

Spanish State: The Third Congress of Anticapitalistas - Reorganising anticapitalism so that we can move forward

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Under the theme of “Making Revolution Possible: Organise to Advance”, the Third Congress of Anticapitalistas, scheduled for 2020 and postponed due to the pandemic, was held on December 11 and 12, 2021.

“For the practical forces unleashed in a given historical moment to be effective and expansive, it is necessary to build on the basis of a determined practice a theory that, by coinciding and identifying itself with the decisive elements of that same practice, accelerates the historical process in the act itself, making that practice more homogeneous, coherent and effective in all its aspects” A Gramsci

Under the theme of “Making Revolution Possible: Organise to Advance”, the Third Congress of Anticapitalistas, scheduled for 2020 and postponed due to the pandemic, was held on December 11 and 12, 2021. This Congress, unlike the previous one, was framed by a changed political and social situation, of an uncertain length and breadth, and which requires a deep rethinking of our strategy along with the revolutionary tasks associated with the construction of a new anti-capitalist political subject with a capacity to take on the enormous challenges that we face.

It is not easy to characterise this new phase. However, movements are taking place on the scale of the Spanish state as well as that of the European and global, that allow us to outline, without risk of making mistakes, the contours of a world system characterised by increasing inequalities and conflict, both within societies and between countries, resulting from greater exploitation by capital.

The global situation in the era of COVID is marked by a new phase of economic crisis that accentuates the tendencies for rates of profit to decline which have accompanied capitalism for decades, a fact that will accelerate the process of the reorganisation of world actors and powers in a strong fight to redefine the hegemon of this new globalisation. That is why we think that the COVID crisis, although contingent, has structural roots directly associated with the current economic system. It is about a new race for resources, with the appearance of new forms of plunder of impoverished countries, closely linked to the eco-social crisis due to resources being finite, the destructive over-exploitation of nature and the blocking of the possibilities of development of capitalism, which will divide the world into zones of influence that compete with each other and will condition new political developments.

Capital no longer has anywhere to go and needs to reboot its cycles of recovery. At the level of internal accumulation, there are three key factors that have been observed since the previous crisis: commercialisation of public services, attacks on wages and exclusion of everything related to social reproduction from the field of rights. Far from having generated less state, neoliberalism has reinforced it and turned it into a key instrument for financing capital and legislating in favour of its interests, while genuine state intervention to reduce inequalities and poverty is withdrawn.

Although, because of the COVID crisis, some governments are implementing plans through monetary mechanisms (relaxation of ordoliberal rules on deficit, relaunch of sovereign debt, etc.) to expand public spending to boost consumption and alleviate the social collapse of large sectors of the population these are still instruments to drive the recovery of capital gains.

Regarding the European Union, its indisputable decline is reflected in the economic crisis, growing center-periphery inequalities and the paralysis of its political framework, while the number of states governed by the extreme right that challenge this institutional architecture increases and show a great capacity to set the European agenda. For its part, the left is extremely weakened, with Greece and the defeat of popular hopes that the “no” vote aroused, set as the indisputable turning point. Although a dismemberment of the EU in the form of a withdrawal led by the extreme right in its key members would accelerate a reactionary recomposition, any left government worth its salt must confront the limits imposed by the EU through disobedience to the Treaties and advancing towards a rupture by key popular sectors while seeking international alliances and extending its struggle, generating contradictions at the very core of other countries. In terms of the construction of a political subject, our proposal seeks a massive alliance of European workers against their respective bourgeoisies. In other words, starting from the class struggle in each state, it is necessary to advance in supranational forms of collaboration, seeking solutions on a European scale and trying to build global social and political movements firmly rooted in local reality.

Tendencies and Counterweights in the Neoliberal Crisis

The main political expressions that have arisen from this reconfiguration of the world scene are, principally, the rise of the extreme right and organic crises and revolts. It is important to clearly characterise the new authoritarianisms, defining their differences with classical fascism but also their lines of continuity, something which is important to do so that we can combat frivolous and instrumentalist concepts which justify alliances with the elites around an abstract defense of constitutional regimes, regimes in which democratic rights are being increasingly degraded. Our anti-fascist proposal is not popular frontism (which renounces the socialist rupture by linking the defense of democracy to the renunciation of the class struggle through a pact with the bourgeoisie and its political representatives), nor is it defensive and identity-based anti-fascism. On the contrary, we propose the recomposition of the unity of the working class in a broad sense, first understanding that the current working class is diverse and, therefore, that the migrant working class is part of the labour movement, and second, that not only is it about improving conditions but also about carrying out reforms that favour the working class's structural position in society and its ability to fight. In order to rebuild an emancipatory class movement we must rely on all movements (union, environmental, feminist, lgtbiq, anti-racist, etc.) because they are inherent to the labor-capital struggle and indispensable to ending all forms of oppression and institutions such as patriarchy, thus avoiding ecological collapse. That is why it is important to direct all efforts towards the construction of an alliance of emancipatory movements and to develop organisational formulas that identify where the nodes of working-class structural power lay, those capable of attacking capital in the field of production (what strike? and in which sectors is it most effective today?) and reproduction (feminist strike).

