territories of the Global North, such as Basque Country and the Spanish state? What are the living and working conditions of household employees, a sector in which international migrants increasingly join women from the popular classes? How does the peasant population disappear? What are the impacts of the Uberization of employment?

In broad terms, we understand that precarity in life is the new regime of existence for the social majorities, although distributed in a radically unequal way. This expansion and intensification of precarity results in an intensified perception of loss of control over our lives, which affects the possibilities of action for political subjects. Fear can be a powerful disciplining factor.

In this multi-dimensional and complex process of producing hierarchies, there is another set of lives whose "value" for the system is nothing more than death. Necropolitics becomes essential for the system. These are lives whose disappearance is "valuable" in an instrumental register (their disappearance is useful for the ac-

cumulation process, for example, in the case of Indigenous communities opposed to extractivism), as well as in expressive terms (for example, in the case of heteropatriarchal violence that allows for expressing the message of who dominates life, of who owns the lives of others). Finally, there are lives that for the system are nothing more than "human waste": those who do not have any "value" even in death. We could understand the deaths along Europe's borders in that register. It is not so much that the deaths of migrant persons and refugees is beneficial. It is simply that their lives are not "valuable" for the system and there is nowhere to dump them.

Understanding the system through this lens of complex and multi-dimensional inequality, shows that there is an injustice in the distribution of resources with which to sustain life, but there is also injustice in terms of the recognition of which lives deserve to be maintained. We could say that capitalism provides a materiality to that hierarchization of lives, while there are other social relations of privilege/oppression (racist and heteropatriarchal) that give unequal "value" to diverse lives. This brings us back to Marxist feminist thought from decades ago, in which capitalism is a "system of vacant positions": it gives materiality to inequality in

the distribution of resources, time, work, etc., but does not define who occupies different positions.

We are interested in understanding the concrete mechanisms that are used to produce hierarchies and dispossession. Those include the process of disciplining the body for labor, that turns people, as well as nature, into means for accumulation. The same thing happens with private property in general, as well as in its specific dimensions, such as land ownership (disputed with violence) and intellectual property (with all of its implications for health care, knowledge, the patenting of vital processes, etc.). We are also interested in understanding the mechanisms for assigning (exchange) value and price. Understanding them is important because they will appear again in our attempts to initiate alternative circuits for sustaining life.

Under this perspective, the capital–life conflict becomes a problem that is simultaneously common and unequal. It is common, on the one hand, because it implies the destruction of the planet, without which nobody could live. And it is common because it destroys collective life. But it is uneven because the attacks against specific lives are radically unequal: from death as waste to useful deaths to radically uneven levels of precarity.

In political terms, our strategy does not lie in removing the veil so that everyone recognizes that it is capitalism that exploits us. We could appeal to the "working class," "women," "the people of the South," "the people," or any other collective subject that seems closest for us to summon, but we have to recognize that we must create that political subject and that, to do so, we have to address this conflict in the specific situations in which the unequal way in which the conflict affects us is materialized.

How does global land grabbing affect us in unequal ways? And housing speculation? What do we propose to do with household employment, a work in which the inequalities between women become forcefully apparent? We build political force by giving situated responses to these questions, understanding that food, housing, and care are territories in which that capital-life conflict is expressed that unites and divides us.

The political forms that the conflict takes, especially in these times of the proliferation of extreme right-wing governments, is a fundamental element to take into account. (Global) authoritarianism of the market and corporate power, in diverse territories, such as Brazil, is taking hold, dispensing with even the minimal appearance of democracy. A key element of that project made

hegemonic by the extreme right is a market consensus: increasing privatizations, expanding the role of corporations by privatizing state functions and overlapping with their public role, and as reference points for promoting well-being with their corporate hypocrisy. If the extreme right does not explicitly occupy these sites of political power, does that suppose some sort of safeguard against market authoritarianism in a global context of the enclosure of the necessary conditions for life?

The view of free market environmentalism, which turns nature into a service provider that is "conserved" through financialization programs, positing private property rights and civil responsibility as the best tools to preserve the health and sustainability of the environment, demonstrates the complexity of the issue.

3. A Common Language to Explore

In what follows, we explore three concepts that are points from which to observe the world and articulate struggles – the body, time, and territory – and their interconnections. We think that they can help us specify and ground the proposals of the sustainability of life and capital-life conflict, and open up new horizons of political articulation.

3.1. Body

Putting bodies in the center of our vision seems fundamental to us, precisely because the hegemonic system negates bodies and turns them into a territory of conquest and dispossession. In this sense, we return to what we said in the process of D*erivas feministas hacia el bienvivir* [*Feminist Drifting toward Living Well*]:

> As feminists, we denounce the fact that the hetero-patriarchy associates masculinity and whiteness with decorporealized reason: the body is experienced as a limit and the privileged subject must not have limits, therefore he is not marked by flesh. The privileged way of being in the world seems to be floating in a vacuum. In contrast to this, [we affirm ourselves] as diverse bodies, marked by a whole history of relations of privilege/oppression, in which class, gender, racialization, functional diversity, etc. are all expressed. Our commitments start from looking at those bodies and looking at ourselves from that perspective, to never lose sight of the matrix of domination.[3]

The negation of bodies and their vulnerability is only possible through hiding care as an insistence that, for life to occur, as a holistic and ecosystemic whole and in each one of its parts, there is constant and always unfinished work. It is the concealment of the body as such by the disembodied reason of "I think, therefore I exist".

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[3]   *Derivas feministas hacia el bienvivir* refers to: Various Authors. (2020). *Derivas feministas hacia el bienvivir (Feminist Drifts toward Living Well)*. Colectiva XXK-OMAL. Available at: https://colectivaxxk.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/informe_definitivo_cast.pdf. More information about the broad process in which this research is framed (a collective investigation-training around feminist alternatives to the system) can be found here: https://colectivaxxk.net/experiencias/derivas-feministas-para-cambiar-el-sistema/

In parallel with critiquing the mechanisms of sub-ordination, expropriation, and control of the body, comes an understanding of the body as a limit to capital's expansion, with its capacities for resistance and reconstruction. With those two axes we enter into dialogue with the political accumulation of Latin American women when they put their bodies on the line against capital's expansion over territories, affirming that bodies are the first territory to defend. We are our bodies and we are nature. That is a political perspective that challenges the dichotomies and dualisms produced by Western androcentric and white thought, which separates the materiality of our bodies from emotions and creates a hierarchy between the senses, privileging sight in the perception of the world.

In capitalist society, the hierarchy among bodies is manifested, among other matters, in that some are shaped for work, some for maximum extraction, in a thread of continuity with the (colonial and slave-owning) plantation economy, even reaching the point of discarding those who are considered surplus. The sexual and racial division of labor is articulated in the disciplining of women's bodies for precarious work, whether in companies, factories, fields, the streets, or households. Work shapes bodies, leaving prints, marks, and

scars on them. Fragility and strength are manipulated in a racialized way. Lives and bodies turned into means for the production of wealth appropriated by capital undergo a transformation in their relationship with nature. For example, in rural communities in which farmers organize their working day, they do so in relationship to the sun. The waged/urban worker, even if they work under the sun, marks time by the ticks of the clock, and the sun is a source of discomfort. Those who work in enclosed spaces no longer perceive how the day or the seasons advance. The control of labor in intense routines is governed by working days, notifications through apps, virtual methods for controlling remote work.

The virtual tends to impose even more accelerated rhythms. Digitalization and tele-work, which we will speak more about later, will be translated into new corporeal scars. The hands, the legs of women who carry out manual labor are presented as if they are less feminine because they are far from the image of a porcelain doll. Unremunerated labor leaves deep marks on the body, a whole history of dedication of energies and efforts without a fixed working day or breaks. Thus, it is up to us to affirm the beauty of the body that works with her hands.

