

F R E E #9 B E R L I N



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Front cover photo: billboard, Autonomous Center, Cologne (photo: Lily Errant). Our publications are available at ProQM, Berlin. With love and respect: Krenak Indigenous Community, Solidarity Feminism Bolivia, AZ K, Lesbian Herstory Archives. Thanks to Octavio Camargo & the crew / Free Berlin is free. Pass it on.

ANARCHISM AND INDIGENOUS RESISTANCE IN BOLIVIA: INTERVIEW WITH SILVIA RIVERA CUSICANQUI

Andalusia Knoll, October 16, 2007

Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui is a Bolivian feminist, sociologist, historian, and subaltern theorist. She draws upon anarchist theory as well as Quechua and Aymara cosmologies. She is a former director and longtime member of the Taller de Historia Oral Andina.

The South American Nation of Bolivia has filled the headlines of the global press with their fight against water privatization, struggle for nationalization of Gas, non-compliance with Free Trade policies and the election of South America's first indigenous president Evo Morales. These struggles are rooted in the long history of Indigenous resistance to colonialism and imperialism in Bolivia. In an interview conducted during her recent stay in Pittsburgh, subaltern theorist, Aymara Sociologist and Historian Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, discussed Bolivian Anarchism, the health benefits of the Coca plant and the Cocaleros (Coca Growers) fight for sovereignty.

Andalusia: Could you talk about some of the things that you have uncovered in your research about Anarchism in Bolivia as related to the struggles of the Aymara and Quecha people?

Silvia: We started as an Aymara collective that basically wanted to uncover the Aymara and Quechua struggles and we discovered that there were many connections with Urban Aymara communities that had organizations linked both to the indigenous communities and they were linked to the union movement which in the 20s was basically anarchist.

What happened in Bolivia is that there had been two official histories: the official history written by the Nationalist Party—MNR—that basically denies all the agency of both workers and peasants and indigenous peoples; and the official history of the Left that forgets about anything that was not Marxist, thus eclipsing or distorting the autonomous history of anarchist unions.

So, also it's the links between the anarchists and the indigenous people that gave them another nuance because communities are self-sustained entities and they basically are places where an anti-authoritarian type of organization can take root. They don't need this leadership that is like permanent leadership. The communities have leaders but as a rotational thing that is a service to the community. It's kind of a burden to be a leader for a community, you know? It's something you do once in a lifetime and you do because you ought to do, and that the community says it's your turn or the turn of your family. So, that creates a totally different relationship with power structures and, in a way, it decolonizes power and, to a certain extent, gives it back to the people.

That is what fascinated us most about the communities

and, on the other hand, it led us to discover that communities were not only rural but also urban and worked with Luis Cusicanqui and other anarchist leaders because they had such an affinity between the way they saw struggle, autonomy, domination, and oppression.

Andalusia: Anarchism in general, I think, is perceived as a European tradition that then has been brought to the United States and places like Argentina and people don't generally associate anarchism with places like Bolivia or places in Africa, etcetera. Could you talk about how anarchism was in line with many of the beliefs of the Aymara and Quechua people and the way their communities were governed?

Silvia: A general point of departure of Bolivian history with the rest of Latin America is that many (especially anarchist) have had to go through the filter of their own traditions of struggle that are basically anti-colonial. So, what happened is that there was like a mutual breeding, a mutual fertilization of thought and an ability to interpret universal doctrine that is basically European doctrine in Bolivian, Chola and Aymara terms.

That's why Bolivian anarchism is so important, because it has its basis in the grassroots urban unions because most urban workers were also Indian in Bolivia and still are. 62 percent of the population in Bolivia self-identify as Indigenous, as Aymara, Quechua, Guarani and many other Indigenous peoples.

So we have a majority, even in urban settings and therefore, have a particular brand of anarchism. I would say it is Anarcho-Indianism. And also it is Anarcho-Indianism-Feminism because the Chola figure, the women, the female fighter, the female organizer is part of Bolivian daily life. If you have been there you know what the market looks like, how strong these women are, how in solidarity they are when there is a march coming from the Cocaleros, where there is this sacrifice marches that last ten, twenty days without much to eat. These women prepare these huge pots of soup they give away to the poorest people. They have such a tradition of union associations that self-organize. And they self-organize basically in the administration of space. The market is a space and it's very symbolic that they take over this space and just grab it from the municipality or from the central state.