The B-side of the rise of the extreme right and of the weaknesses of the left are the organic crises and its uncohered form, which express a high degree of unease and which, moreover, initially lacked a political framework and project, as evidenced by the Chilean process. Bluntly put, the success of these spontaneous social outbursts will depend on the living fabric that exists in the societies where they occur, and on their ability to provide organisational support and political direction to the movement. It is therefore urgent that the left prepare ourselves for these events and to be able to defend ourselves against processes which seek to restore social consensus, in order to advance towards political reorganisation. We have no doubt that, as the cracks of inequality deepen, these

episodes will become more frequent and intense; we cannot allow them to be repaired by force of repression.

These tendencies also have their correlation in the Spanish State. After an intense political cycle of left ascent that began with the crisis of 2008 and gave way, to the irruption of partisan and social political expressions (15M, Podemos, Catalan referendum, etc), more than a decade later these have led to a brick wall, plunging broad sectors of society into political disaffection and, what is more worrying, accelerating a demobilisation that is already widespread. This is a retreat that even extends to social and union movements that are progressively losing space and social power, combat capacity and autonomy and that have adopted a logic of both support for and negotiation with the government.

Considering that, due to the semi-peripheral condition of the Spanish economy within the international division of labor (tourism, dismantled industry and with low added value, etc.) the current crisis is hitting our class heavily (especially women, youth and the migrant population) the current coalition government is a government incapable of carrying out the forceful reforms that could reverse the precarious situation of more and more layers of society. Although it is managing to temporarily mute the possibilities of protest, it is nowhere near reaching the minimum programmatic goals that constituted its modest electoral promises thus demonstrating its inability to confront large companies, such as energy companies or vulture funds. Neither has it intervened favourably towards the population in the field of civil liberties and rights. Quite the contrary, as we have seen in Cádiz with the fierce repression against those who legitimately exercise their right to strike or with the savage sentences against the six kids from Zaragoza.

We are, therefore, heading towards the perpetuation of a model in decline (precariousness, low wages, structural weakness and looting of public services) that, paradoxically, coexists with a weak tendency towards an ongoing macroeconomic recovery. A dialectical relationship exists between very deep social inequality and ecological deterioration in the medium and long term, and a partial recovery in the short, based on bail-outs of industry, helps companies with public money that sooner or later will turn into more debt and cuts, or cosmetic measures such as the Ingreso Mínimo Vital/Minimum Living Income (IMV). A dialectical relationship that will generate forms of struggle in the field of class antagonism, but also with internal repercussions in terms of the configuration of the state and its national territorial structure ("empty Spain") as well as emerging new territorial tensions and discontent that can take different forms, not necessarily on the left.

New Tasks in the Face of Difficult Challenges

Considering this new scenario in which we find ourselves, which is very different from the previous one, static and muddy although with possible unexpected irruptions, we need to readapt the sense of the organisation, deepening the construction of an active and militant party, radically democratic in its internal organisation and towards society and independent of economic and state powers. A party that launches new ideas and a project for an eco-socialist society alternative to capitalism based on the active pluralist participation of citizens in decision-making through democratic planning. This also implies, while we continue to intervene in specific joint struggles and in the loyal construction of the various movements, that we promote propaganda in defense of class independence and programmatic alternatives, as well as the uncompromising search for greater cohesion and coherence in the approaches that are formulated. All this whilst tackling an unavoidable task: laying the milestones of a strategy that enables this radical social change.

If in the 15M phase we tried to translate all challenges and indignation into organisation, we now have to translate it into slogans, ideas and strong proposals that broaden the awareness of the working and popular majorities about the need to stop this drift in its tracks and which pose class antagonism as the central axis in this new phase. We must contribute within social movements to

consolidate their autonomy from the state from a disruptive and class point of view, as well as to convince them of the need to put into practice unity of action and programmatic alliances as the only way to resist, to rebuild the popular movements and seize the momentum needed to confront the authoritarian neoliberalism that rules the world.

It is also about thinking about a constituent proposal that, as is clear time and again in the history of the Spanish State, will have to be based on an alliance between emancipatory movements and nations without a State. We defend the right of self-determination in a coherent way, in order to think of new confederal and republican models based on the freedom of peoples. In this current regime that is not possible; nor is it possible under the leadership of the elites who lead the national-popular movements of the stateless nations. In this sense, we do not renounce making political-electoral wagers that fight to ensure that the breaches opening up remain open, as is the case with Adelante Andalucía.

Recalling Bensaïd, we are aware that we must not fall into a kind of abstract movementism. The recomposition and strengthening of the social is fundamental as well as being a precondition for the construction of a socialist, environmentalist and feminist project that combines massive support with radicalism. We know that this has its rhythms, and that history is a pendulum where you have to know how to move with opportunities both open and closed. That is why we clearly bet on building a political force capable of implanting itself in the real movement, but that also aspires to create a strategic leadership that contests the question of power in the long term: that is, which class governs. Far from all political impatience and all sectarian fickleness (which is the great risk of revolutionary projects in times of ebb, more concerned with marking their tiny territory and stealing a militant from whoever they have next to them), we assume that the pace is not simply set by our desires, even though we will endeavour to build a collective will.

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P.S.

- Fourth International. : <https://fourth.international/en/europe/405>
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