Freeing women's bodies and reproductive life from impositions has always been on the feminist movement's

agenda. That agenda includes a critique of transnational pharmaceutical corporations that promote contraceptive methods that are outside of women's control, such as injectable or subcutaneous hormonal methods. Their collateral effect of suppressing menstruation is presented as an advantage that saves energy for women's bodies allowing them to dedicate that energy to work.

These corporations are situated in the bioeconomies of assisted reproduction. There is an intense polemic around surrogacy/wombs for rent. It runs the risk of being established in as dichotomous and aggressive terms as those that exist in relation to prostitution/sex work. Attempting to avoid polarizations, we think that it is fundamental to open up other reflections.

In the everyday practices of broad social segments of the Global North, as well as in certain sectors of the Global South, the recourse to (privatized) assisted reproduction is becoming normalized as a way to deal with reproductive difficulties. On the one hand, there is the debate about what it means for the bodies of many women to subject themselves to different, increasingly complex, costly, and long, treatments, that are going to "make their dreams come true".

Anything is possible, science has no limits, and women's bodies become a test tube to discover how

far we can stretch everything a little more. Thus, private clinics appear, motivating us for "one more try" as long as we have the economic resources to pay them and feed their business. But we even see that, more than assisting reproduction, what occurs is really a "transfer of reproductive capacity," whether through the use of third-party gametes, especially eggs, or through surrogacy of pregnancy and birth[4]. Feminism does not have its own clear position on this issue.

There is no political and collective comprehension of what these bioeconomies mean in terms of the commodification of life, opening new market niches for large capital, reinforcing inequalities, perpetuation of heteropatriarchal and nuclear notions of the family and descent, etc. Nor is it linked to an analysis of the structural causes of what we could call a "reproductive crisis," of the postponement of maternity and declines in fertility (for example, linked to the possible effects of consuming products from industrial agriculture and animal production, provoking hormonal and reproductive changes). Why have we reached the point of needing assisted repro-

4   Lafuente-Funes, S. (2019). La reproducción asistida en el contexto español: la ovodonación como motor de un modelo de negocio heteronormativo (Assisted Reproduction in the Spanish Context: Egg Donation as the Motor of the Heteronormative Business Model), in: *Política y Sociedad* 56(3), pp. 645-667. https://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/POSO/article/download/60620/4564456552396/

duction, what services are we buying and normalizing, what are the consequences of that? What is the difference between thinking about it in terms of individual access to market services instead of in terms of a collective debate over whether or not it is a right and, in that case, what the role of institutions would be? These are debates that are not taking place in a consistent manner. And they are a fundamental terrain on which to give a response to the question of what we call *bienvivir* (the collective good life) and how to make it collectively possible.

Besides the body shaped for work, a body that is bought in parts or functions, women face a series of social and legal limitations for living their bodies to the fullest. These include limitations ranging from those on the right to abortion (due to legal or de facto restrictions) to the fact that it is often impossible for women to dance or dress freely, which is read as a sensual act that puts us at risk and that justifies whatever could happen to us. This expropriation of our bodies is one of the central axes of the violence exercised by the heteropatriarchy.

However, as we discussed recently in workshops with compañeras from the World March of Women of the Americas:

> Personal and collective memory, lived experiences, wisdom, and knowledges allow us to understand that

> women's bodies are the place where a history plagued by violence, dispossession, racism, and discrimination has been marked. By recovering the continuum of violence, it also teaches us to look at the continuum of resistance.[5]

And thus "we wager on forming a collective body: recognizing the embodied marks that unite and disunite us, the joys and the pains that leave marks on us; recognizing ourselves from our sovereign bodies along with others and occupy the territory as a diverse collective body".[6]

3.2. Time

In our perceptions, we experience time in a subjugated way:

> We live in overly stressed times, exhausted and drowning; robbed, imposed, and lost times. What can we do and are we doing to live more sustainable times, to have more sovereignty over our times and to experience time with happiness? [...] 'There are not enough hours in the day' seems to be the omnipresent mantra. To build alternatives we need time that we don't have and dedicating time to the

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5   Extracted from the summary of the workshops of the World March of Women of the Americas (August 2020): *Documento regional Américas para el cierre de la 5.a acción internacional.*

6   *Derivas feministas hacia el bienvivir.*

collective ends up exhausting our body, which is already at the limit. What can we and what do we want to do? We know that we want to make the notion of productivist, quantifiable, and monetary clock-time explode. Time is not money, but nor is it infinitely elastic.[7]

We perceive that we are stretching the elastic cord to its limit due to the number of paid jobs necessary to achieve sufficient remuneration and the way in which jobs are organized, which requires constant attention/availability. Employment, driven by logics of capital accumulation, becomes the backbone for the socioeconomic organization of time. At the same time, there are many other jobs that are necessary to do, and that are located outside the market. There is a whole life to carry out and this has to be done under the times imposed the market. The more responsibilities one takes up in this whole complex mechanism of work, the greater the experience of living in subjugated times. Even more so when we add the work of participating in processes of social mobilization, when we add the time necessary to create transformation in a collective way.

Furthermore, precarious jobs, authoritarian government, the dismantling of public social security systems,

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7   *Ibid.*

and the tendencies toward more precarity and control increase our insecurity in regards to the future and feeling that it is out of our control. Predictability as a demand becomes a commodity. For example, ultra-processed foods are not nutritious, but they are always the same. There is no surprise waiting for us when we bite into them, like the unpleasant surprise of finding a worm in a guava. The very desire for surprise is controlled and commodified in the toys accompanying chocolates or hamburgers. Uncertainties also fuel the growth of security and surveillance companies. The present becomes continuous. Every day is the same, we see the same employee of the security company despite the fact that they could be different ones, since they all have the same physical form, the same haircut, and the same uniform.

Clock-time organizes industrial society and its economy. The socially necessary time for reproducing the labor power employed in the production of a determined good or service defines its exchange value and the remaining part as surplus value.

This time is also fixed in the instruments, tools, and machines used in the production process. The more complex those technologies become, the more the idea of socially necessary labor time becomes an abstraction. However, the idea remains that time can be separat-

ed, quantified, and used with efficiency. All of this falls apart when we think of care and nature, but also when we think about forms of work that involve creation. These are some of the knots that we face when we think about "how to value" the work that the system does not value.

There are other ways of experiencing temporality that enter into dialogue with ways of organizing life according to other forms. If the *quilombolas*[8] counted all the hours they dedicate to producing corn meal in the *pilón*, perhaps they would get discouraged, but instead they are making more corn meal and even planting more corn that will be processed. The way in which time is experienced makes a big difference: common labor (*mutirão*[9]) of peeling corn and toasting beijú next to a waterfall cannot be compared to waged work.

The *mutirão* is a form of the organization of common work in several traditional communities, it is a way of defeating the urgency of time with nature. If someone were to prepare the ground alone, eliminating the weeds that compete with plants, when they finished

8   Quilombola refers to the Afro-Brazilian women living in quilombo (maroon) settlements originally established by escaped slaves in Brazil, which continue to be important political and cultural references today in the struggle for Black autonomy. – Translator
9   It brings to mind, with all sorts of differences, different experiences of other people, such as the minga in some countries of Latin America and the *auzolan* in Basque Country.

one area, the weeds would already be coming back up where they had started their work. If they were to build a *taipa* house alone, the mud would have dried before adhering to the structure. In other words, there are jobs that must be done collectively.

This form of organization can be carried out by contracting labor power or by exchanging work days. In agro-ecology, this common labor is also a moment of exchanging knowledges, practices, seeds, new plants, and is the basis of the participatory certification.