So, you have a very specific Chola brand of anarchism that explains why it was so attractive for so, so

many people. And it explains why one of the most salient things in Bolivian and anarchist history is that their leaders made their speeches in Aymara. And just thinking that another non-western language, non-European language is filtering the thoughts of anarchists and helping to phrase, to express the rage, the proposals, the ideas; it gives such richness, you know? In Aymara you can say, “us” in four different ways.

Andalusia: Then how do these struggles of Indigenous people in the 20s and 30s relate to struggles against neo-liberalism today?

Silvia: Liberalism made their big reforms in the late 19th century which were anti-Indian reforms. They killed the market for Indigenous crafts and goods. They took Indian lands. They jailed all the leaders of the communities. They wanted them to become servants of the haciendas and have a quiet and domesticated, low-paid labor force in the mines and in the factories.

You have a second liberalism here now that has basically the same thing except for the issue of haciendas. Haciendas are out of date in Bolivia because of agrarian reform. Yet there is still a need for agrarian reform because the big land ownership has moved, it has been displaced to the lowlands and still, it's doing the same thing. It's usurping indigenous lands.

So you have basically the same set of problems and aggressions and you obviously have cultural differences, a cultural gap because then, at those times, you didn't have much of a literate working class, or literate leadership in the communities. The communities had many problems just trying to understand the language of the documents that decreed their extinction, or decreed their laws against them. So they created a movement in favor of schools. That was another link with the workers because the workers, especially the anarchists, had their own self-organized schools. The indigenous communities—came in search for support for their schools and found a very fertile terrain in the anarchist unions.

Andalusia: Could you talk more about the struggles of the Cocaleros. Here in the United States there's very little dialogue about their struggle and people don't even realize that there is a difference between coca and cocaine.

Silvia: Well, let me tell you, I have been researching and

every time I come to the U.S. I go to the libraries with one question: “Why is coca so underground, so unknown, so mistreated, so stigmatized?” Why do people believe all these lies. Why can you get any drug but not coca. It's because if coca was a drug you could get it.

And I'm finding a big conspiracy against coca in the late 19th century by the pharmaceutical industry. And it is a conspiracy against people's health in general. But the conspiracy against coca was particularly mean and ill because it was a conspiracy against a people. The Indians who had been in touch with coca for millennia and have been able to use it in a variety of ways; as a mild stimulant for work, as a ritual item, as a recreational commodity that you chew in parties, in wakes, in weddings, or even as a symbol of identity and of struggle.

So, coca leaves are almost pervasively present in the Bolivian context but there is like this press blindness, blindness of the media. Blindness of the media that in many senses is dictated by the U.S. embassy, you know? It's the U.S. embassy that dictates the policy on coca and blackmails the government so that if we don't do as they say, the funds for development or, I don't know, the funds they give to the Bolivian government will be cut. I always said to the leaders, “Let them cut! We won't die! And we can't live forever on somebody else's alimony.”

But I think it's hard because really there is a problem of poverty; but poverty in Bolivia is constructed, it's a result of bad policies! And it's a result of being robbed of our resources. And so I think the coca issue is very, very enlightening in terms of what the power of interests of corporations can do to truth, yeah. Just veil the truth to such an extent that you cannot separate; common sense has been overcome by this absurd idea that coca is cocaine. I have chewed coca since I was 16 years old. When I came to the states, of course you miss everything you don't have, but I'm not in an abstinence syndrome. I have an abstinence syndrome of coffee! When I quit coffee I had symptoms of being addicted to coffee but the coca leaves are not addictive. I just chew them and enjoy them everyday and if I don't have them I don't chew them and that's it. And I'm very healthy and I think so many people would be rid of osteoporosis and calcium deficits and gastric disorders and obesity and cardio-vascular problems and diabetes.

And that's why it is an enemy of the pharmaceuticals; because we wouldn't need all their shit! All their pills, all their venoms that make us believe that they are

good and then they have side effects and then you go back, then they give you another thing, then you keep on going back and then you end up with having a full pharmacy in your drawer and then you feel miserable and you have lost control of your life. That's what they want and that's what we're against and coca is our big, big shield against companies taking over our bodies.

Andalusia: Then earlier you had mentioned one of the marches of the Cocaleros. Could you talk about some of the actions that people have taken to defend their rights to grow coca and their sovereignty?