The *mutirões* can also be traversed by gendered features. In ancient times, a woman would often have to work two days to compensate for one day of a man's work. Today, even in agro-ecological organizations, women's time spent providing food and water for the collective is often not considered part of the common commitments. For women, *mutirões* with only women are times of intense joy, in which they can express their knowledges and ways of working without men's critical gaze; additionally, they can sing and speak of things that they would not mention were men present. They have a good time and it is work. Orienting work around tasks moves us toward privileging the time of relationships, the times of nature, and opens space for pleasure while working.

Far from normalizing the life experience of subjugated times, we need to understand ways of experiencing time, which are radically unequal in different modes of sustaining life. Capitalist time is an imperialist time. It imposes its mode of working days and times and "the time left to us," the leftover time. Time is at the heart of our resistances and alternatives.

> We suspect that rootedness and collective embodiment are commitments that are intimately linked to an experience of time that creates a rupture with the present, that allows us to be sovereign over out times. That is probably the only thing that will allow us to confront that "there are not enough hours in the day".[10]

We also link time to the possibility of constructing a collective right to care:

> To have the collective right to care, we must have the right to time, and that is not something that is only granted externally, but that comes from ourselves: there is always something more important to do so that one's own act of living, life and care are always relegated to last place. This is not to say that there are not also external elements that limit us: as long as employment occupies the central place that it does today, having time to take care of ourselves

10   *Ibid.*

and to care for others will continue having to move against the current. Therefore, freeing time from employment is going to be one of our key paths of change for *bienvivir*.[11]

We can also connect the issue of time to food sovereignty:

Food as a right requires time for the kitchen, as a workplace and a place of encounter. "So that the space of eating with my people can be a space in good conditions." And we think it requires larger kitchens, in common. Recuperating time for food goes hand in hand with collectivizing it.[12]

Initiating other forms of organizing life and the economy while capitalist forms are hegemonic makes it so that we often experience them in constant tension. For example, it could be the shifts in the times of planting and harvesting due to the altering of rain patterns because of climate change. Changes in the climate are one more expression of the ecological collapse due to the use and waste of fossil fuel energy, extensive livestock farming, and deforestation. Hyper-productivism, the capitalist form of living time, traverses our alternatives and burdens us with guilt. The times that we need to build alternatives are in constant tension with the little time of life that the

11   *Ibid.*
12   *Ibid.*

system leaves us with once we have finished the working day and resolved badly distributed care issues. We must render visible this guilt we feel for not making it with the time that we have and, from that position, attempt to get rid of it. The same must happen with the guilt that we women feel for using our time for our own enjoyment. Therefore, the liberation of times of life lies at the heart of our wager to dethrone employment. And, vice-versa, by removing waged work, the work of capitalism, from its position of centrality, we can emancipate our vital times:

> For employment to mark our vital times less, besides being liberating in itself, is a precondition for being able to commit ourselves to other alternatives, because all collective processes require time. [...] A relatively wide, although unequal, margin of action lies in our hands. The liberation of time is linked to the type of jobs that we choose. [...] But, along with this search for better working conditions (understanding that better does not mean earning more, but liberating vital time), a series of ruptures with internal logics become essential. We have identified two: perennial guilt and productivism. [...] We don't have a good idea of how, but we know that the connection with desire and pleasure is necessary for freeing time from work, but also to have free time to do what we want and to "individually and collectively touch ourselves".[13]

13   *Ibid.*

The rules of waged work (clock-time, hierarchical structures, alienation) also exist in precarious forms of "self-employment," that today account for the majority of people in countries of the Global South. In reinventing work with non-capitalist forms, although today immersed in capitalism, there is much to be done to dismantle ideologies that associate work with suffering, with the only way of accessing the minimum needed to survive, or prejudices that manual less dignified and more transferable to other people, those who are in positions of less power over their lives.

3.3. Territory

Territories are the spaces in which modes of life are materialized in relation to nature.

Territories make visible the combination between nature (land, water, seeds, winds...) and community (the meanings that community attributes to it and that transform each of these elements and them as a whole). These modes, these combinations, can be based on community agreements or, on the other hand, on rules of private property and a market logic. Nation-states, for example, are obsessed with borders, which become increasingly physical and militarized. Indigenous or Afro-descendant

communities, on the other hand, think of territory more as paths leading to multiple encounters: trade, affection, devotions or what constitutes them as peoples, as the Guaraníes who walk in search of the land without evil. Therefore, any evictions of communities in the name of "development," for example, to establish hydroelectric stations, real estate projects, tourism, or monocropping, cause pain and resistance against compensation and resettlement offers. Land can be exchanged, but territories can never be replaced.

The rootedness of communities (even having been displaced) is part of the territory. Thus, we need to root our alternatives in the territory from which we live, weave the relations that sustain us there, in a way that makes them more visible and sustainable. In neoliberal globalization, we have experimented with the chimera of the annulment of distances. We have lived as if it were not problematic to take four planes a week or buy food produced thousands of kilometers away without asking what impacts it has on access to the land for other peoples. We have also believed in "cheap cosmopolitanism," in the idea of not belonging anywhere and, at the same time, belonging everywhere.

During the time of confinement due to the pandemic, there has been a valorization what is small and nearby, for

example, in the realm of shopping. But, at the same time, digital companies have taken off and there is a tendency for relationships to transition onto the online mode.

We ask if we are experiencing a double tendency: do we think more about the local and the sustainable at the same time as we depend more on online companies? Due to fear and safety concerns, we don't leave our homes (if we don't have to), but do we not care about the person who comes to our home, does their life matter less than ours? Confinement has clarified the territory in which we live: we have seen our dependence on the countryside and differences between how food distribution systems operate under market logics or that a logic of solidarity between organizations of the countryside and the city. We have also seen that, when the city no longer offers us a series of advantages (anonymity, multiplicity of activities...), it becomes a prison.

What lessons have we learned from all of this? How have territories and our ways of inhabiting them been transformed?

We are especially concerned with the question of cities and the sort of unavoidable urban destiny that the system plots for us at the global level. To address this issue, we need to think beyond the urban/rural dichotomy. One key element is thinking about the relationship

with nature in these forms of organizing space. The city model is that of the artificialization of life by making the ground impermeable, air conditioning buildings, lights that negate solar hours..., everything is organized by a market logic marked by real estate speculation and economic growth focused on civil construction. All of this, is, in turn, marked by the denial of any limits related to our ecodependence: seasons should not exist, meteorology should not condition the civilizing wheel.

Sometimes, in places such as Basque Country, there is a certain physical continuity between the urban and the rural that, far from bringing us closer, makes us believe it is a matter of "urbanizing" the countryside, turning it into a place, not for food production, but for tourism and second homes.

Improving public services (basic sanitation, internet...) in rural areas is not the same as urbanizing it in the sense of making space and peoples' relationships with that space artificial. At the same time, in the city many communities establish their territories (urban *quilombos*) for generations or for a few hours. Rural women arriving to the city have constructed the peri-urban space on the basis of practices of solidarity and places in which to share the common despite so much precarity. At first, these were open air spaces (counterpoised to enclosed

spaces, considered safe). How can we expand communitarian territories by decommodifying spaces, allowing for the circulation and flow of people, water, and breezes?

3.4. Body-Time-Territory Interconnections

This process of disciplining the body for work turns people, as well as nature, into means for accumulation. Permanent accumulation takes place through dispossession. Denying the body denies care and renders invisible the dispossession of the body-time-territory of women dedicated to care.

Women's bodies are sustaining this "not-work" without the time or possibility of taking care of themselves. Deterritorialized women are confined in the house-workplace to full dedicate themselves to caring for others, tending to the annulment of their own wills.

Clock-time is a discipline that we are taught starting from school and that prepares our bodies for the market, for the company, as a dispossession of our own time. In territories, there is the dispossession of communal goods and wealth, as well as cultural and historical dispossession of memory. Challenging this fact means returning to bodies and territories, understood not only in the individual sense, but also as collective subjects, articulated

in the reorganization of processes of sustaining life in common, in the construction of what we could call communitarian fabrics. By that, we are referring to food, achieving food sovereignty and agro-ecology; as well as the reorganization of the times and rhythms of work, which means not only regulations and transitions, but also the construction of other reference points, such as associated and cooperative work. We are also referring to the need to put a stop to processes of the commodification of life and, furthermore, calling for the decommodification of bodies and nature. In sum, we are necessarily referring to the constant struggle against the capitalist, patriarchal, and colonialist offensive of occupation and dispossession, whose method is hoarding, violence, and destruction of alternative and counter-hegemonic experiences.

Those processes of organization of life in common, based on other logics, are part of a trajectory of (anticapitalist, anticolonial, antiracist) resistances. The territories being threatened are inhabited by peoples with their own modes of life (Indigenous, Quilombolas) that are being subjected to attacks.

The different building blocks supporting life are what are being attacked: nature, housing, communities, and the public. A wager on life is a wager on the bodies that

compose it, the times in which it occurs, and the territories that constitute it.

We ask if the form of experiencing bodies, territories, and times could be considered a defining feature of the life we want. Or if we should look at those as radical inequalities of the life that we have today. We think that, although there are other elements we could take into account, it is worth exploring the possibility of using the notions of bodies, territories, and times to diagnose structural inequalities, as well as areas for powerful change and definition of what we want. For example, in respect to time, we see that there are profound inequalities, that have been made even more apparent with COVID, not only due to the distribution of time, but also how it is experienced.

There are palpable inequalities that we need to explore more. There are inequalities in the possibility of annulling time (living as if death did not exist, giving less value to lives the closer they are to death, such as the elderly); availability of "free" time (but, what is *free*, if we then fill the time doing what is socially valued, what is imposed on us from the outside?); capacity to buy or use the time of an other's life, and the possibility to individually project yourself in time and construct a future.

Our horizon of emancipation would include questions related to times, such as their redistribution (in this sense,

the issue of removing the centrality of employment would be fundamental, as well as promoting the collective right to care); learning to be sovereigns of our times (not doing what the system tells us to do with it, not filling it with activities, breaking with guilt and productivism); recuperating time to be able to construct projects, to project ourselves, but to do so collectively. Would it make sense to start to speak of a right to time?

The negation of bodies is linked to the negation of territory and time. We think there is a big knot in that triple negation, and that we need to understand it in order to fully understand inequalities and define the horizons of transition.

> Corporate power is deterritorialized. It moves globally at a velocity that would be hard to imagine for the citizenry on foot [...] Uprooting is to deny the limits of life. It is to sell fantasies such as the dematerialization of the economy [...] In the so-called dematerialized economy there are bodies and matter, but imagination disappears. [...] The deterritorialization of corporate power goes hand-in-hand with its attempt to negate time: distance and time, as coordinates that can limit the accumulation process, must disappear. Faced with a system that deterritorializes, rootedness is not only a movement, and much less a rhetoric, it is an element that gives materiality to al-

ternatives, a space so that they exist. It forces us to have profound ruptures in our way of understanding the world and understanding ourselves in it. It is a matter of understanding ourselves as living entities that do not float in a vacuum, or in words, or in stock markets. Taking root and rooting ourselves means recognizing the limits of our bodies and the earth that we inhabit, and recognizing the links that tie us to other people, other living beings, and the ecosystem as a whole.[14]

We ask if the notion of body-land territory can help us in this search:

By speaking of the body-land territory, we are referring to, on the one hand, the earth itself in the sense of the ecosystem of which we are part. On the other hand, to the bodies that we are, because being alive is being flesh. Finally, to the fact that the bodies that inhabit the earth interact, we weave relationships; the territory is also constituted by those relations.[15]

Our compañeras from MesoAmerica speak of body-territory-memory to show that stripping us of our history as a people, as well as of our language and modes of life, is also dispossession. Black feminism speaks of self-recuperation when we recuperate our history rec-

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14   Ibid.
15   Ibid.

onciling ourselves with places, bodies, and knowledges, and, in this way, establishing a becoming as a field of possibilities.

Memories are inscribed on our bodies, they establish a political time, they weave the relationship with the earth, forms of life on the earth, and communities that convert that land into territories. The memory inscribed in the body-territory makes us transcend the present moment and allows us to imagine and speak to a bigger tomorrow (in connection with all living beings).
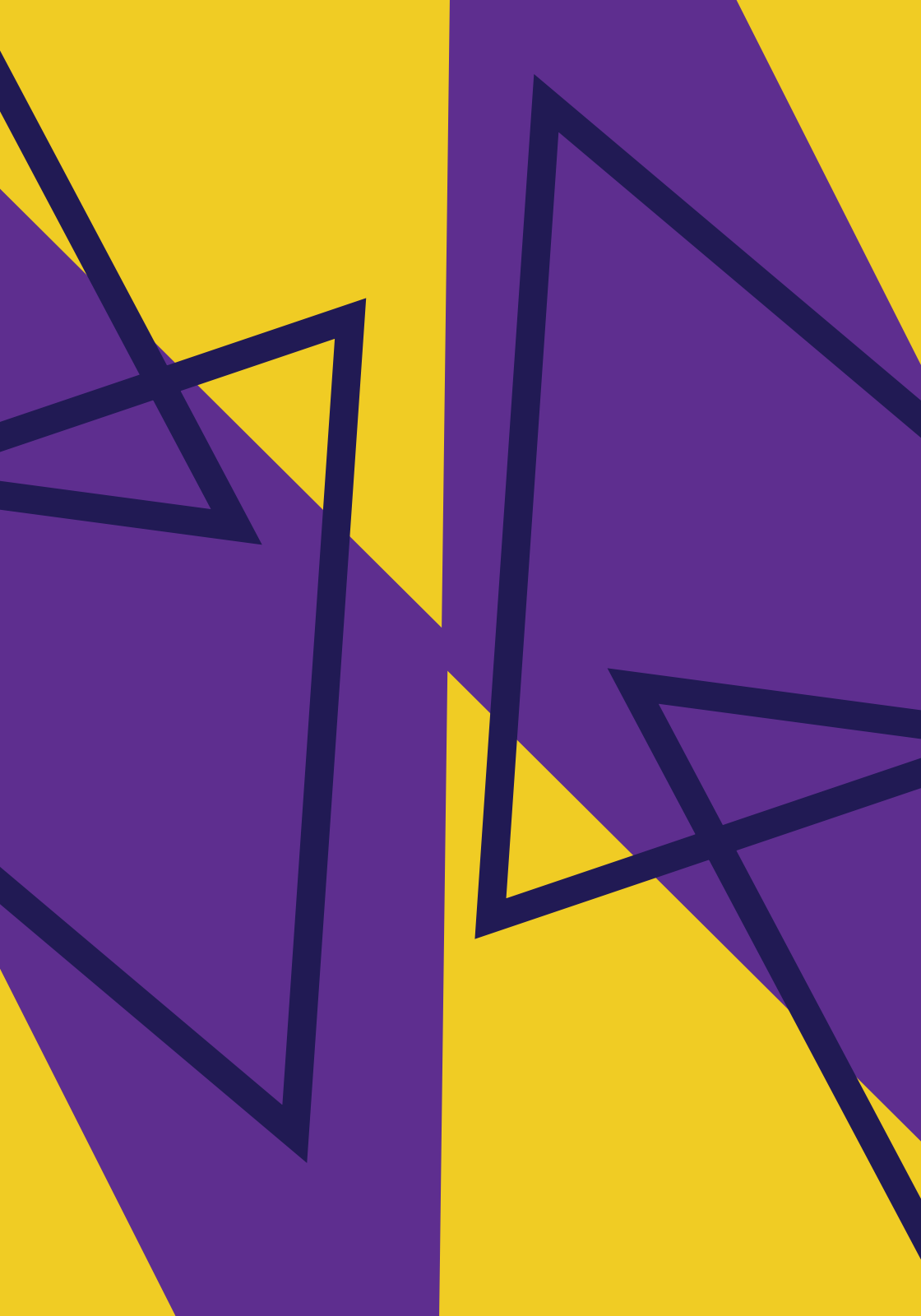
4. Between Home and the State... the Community?