Silvia: Yes. Well, I like to talk about things I really know first and there have been many, many marches. One of the most impressive ones was in 1994 and it is really very incredible to be a part of one of these events. And in 1998 when things were getting really bad because of forced eradication and assassinations of Cocaleros and army raids where they went into the coca fields and destroyed everything was a daily occurrence. And there was this big march that I joined, more or less, half-way; more than half-way. And I was able to get into the rank and file Cocaleros within the march and see how there is this Ghandian ethics of self-sacrifice accompanied with coca. It's also a Ghandian ethics of not eating too much because you actually lose strength if you treat yourself too much. Eating is ok but if you engage in this, it's the spirit that carries your body. It is the force of the spirit and the force of the belief that goes and carries your body. And so your body has to be light and that's why you learn a lot about ethics when you do this type of struggle. And, on the other hand, you do some learning of solidarity, community, and self-help, and also sovereignty over the body. You are doing a self-inflicted sacrifice. But you're doing a sacrifice for a cause that is for the good of many people and it really feeds your spirit. It is something very important to have something beyond your own belly and to go for something beyond your own belly; and also to go for a cause that is for the whole of the Bolivian people because sovereignty is the missed task. No revolution of whatever kind—liberal revolution, nationalist revolution, Leftist—has really been freed from Imperialism, freed from colonial domination.

So, that task requires all the strength and these marches, vigils and hunger strikes have been, always, a typical characteristic of the Bolivian people. A peaceful

type of non-violent actions—but so massive! so massive!—where people are ready to die. And that generosity, to be able to spare your own life, is very, very heart lifting, you know? And so, it gives people a strength to overcome many obstacles, to overthrow governments, and to even take governments. And so, I think that's a result of our strength; our collective strength.

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This interview originally appeared on Rustbelt Radio, the Pittsburgh Indymedia's weekly review of news from the grassroots. To hear the complete interview you can go to <http://pittsburgh.indymedia.org/news/2007/03/26831.php> and to listen to Rustbelt Radio you can go to <http://radio.indypgh.org>



“The predatory capitalist system is putting at risk the lives not only of our communities, but of the entire planet. In the face of this, it is important to take into account that women are the caretakers of life, and this puts us in the front line in the struggle for the defence of collective rights.”

Bertha Bejarano, indigenous leader.
March in Defence of the Isiboro-Sécure
National Park and Indigenous Territory (TIPNIS), 2012



CENTRE FOR FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY

Anna Provan

Project Manager at the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (CFFP)

In 2020, the shortcomings of traditional foreign policy structures became abundantly clear in the midst of unprecedented global crisis. However, in the face of adversity, the international community was also offered an opportunity for reflection, for action and for meaningful change. A growing consensus indicates that feminist approaches to foreign policy could be key, not only to fair and equitable regrowth, but to fostering more peaceful societies in general. With ever more states becoming convinced of its transformative potential, this article introduces Feminist Foreign Policy as a viable paradigm for change and as a practical mechanism for justice, equality and peace.

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In 2020, the coronavirus pandemic created a global crisis of an unprecedented scale. However, its effects were not distributed equally among all social groups. Research¹ has shown that women and girls have been disproportionately affected by the outbreak of the pandemic, as existing inequality within our societies has been exposed and exacerbated. As the United Nations has argued, women are more likely to earn less and save less, hold insecure jobs or live close to poverty and have therefore experienced compounded economic impacts in a more concentrated manner.² Indeed, women are more likely to be employed in the informal workforce, they have less access to social protections and form the majority of single-parent households. The increasing burden of unpaid care work caused by school closures and the illness of loved ones has fallen disproportionately on women leading to increasing unemployment and widening inequality. Furthermore, disrupted access to sexual and reproductive health services and soaring rates of domestic violence (with increases of as high as 50% in some countries³) has compounded this economic difficulty to create a real circumstance of insecurity for women during the pandemic. Such developments have caused United Nations Secretary General António Guterres to label the coronavirus a threat capable of “revers[ing] the limited progress that has been made on gender equality and women’s rights”.⁴

In addition to this, the effects of the coronavirus pandemic unfolded in the context of an international system plagued by rising anti-gender sentiment. In recent years, we have witnessed the growth of alarming pushbacks against women’s rights and gender movements born from an “alliance of conservative political ideologies and religious fundamentalisms”.⁵ Groups that were once at the margins of society now occupy a space in the political mainstream and are now able to launch attacks on issues such as sexual and reproductive health and rights with increasing force. Powerful countries from the Global North have participated in and strengthened such a pushback, with support from the United States, for example, emboldening the rhetoric of hostile conservatism. In Europe, we find ourselves among countries that wish to pull out of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and among those who refuse to ratify it. The conclusion of many at the end of 2020, therefore, was that by many indicators the global status of commitments to gender equality is now under threat.