We are experiencing an emergency situation that has been reinforced by the pandemic. The system applies pressure to hollow out the community, concentrating on socioeconomic relations in heteropatriarchal nuclear households, on the one hand, and in strong, centralized states, captured by global corporate power, on the other. This reactionary scale jumping is counterpoised to a strong search for responses from the "community.

Then the question arises of: What "communities" are articulated in each territory and what emancipatory power do they have? According to the logics of mobilization that operate in each territory and the historical dynamics with which they are connected, the implications are completely different.

4.1. Nuclearization Of Relations

While capital converges in the search for total control of life, the forms of ideologically and materially negating ecodependence and interdependence are updated. There is a drive toward fragmentation, breakdown of social bonds, and individualism, whether through technology designed for isolation, through forms of organization of work that divide us, or attacks on living conditions that are so severe that they make it difficult to carry out resistance processes that go beyond survival.

The home is being reinforced as the preferred space for resolving the sustainability of life in terms of everyday material issues. This process takes place along a line of continuity with pre-existing neoliberal and heteropatriarchal dynamics. When processes of sustaining life are submerged in households, they disappear from the terrain of political debate and the tension of dealing with the capital-life conflict becomes a "private" matter.

Our feminist resistance includes politicizing what goes on in those "private-domestic" spaces and combating the violent disciplining used to impose a model with the heteropatriarchal, white, middle class, urban family as the norm.

Today Margaret Thatcher's allegation from 1987 becomes more relevant than ever: "There's no such thing as society. There are individual men and women and there are families." This emphasis on subjects and families goes hand-in-hand with placing responsibility for carrying out one's own life in that individualized sphere and is based on the negation of any type of collective responsibility for sustaining life. Furthermore, it denies the very existence of a collective body: there is no community to sustain, therefore there is no collective responsibility for the community.

This nuclearized neoliberal tendency implies an increasing inability to seek collective solutions to collective problems. There is a tendency to look for individualized responses to problems. Global care chains are a clear example: contracting household employment resolves urgent needs in relation to serious socioeconomic deficiencies (lack of public care services, a labor market based on the negation of care, etc.).

Finding private solutions impedes the articulation of demands for common responses. But, even beyond this, it does not manage to recognize the existence of collective problems as such: individual solutions are given for situations that are only able to be seen as individual. Even further from being addressed is the question of the

social consequences of our individual solutions is: when a household worker is contracted to solve care emergencies, are the emergencies being shifted onto her? By contracting household employment, I resolve "the problem," "my problem," and no major doubts arise for me. This can also be clearly seen in the way in which the markets for transferring reproductive capacity are being articulated, as we discussed in the previous section when we delved into the concept of the body.

This nuclearization has been strongly reinforced by as a result of COVID. There is a clear limit to the "stay at home" strategy if it does not recognize that it not only the household, but also the spaces, relations, and processes expanded throughout territories that weave together the sustainability of life and it it does not address how the household operates as patriarchal isolation for many women.

Additionally, "stay at home" has a profoundly unequal impact on households according to their material conditions. Inequalities in the infrastructure of households is often the result of privatization and cuts to spending on maintenance, as well as the case of the lack of electricity (*apagão*) and water in Brazil, and energy poverty in Basque Country and the Spanish state. When "stay at home" is launched as the only measure, a single uniform

measure for all society, without addressing inequalities, it appears as an egalitarian public health policy, but actually results in a serious worsening of inequality.

In the context of Basque Country and the Spanish State, it is very problematic how, in the face of the resounding failure of the long-term care residency system for the elderly, there is a return to a discourse based on the family, committed to keeping elderly people in the home as long as possible, without any reference to promoting broad webs of coexistence. On the contrary, this discourse is based on an old logic of the family, modernized through the prioritization of technology (tele-medicine, localization and emergency services, support technologies, etc.). This opens the way for solutions that are not only based on the family, but are also increasingly rely on technology, based on a commodified and elitist understanding of the technological.

Using the catchphrase "stay at home," instead of "stay in the neighborhood, the territory," the call for "social distancing," and the emergence of a new concept, "household bubbles," are all eloquent forms of the system's negation of the community. At the same time, and despite the "stay at home," many people have continued working in essential services (health care, food distribution, etc.), but also in non-essential ones

(domestic employment, mining, industries, banks, etc.; what is classified as an essential job varies depending on the country). The conflict between the needs of the accumulation process and those of sustaining life have become very clear in the tensions over whether or not to halt "production".

4.2. Are Women Returning To The Home?

Feminist movements have frequently denounced the pressure on women to return the home. But, did we ever leave it? We can understand this question in two different ways.

"Being in the home" can mean that women do not have a paid job outside the household that provides us vital and financial autonomy. But we can also understand "being in the home," as being the one who takes responsibility, based in the household, for resolving life. Many women are "outside the home" because they have a job, but they are still "in the home" because they continue taking on the responsibility for making sure that the household functions as that big cushion on which all the tensions of the capital-life conflict are discharged.

In that second understanding, we can say that women have never left the home, because there was never an

articulation of a more broadly shared responsibility, in which institutions, men, and, even less so, companies would participate. What has forcefully emerged has been a transfer of responsibilities among women (for example, through contracting household employment and the increasing commodification of life), deepening the inequalities between women.

The life experience of women is characterized by the common responsibilization for keeping these households – the fundamental socioeconomic unit – going, but also doing so with radically unequal resources, support, and conditions, which results in radically unequal living conditions.

We believe that we are facing a moment in which women are being overburdened, but that manifests in an unequal way depending on the territory, as well as social class and race. In contexts of advanced capitalism, this overburden occurs through processes of the privatization of public services, the precarization of the labor market, and the nuclearization that we discussed above. In contexts where socioeconomic forms that escape capitalist hegemony still exist, the destruction of those economies (for example, campesino and popular economies) and displacement of the population, which are closely tied to the dispossession of the

commons and the territory itself by extractivism, are fundamental for capitalism. All of this implies violently encouraging that nuclear formula of resolving life.

With the pandemic, women in the home have taken charge of care tasks, given the collapse of the health care system, the closure of day cares and schools, the interruption of public food assistance programs, etc. Therefore, there is an overburden on women in the home, with very unequal implications depending on social class.

In the first meaning (the availability or not of remunerated work outside the home), rather than making a general affirmation, we have to refer to a plurality of different situations. In certain occasions, the urgent need to resolve new responsibilities being imposed in the home is translated into abandoning jobs. For example, in Brazil there are cases of compañeras who used to participate in solidarity economy experiences and that, to a large extent, have withdrawn to their home, returning to a condition of servitude so that their male partners or children can work outside the home. In the case of Black household employees, many of them have been fired due to the violent racist gaze that associates Blackness with sickness and dirtiness. On the contrary, many live-in household employees in the Spanish state, as well as in Brazil, have been doubly

enclosed, by being restricted from leaving their employing families' homes, even during breaks, using the excuse of avoiding risks.

It is perhaps tele-work that is profiled as a common sphere in dispute in very different territories. In some places, particularly in spaces of advanced capitalism, tele-work had been vindicated as a measure to enable "work-life balance" by middle class women. Other feminist perspectives had questioned this demand on the basis of two arguments. On the one hand, they argued that it was based on an erroneous idea: that it is possible to find balance between two things that are, ultimately, irreconcilable (dedicating time to life or to capital). On the other hand, they criticized it as being one more mechanism that would impede a redistribution of care work.

But now these debates reach another scale. Tele-work is massively encouraged in this context of nuclearization and women's overburden of responsibilities in the home, as well as the context of new forms of organization and control of labor brought about by digitalization.

How does this effect women? It seems that it exacerbates the negative implications through the intensification and lengthening of working days within the home; by the loss of any ability to limit the overlap of employment with care work; by enclosure in the household and

the loss of the labor sphere as a space of socialization and a fabric of social and political relations, and by the "disappearance" of collective problems that emerge in relation to political decisions such as school closures, etc.

Tele-work, practiced and experienced in a very unequal way between men and women, can intensify gendered inequalities in the distribution of jobs and responsibilities and in living conditions, as well as re-inforce a very reactionary ethics of domesticity. But it also allows for an intensification of the inequalities between women, because, ultimately and despite all its deficiencies, it has the capacity to function as a priv-ilege in a moment when going out to the streets is a risk. Thus it raises the question of "who is able to stay at home," even when there are radically unequal ways of staying at home.

4.3. Reinforcing the State

The concentration of socioeconomic relations in the household goes hand-in-hand with the reinforce-ment of states as the sphere that exercises authoritari-an power. These are strong states, that tend to weaken smaller-scale public institutions, those that are closer to the citizenry and through which a form of more direct

access can be exercised. Reinforced states are those that were already undergoing a profound process of corporate capture, in which the interests of states and large corporations were becoming blurred. Although we can observe this as a general process, it is much more striking in contexts in which there is a tight nexus between the extreme right and economic elites.

This reinforcement is frequently accompanied by a process of militarization and securitization of states, increased spending on security forces and expanding their role in people's daily lives. The militarization of public space is extreme in some cases, for example in many neighborhoods of large cities in Brazil or in spaces of territorial disputes related to extractivist projects. The heteropatriarchal class's racism and hate are not new in our society, especially directed toward the Black population, which lives in situations of complete precarity, nor is their use of repressive apparatuses, maintaining a violent dispute for control of territories, as well as socio-spatial segregation in cities.

In others, the process of militarization and securitization is more veiled, yet expanding, in connection with the vigilance enacted through social control measures in response to COVID-19. In these cases, state discourse in the face of COVID has had a strong war-like imprint both in

terms of the language used ("winning the battle against the virus"), as well as in terms of which ministries have been prioritized. In the Spanish state, the first ministry mentioned when the state of alarm was announced in March 2020 was the Ministry of Defense.

In several countries, the army is considered the only entity capable of responding to the logistics of mass vaccination. COVID is also serving as an excuse to launch "ghettoizing" processes of confinement in cities, within the framework of racist and classist management of the pandemic.

This reinforcement of centralized and securitized state power, occurs at the same time that supranational bodies – that are even more distanced from any possibility of grassroots democratic control and that historically have served to impose the interests of global corporate power – acquire greater weight. This is the case of the international financial institutions, such as the World Bank or the IMF, for Latin America, and of the European Union. We are probably at the beginning of a new period of the intensification of international "aid" subject to conditionalities.

4.4. The Community in Dispute

Could we say that all of this, which we mentioned above, means the emptying out of the community? We have to be careful when responding to this question and, above all, clarify what we mean by community.

As we said above, in moments of crisis, such as the current pandemic, a strong search for "community" emerges. But, what logic motivates that "community"? The system installs a market logic that imposes an individualist and meritocratic neoliberal subjectivity and that captures collective organization, for example, through projects of green and pink washing. That logic is combined with assistentialism and service-based logic, that can go hand-in-hand with political parties or religious institutions, establishing patronage networks.

Our interest in the community (our concern about its emptying out and our joy in its reinforcement) does not refer to those based on assistentialism, patronage networks, or other captured forms of "community." We are interested in that community that functions based on a logic of solidarity or from a logic based on the people, from below. By community we refer to the self-organized forms of weaving social relations and making the

economy (providing the means of existence) based on the recognition and valorization of interdependence.

The community that we understand as an exercise of resistance is that which involves a recognition and valuing of interdependence, translating this exercise into other forms of organizing the economy and social relations in a broad sense. It is a matter of other modes of constructing society and economy (that, in fact, break down the distinction between society and the economy), horizontal forms of solidarity capable of providing the material conditions for what is collectively defined as the life that deserves to be lived. Community is not constructed abstractly or in a vacuum, but rather is rooted in a specific territory through the recognition of ecodependence.

We can define solidarity as the collective political will that makes explicit the link between the economic and the political. Solidarity is a principle and practice of the feminism we are building, as well as a strategy of self-organization for transforming the economy (that is exercised, for example, in agro-ecological networks and in the solidarity economy).

Solidarity starts by creating collectives responses to the most basic needs, from food to the reduction of suffering and full satisfaction of needs, incorporating desires and wishes along with other forms of organiza-

tion. It is a political practice that involves popular organization, in movement, in scenarios characterized by the precarization of life and fragmentation provoked by a ferocious neoliberalism. Movements construct a horizontal solidarity, in which people share what they have, but also what is needed, not only what is left over.

What happens in communitarian terms is very unequal according to the terrain from which we speak and the prior solidity of that common ground. While the *mutirão* is a way of organizing common work in many traditional and peripheral communities in Brazil, in the European context, these forms of common work hold much less weight and often don't even have their own name. In cases in which they are named (the *auzolan* in Basque Country), we can say that they tend to be pale comparisons, remainders of a form of work that was important in its day and that, in any case, it is a matter of recuperating, more than preserving.

These very different points of departure give rise to very uneven responses in the face of attacks from the system (which engulfs networks in logics that de-activate them) and especially in crisis moments, such as the present.

In Brazil, in territories where there is still a significant peasant economy (for example, in *quilombola*

territories), there is a strong capacity for re-articulation and resistance. In the Basque and Spanish contexts, the capacity for community response has generally been weak, but has been stronger in agro-ecological networks, as well as in those articulated around concrete and urgent material needs. In Chile, after the dictatorship's erasure of the communitarian, which was not reversed by later governments, a social uprising has taken place in which the people have united to speak about the society that they want to construct. They have managed not only to keep that process going, but even to strengthen it with the COVID crisis, self-organizing to maintain processes of sustaining life.

How can we strengthen the community? First of all, we need to be able to see the existing communitarian fabric and understand how communitarian networks contribute to processes of sustaining life. A first element of resistance consists of understanding and valuing the existing communitarian networks (as well as those that are connected to local public institutions through a thread of continuity).

In order to see the community, we cannot base our view on the angle offered by the system. From that perspective "we don't see" the community, because the communitarian lies in its margins and cannot be cap-

tured by the hegemonic logic and gaze. Thus, for example, we cannot understand the way of establishing prices and defining exchanges between groups of agricultural producers and persons consuming those goods when those exchanges are based on solidarity. Those are agreements that employ logics other than that of maximizing profit and cannot be reduced to mimicking market prices, since other elements intervene, such as the contribution to *mutirão*, time availability in relation to responsibilities for care or factors relating to nature (such as the fertility of the soil).