In light of these concerns, a growing consensus has indicated that feminist approaches to policymaking could be key to establishing a more united front against mounting threats to human rights and security. As a normative reorientation of foreign policy that prioritises the achievement of justice, equality and peace, Feminist Foreign Policy provides a fresh perspective on a tradition that has prioritised power, domination and militarism since its inception. Though a move to policymaking of this nature can be seen as a somewhat radical departure from the state-centric *realpolitik*⁶ that is so deeply engrained in the structure of international relations, the select few states that have implemented Feminist Foreign Policies have proven that they are not only idyllic but also actionable and effective. As we evaluate the shortcomings of traditional processes in the face of global issues such as the climate emergency and nuclear proliferation, feminism could be the “radical” tool we need. As former Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallström has maintained, “It’s time to be a little braver in foreign policy”.⁷

What is Feminist Foreign Policy?

To be clear, the integration of gender perspectives in policymaking is not necessarily new. Women's rights have occupied a place in public policy since at least the late 1970s, supported by a wealth of both local and international institutions. However, national reforms have primarily addressed domestic concerns.⁸ In the international context, there exists a broader discourse on promoting gender equality at the multilateral level that has been developing since the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The passing of this resolution was a milestone in, "affirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction"⁹ and stresses the importance of their equal participation in efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. The Women, Peace and Security agenda created a foundation in which Feminist Foreign Policy has its roots. However, Feminist Foreign Policy offers something different still. As political scientists Karin Aggestam and Annika Bergman-Rosamond have argued:

"By adopting the 'f-word' it elevates politics from a broadly consensual orientation of gender mainstreaming¹⁰ toward more controversial politics and specifically towards those who seek to renegotiate and challenge the power hierarchies and gendered institutions that defined foreign and security policies."¹¹

In other words, Feminist Foreign Policy goes further than merely integrating gender perspectives into the existing structures of the international system. Instead, it demands a complete reordering of the concerns of foreign affairs. By focusing on the needs and perspectives of underrepresented groups in foreign policy, Feminist Foreign Policy places the *individual* as the referent of security, rather than the state. The achievement of human security¹² therefore takes precedence. The suggestion is that if states are truly serious about preventing conflict and building sustainable peace, foreign and security policy must be focused on the eradication of injustice and inequality and states must also commit to a meaningful redistribution of power both globally and locally. Feminist Foreign Policy offers a means to do exactly this. It acts as a tool to analyse power: who has it, who uses it, how is it being maintained, and for what purposes? It challenges the status quo of foreign policy by scrutinising who gets to speak or make decisions, who is being overlooked and whose needs and experiences are regarded as important or indeed relevant. A feminist analysis should expose these power dynamics to render the exclusion and marginalisation of particular groups at the international level visible.

A Feminist Foreign Policy also rejects the notion that "more weapons equal more security and that nuclear weapons are the ultimate guarantor of security because they are the biggest, baddest weapons".¹³ As Ray Acheson, Director of Reaching Critical Will, the disarmament programme of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) has argued, these weapons of control, domination and exclusion merely dictate a certain kind of foreign policy - one that equates strength with a capacity and a willingness to use violence. They represent a defence policy that is predicated on the idea that to destroy and eliminate is the best way to afford security to the citizens of a country. A Feminist Foreign Policy maintains that the pursuit of peace is just as important to foreign policy as is national defence.

It is important to note at this point that although implementing feminist strategies in policymaking is ethically important, it is not just a moral obligation – it is an economic and security imperative. As Margot Wallström has put it, Feminist Foreign Policy is smart policy.¹⁴ Women's social, economic and political participation can lead to a more peaceful and prosperous world. For example, closing the gender gap in workforce participation could add as much as 23 trillion EUR to global GDP¹⁵; equalising access to agricultural resources for women could result in 150 million fewer

hungry people on the planet¹⁶; the more women there are in a country's parliament, the lower the incidence of human rights abuses and conflict relapse¹⁷; if women participate in peace negotiations, the probability that the peace agreement will last for at least 15 years increases by 35%¹⁸; and an increase in gender equality in society decreases the overall likelihood of violence, corruption and militarism.¹⁹ Furthermore, perhaps most notably, the number one indicator in determining whether or not a country is peaceful within or outside its borders is its level of gender equality²⁰. This means that one thing is for sure: there will be no peace without feminism.