From here, how can we strengthen communitarian resistance? We think that there are, at least, three critical elements. The first element is to look inwards. All social networks are traversed by privileges and, if we cannot see them and push ourselves to dismantle them, the communitarian fabric that we build will be weak and, above all, it won't weave that feminist, antiracist, and class-based solidarity of which we have spoken. Taking a critical look at ourselves implies not falling into acritical celebration, as well as paying special attention to the dynamics of control that can be deployed at the community level.

Looking at ourselves critically also means asking ourselves what we are afraid of when we do not dare to dream, think well and learn together. At times, we renounce

greater amounts of freedom than that which is taken away from us. When this happens, we have to collectively ask ourselves what we are afraid of. The second element is that strengthening the community requires the capacity for political critique, to connect the role of networks in defense of life with a broad political vision that understands the systematic attack against life. That is what happens when, for example, agro-ecological networks are able to politicize food issues, connecting urban and rural scenarios, shortening the distances between them.

And that is the third element of strengthening community: weaving alliances, between a multiplicity of territories, between the city and the countryside, between the local and the global.

We think that practices that bring together agro-ecology, food sovereignty, and the solidarity economy have great potential when we understand them as wagers that go beyond the peasant world and traverse all of us, in the city and the countryside. From there, they allow us to rethink the territories over which we weave community in the register of feminist repeasantization.

5. A Changing World: Digitalization

Addressing digitalization seems necessary in order to comprehend the changing world. We orient our attempt to understand it toward action: do we think about digitalization as a new form of control and dispossession or as a new common to build? How is it inserted in the capital-life conflict and what are (if there are any) the possibilities for disputing technology?

5.1. What do We Mean by Digitalization?

Digitalization is not limited to the transformation of information and parts of our lives into a binary language processed by computers, but is a process that is developed alongside what is known as datafication. Datafication refers to massive data collection and processing, as well as the fact that capital accumulation is increasingly more dependent on that data.

The expansion of the capacity to store and process data has driven the logic of accumulation, that is not only based on collecting data, but also on constantly increasing data generation. That accelerated and intensified process is added to mechanisms of capital expansion (accumulation/dispossession) over our lives (bodies, labor, territories, and time).

The idea that "data is the new petroleum" is very widespread, but we think it is important to understand, as we said above, the idea of data generation. By data generation we are referring to much more than what occurs on social media. We are talking about the internet of things, agriculture 4.0, and constantly growing data banks of genetic materials (human and non-human), among other examples. The more appropriate formulation might be "data as capital," which includes data extraction, ownership, and processing as fundamental aspects of that accumulation process. In that sense, we can understand the neocolonialist initiatives (presented as "social") by large corporations that "invest" in connecting communities and poor countries to the internet, with their media and platforms, extracting data that take ownership of, as power and control.

Datafication develops within the framework of financialized capitalism, within the regulations of trade

agreements that claimed they were freeing trade (while ensuring intellectual property) and in the absence of regulation of what will be developed by digital technologies controlled by transnational corporations (which is also related to the authoritarianism of the market and attacks on democracy).

Massive data collection does not only occur when we use social media, but also with a very defined population-objective. In Brazil, there is a growing data bank that records genetic data of incarcerated persons, that, in turn, is shared with private and foreign companies. The logic goes as follows: the bigger the data bank, the greater the capacity to predict behaviors based on identified patterns and, therefore, the greater the possibility of control and business.

It is no small thing that this advance has taken place over the most attacked and subjugated bodies in our societies, such as the incarcerated Black population and the migrant population.

This process is configured through a fabric of social relations that, in turn, it transforms. It expands at an accelerated rate, as do the transformations it provokes, which deepen and complicate the system of multiple domination. We can recall that platform-companies such

as Uber and Airbnb emerged after the 2008 crisis, and have had very broad impacts on the precarization of life.

Digital technologies are, more than tools, "places," infrastructures, and platforms from which life, the economy, and politics are carried out, where public policies and cities are organized. Therefore, how they operate matters, but their opacity is precisely a key characteristic of corporate digital technologies. Although algorithms increasingly manage platforms and services, their modes of operation and selection criteria are not clear. While the process is accelerated in terms of control and accumulation, it is not accompanied by a parallel process of the acceleration of understanding the uses and abuses of corporations, even by social movements.

The logic operated by corporate power, in which data becomes a commodity for capital accumulation and its control mechanisms, can be clearly seen in datafication. In turn, we observe digitalization from the perspective of the politicization of technologies and the possibility of constructing counter-hegemonic alternatives. Rather than automatically rejecting everything that is digital, we reject the strategy of corporate power that is established against peoples.

5.2. The Hidden Material Basis of Digitalization

Revealing what is hidden behind digital technologies involves understanding the materiality of the "virtual" and the technologies of capital.

Datafication updates neocolonial and imperialist dynamics in order to sustain the unchecked accumulation of data. In other words, the minerals for batteries, the planned obsolescence of apparatuses, and the energy consumed by servers, which process everything from sending short emails to blockchains and "clouds," require land grabs for mining (for example, coltan and lithium) and the hyper-exploitation of labor.

In that dynamic, the physical infrastructure and algorithms owned by corporations progress toward connecting the poorest of the South, establishing cable networks and data flows, profit and more power for corporate data storage and corporate data processing in the North. Artificial intelligence projects, especially so-called neural networks, are those that consume the most energy. As a response, large corporations, such as Microsoft, have compensation projects, which claim to have the goal of achieving carbon neutrality and, going even further, being carbon negative. That is, their activities' carbon emissions and energy consumption would be compen-

sated for by carbon capture projects (for example, forest conservation projects) and the generation of renewable energy. In the same logic as green economy mechanisms (and articulated with them), digital technologies are profoundly anchored in territories, where they continue the logic of dispossession and appropriation.

The materiality of digital technologies is also shaped by labor, which we understand in a broad sense. It articulates the transformations that digital technologies promote in labor relations, just as it does for jobs involved in the production process itself (from the aforementioned materiality of digital technologies to the production/generation of data that will later be extracted).

When the "end of work" because of digitalization is spoken of, emphasis is placed on the quantity of jobs that could disappear because they would be directly replaced by technology and automation. Although this is a very significant quantity, in feminist economics we also take into account the whole set of hidden or necessary jobs that, combined, enable the system to function. That is, there is other work, which is not taken into account in many analyses, that is often made precarious and exploited at an accelerated pace, that remains hidden and without which that technology would not be viable. We are referring to work in mines, in the as-

sembly factories of communication devices, as well as the work that maintains the infrastructure where this whole digital process takes place: for example, who cleans the offices where the computers are located?

Data does not exist in the abstract. It is not floating in the air waiting to be collected. Data is produced based on our relations and interactions, our lives in common, what we do when we are connected or in our everyday routines. We should not lose sight of that point: the work that sustain life continue being fundamental for the accumulation of data as well as capital. The work that produces those technologies should be rendered visible, as well as the conditions in which it takes place. That is the case, for example, of the small task or micro jobs that make artificial intelligence possible (as well as, for example, artificial-artificial intelligence, of Amazon Mechanical Turk), and that which could be considered a type of unpaid labor, such as the people who correct a word or expression in an automatic translation by Google or tag someone in a Facebook photo.

The so-called Uberization of work has reached an unprecedented scale, such as in the Brazilian situation of women working for corporations such as Avon, which is precarious and informal, in which the labor relation with the company is not recognized. It is a process that, more

broadly, is called platformization, which affects ever more sectors, including the care sector.

Remote work, which was already presented as an "option" for women's flexibility, has expanded during the pandemic with productivity management instruments that tend to control labor processes even more, as well as increasingly long work days.