What Does Feminist Foreign Policy Look Like in Practice?

In 2014, Sweden became the first state to adopt a Feminist Foreign Policy, placing the pursuit of gender equality and women's rights at the centre of its diplomatic agenda. Although this decision can be traced to Sweden's long history of multiparty support for gender equality, the government's explicit decision to use the word "feminist" to describe its policy strategy was a significant move, signalling the beginning of a new era of policymaking for the country and the institutionalisation of a new concept. The new normative approach in Swedish foreign policy has been closely linked to former Foreign Minister Margot Wallström, who is herself a fierce advocate for gender justice, having held the position of the first-ever UN Special Representative on sexual violence in conflict. In her own words, the new direction signified a meaningful pursuit of peace by "standing against the systemic and global subordination of women."²¹

Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy can be defined in terms of three 'Rs': rights, representation and resources. In other words, Sweden strives to advocate for women's rights as human rights and to ensure the full and meaningful enjoyment of human rights for all women and girls. It strives to promote women's representation and participation in decision making processes at all levels and to work towards a more equal and gender-sensitive distribution of global income and resources. It has also been noted that a potential fourth 'R' could be "reality check", that is to consult empirical research and policy reports in order to formulate foreign policy and practice.²² In addition to being a trailblazer of Feminist Foreign Policy, Sweden has been praised for ensuring that its announcement in 2014 was followed by a definition of concrete objectives and measures. It has also demonstrated a commitment to ensure that its own internal structures and capacities reflect the vision of its foreign policy agenda, by declaring its entire government to be a "feminist" one. For example, Stockholm has a dedicated Minister for Gender Equality and each Ministry contains a further designated staff member responsible for women's rights. Sweden has also proven its commitment with tangible funding as 90% of Sweden's Official Development Assistance (ODA) is now earmarked for gender equality.

Since Sweden's landmark announcement a number of other countries have started to engage with similar strategies in foreign policy. For example, in 2017 Canada announced the adoption of its Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP), which aims at eradicating poverty by tackling inequality.²³ On International Women's Day in 2019, France followed the example of Sweden and Canada to announce the introduction of a feminist diplomacy and in January 2020, Mexico became the first country in the Global South to adopt a Feminist Foreign Policy. Similar to Sweden, Mexico's approach is impressively detailed and comprehensive, consisting of five main areas of engagement²⁴ and charting precise timelines by which it aims to achieve an ambitious number of immediate actions across these areas. In sum, although only a small sample of states have implemented strategies of this nature to date, it is safe to say that the Feminist Foreign Policy movement is gaining momentum. Other countries such as Spain, Luxembourg and Cyprus have expressed interest in developing similar foreign policy approaches and in November, the European Parliament voted to adopt a gender-equal foreign and security policy for the EU. With these conversations taking place with increasing precedence around the world, it is clear that the fight for justice and equality is well underway.

The Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy

The Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (CFFP) is an international research, advocacy and consulting organisation based in London and Berlin. In our work, we advocate for the implementation of human-centred foreign policy approaches capable of rebalancing structural inequality and correcting the injustices of patriarchy, militarism, colonialism and imperialism. While we welcome the increasing willingness of states to engage with Feminist Foreign Policy processes, our analysis of existing approaches is not without criticism. Indeed, despite significant steps forward we are concerned by a number of blindspots in their implementation, such as the erasure of the experiences and perspectives of LGBTQI* communities, the continuous export of arms, nuclear proliferation and hostile policies of migration and asylum. With this in mind, we regularly produce research on foreign and security policy from a feminist perspective with policy recommendations designed to fill these implementation gaps and to advance the conversation on truly transformative and inclusive Feminist Foreign Policy.

At the core of our work is a concern for intersectional perspectives. “Intersectionality” is a term that was coined by Black feminist scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe the ways in which social categories such as race, class, (dis)ability, gender, sexual orientation and other individual characteristics can “intersect” to affect lived experience and in some cases to create more concentrated experiences of oppression or marginalisation. Intersectional feminist perspectives have become increasingly prevalent in academia and activism but have remained largely absent in policy practice. CFFP strives to centre these perspectives in order to consider how diverse groups of women, men and non-binary individuals may experience government policies, programmes and initiatives. We offer an alternate rethinking of security from the view point of the most vulnerable with the intention of elevating the experience and agency of marginalised groups and to support the reform of foreign policy for a more just and equitable world.