The demand for the "right to disconnect" starts to appear as part of labor rights, in a scenario in which precarization, informality, and the absence of rights are the increasingly the rule. Related to this is control of work (and workers' time) through by applications tracking deliveries and services (platform-companies), direct evaluation by consumers, etc. It is worth reiterating that all of this involves the massive production of data, profiles, and predictions.

5.3. Corporate Control and Resistance

For large corporations, the goal is to massively extract, store, and process data, promoting its naturalization along with the perspective that data expresses reality, which then generates confidence in certain forms of processing it that are considered unquestionable. Psychometrics, the detailed profile that corporations now

have of people, and how they use that data, has very profound implications including our subjectivities, our wills, and desires, always in the sense of control and consumption, of the expropriation of subjectivities.

Anticipating and predicting behaviors are ways of selling more products and influencing all types of decisions, including political ones. Digital technologies, as well as others, are not neutral, they reproduce biases (which have been proven in the racist algorithms of corporate platforms such as Twitter and Zoom). Additionally, they impact public policies, such as security technologies (for example, facial recognition systems that are more likely to commit errors when identifying Black women) and health technologies (in which algorithms decide who receives access to health care services and who does not).

Large corporations converge on datafication: Microsoft, Google, and Apple invest in platforms for health, care, agriculture, and are articulated with states, even to the point of privatizing the whole population's data (as in Brazil), claiming that they are better able to guarantee data security. We can see this as a dispute over confidence, that makes people uncritically "accept" the terms of (public and private) data extraction, as if it could not be any other way. And, in that same dispute over confidence, agriculture is also digitized, with the argument

that it guarantees the traceability of food for those who consume in cities or using climate issues as justification.

A series of technologies converge and reshape capital's forms of control over human and non-human life, for example, to manipulate our bodies, for bio-surveillance, genetic markets, etc. Being able to see the scope of that process is fundamental for understanding what happens, constructing resistance and alternatives, or at least imagining them, rejecting TINA 4.0[16]. Returning to our initial question in this section, it seems important to create a space for this debate within the feminist movement, and also to pursue questions that movements have raised for a long time about resisting technologies of control and death, since technology, including digital technologies, – like all forms of knowledge – is not neutral. There are real people who program the algorithms, people embedded in social relations and that present views and objectives oriented toward their own interests.

The possibilities for disputing technology and the digital as a new common to be constructed are connected with two key aspects: the broad defense of public services, since

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16   A reference to Margaret Thatcher's affirmation: "there is no alternative", which defines neoliberal hegemony, here in its current reformulation that integrates so-called 4.0 digital industrial processes.

corporations advance hand-in-hand with the privatization of increasingly more areas of life, and the need of organization of political subjects capable of carrying out this dispute, of building alliances between popular movements and collectives that construct technologies from below for the sustainability of life.

Thus, there is a big difference between corporate technologies and software and experiences that take place in the margins of the accumulation circuit.

The open-source software movement, in its processes creating and building operating systems, information, and software, has also constructed community, with principles that are in opposition to private property. Behind each open-source software tool there is an active community in which codes are developed, changed, and reviewed, where people teach one another and seek help in solving user questions, that is what creates security and confidence.

We think that there are many connections between open-source software and agro-ecology, precisely due to that relation of closeness and proximity. It is based on that relationship that trust is established. These are logics, in any case, that contrast with the traceability of agribusiness corporations or the antiviruses of private software companies.

"How" technology is made is also a target of capture and we are seeing "collaborative economy" initiatives popping up in the arena of technology. But here the how must also be linked to the what for, for whom, based on what type of infrastructure and property.

Those elements connect our discussion about digitalization with the previous sections, especially the issue of the body-time-territory interconnection, that even establish limits and are key for imagining alternative paths. Open-source software platforms, on shared servers[17], can imply, for those of us who are less accustomed to them, slowing down, recognizing the time variable that is so important in restarting our lives in common, in an emancipatory register. Hence the reasoning behind establishing bodies as the limit to the artificialization of life, of defending territories from the extractive logic that maintains that datafication structure. Those computers, cables, connections need electricity, etc., and we live on a finite planet. This leads to new questions: is it

[17]   In the original Spanish, the word *servidora* is used, feminizing the usually masculine term to refer to servers, as a specifically feminist form of talking about servers as a practice of feminist collectives active in the area of technology that emphasize the importance of having autonomous servers, server networks guaranteed by feminist technology collective and open-source software as a form of having control over our data and information, without going through the networks and infrastructures of corporations. – Translator.

possible (and desirable) for this system to expand to the whole world? What will materially sustain that alternative digitalization that we are to build? For it to be an alternative, would it need to consume less energy?

We also connect the discussion about digitalization with possibilities for reinforcing or constructing community. We understand that digital technologies can be a very useful tool for connecting community if we articulate them based on a common logic, removing them from the domain of corporate power. The digital helps us build in common, but we know that the digital cannot be the only terrain on which to build community. The community requires territory, it requires land and the encounter between bodies.

In many parts of the world, there are groups of women and many activist collectives that organize to construct activist and feminist digital technologies, and they employ principles in their practices that are opposed to those of datafication. For example, there are feminist collectives that develop videoconferencing platforms that, by design, do not store any data of participants, of who speaks, etc. In other words, data recording, collecting, and tracking is not a necessary condition for the digital, but for the accumulation of data as capital.

Building more alliances and common process- es through feminism and activist collectives regarding technology is a way to broaden comprehension, raise new questions, find answers, encourage struggles, and weave collective alternatives.

6. Questions for Feminist Action

Finishing writing this text does not represent a closure. Our overarching questions about the re-articulation of the system of dispossesses us and the resistance that we put forth remain open. They are part of a living and always unfinished process. SOF and XXK will continue working together along this line and getting involved with many others along the way. We have many doubts, but we are certain about a few things, which we would like to share with our readers.

We understand that any theoretical, conceptual, or analytical elaboration must always be linked to action. We want a language to name realities to be construct-ed. We want the realities that we build to modify our words. We understand all knowledge as linked to a po-litical subject. We can debate what to call work or how work is changing in order to be able to imagine and de-

ploy emancipated forms of work. Based on other ways of working, we question the very idea of work, how we measure and value it. There is no knowledge without action, but nor can there be any action that does not emerge from a collective wisdom with the capacity for critical reflection.

Our resistances are rooted in the territory, they emphasize weaving community in the local arena, where long term memory and the present time come together, where individual bodies inhabit, forming a collective body, in which processes of the sustainability of life occur. "Local" is something that happens on the land, and there is always land: in the countryside and also in cities. But the local is suffocated if it does not build networks with other territories. In a hyper-connected world, the local is suffocated by global corporate power if it does not weave networks of complicity and global resistance.

The internationalism that emerges from the commitment to the territory is our political wager. That feminist and antiracist internationalism is both a strategy to resist locally and a form of constructing diverse community. And, at the same time, the rootedness in the territory that is expanded with internationalism learns from struggles for the common, from food sovereignty and agro-ecological practices.

And, in this internationalism, open-source digital technologies placed at the service of communities are a very useful tool. Without them, none of what is now in your hands would have been possible.

Together and rebellious. Those words, shared in the seminar which nourished this text, are a good reflection on the wager for constructing a political subject with the power to name the capital-life conflict that we are up against and the very unequal ways in which that conflict lands in our concrete lives. We are together because we wager on collective action and knowledges. Because our lives are valuable. And we are rebellious we because we know ourselves to be diverse and we understand that there is an immense power in diversity. But we are also rebellious because we recognize the inequalities between us and we are committed to addressing them head on and questioning the relations of privilege/oppression in which we are situated.

Together and rebellious rooted in our territories, we want to connect internationally and construct active knowledges for resistance in defense of life in the present.

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to Continue Exploring

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