Although the task of transforming the institution of foreign policy alone can be daunting, together we are powerful. CFFP has amassed a growing network of like-minded individuals, academics, activists and policymakers with which we can engage, learn and grow. We invite you to join us in advocating for foreign policy that champions cooperation over domination, inclusion over exclusion, and emphasises the shared commonalities of human beings rather than enforcing division or maintaining conscious distinctions between “us” and “them”. We invite you to be critical, to challenge the status quo and to demand better and we ask you to start now.

Join the Movement

Become a member!

<https://centreforfeministforeignpolicy.org/membership>

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Notes:

1. United Nations (2020) *Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women*. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/04/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women>
2. Ibid.
3. Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (2020) *Policy Brief: A Feminist Foreign Policy Response to COVID-19* Available at: <https://centreforfeministforeignpolicy.org/policy-brief-a-feminist-foreign-policy-response-to-covid-19>

4. United Nations Secretary General António Guterres (2020) *Put Women and Girls at the Centre of Efforts to Recover from COVID-19*. Available at: <https://www.un.org/en/un-coronavirus-communications-team/put-women-and-girls-centre-efforts-recover-covid-19>
5. UNHRC (2020) *Report of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice*
6. *Realpolitik* is an approach to politics or diplomacy based on pragmatism rather than ideological notions or moral and ethical considerations. It is widely used as a synonym for “power politics” and is understood as a realist approach to foreign policy.
7. The New Yorker (2015) *Who’s Afraid of a Feminist Foreign Policy?* Available at: <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/swedens-feminist-foreign-minister>
8. Foreign Affairs (2020) *The Best Foreign Policy Puts Women at the Centre*. Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2020-03-09/best-foreign-policy-puts-women-center>
9. United Nations (2020) *Landmark Resolution on Women, Peace and Security*. Available at: <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/>
10. Gender mainstreaming is the public policy concept of assessing the different implications for people of different genders of any planned policy action, including legislation and programmes, in all areas and levels. While the adoption of the vocabulary of gender mainstreaming has been widespread at the international level, the concept has been criticised for producing ineffective results linked to poor implementation or insufficient monitoring or follow-up.
11. Aggestam, A. & A. Bergman-Rosamond (2016) ‘Swedish Feminist Foreign Policy in the Making: Ethics, Politics, and Gender’ in *Ethics & International Affairs* Vol. 30 No. 3 pp. 323 - 334
12. Human security is a term that refers to the security of people and communities as opposed to the security of states. Human security recognises that there are several dimensions related to feeling safe, such as freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom from indignity.
13. Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (2018) *Interview with Ray Acheson*. Available at: <https://centreforfeministforeignpolicy.org/interviews/2018/12/5/ray-acheson>
14. Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (2019) *Feminist Foreign Policy - imperative for a more secure and just world*. Available at: <https://centreforfeministforeignpolicy.org/journal/2019/2/16/feminist-foreign-policy-imperative-for-a-more-secure-and-just-world>
15. Foreign Affairs (2020) *The Best Foreign Policy Puts Women at the Centre*. Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2020-03-09/best-foreign-policy-puts-women-center>
16. FAO (2011) *The State of Food and Agriculture*. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/i2050e/i2050e.pdf>
17. Foreign Affairs (2020) *The Best Foreign Policy Puts Women at the Centre*. Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2020-03-09/best-foreign-policy-puts-women-center>
18. UN Women (2015) *A Global Study of the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*. Available at: <https://wps.unwomen.org/index.html>
19. Foreign Affairs (2020) *The Best Foreign Policy Puts Women at the Centre*. Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2020-03-09/best-foreign-policy-puts-women-center>
20. Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (2020) *Policy Brief: A Feminist Foreign Policy Response to COVID-19* Available at: <https://centreforfeministforeignpolicy.org/policy-brief-a-feminist-foreign-policy-response-to-covid-19>
21. The New Yorker (2015) *Who’s Afraid of a Feminist Foreign Policy?* Available at: <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/swedens-feminist-foreign-minister>
22. Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2019) *Handbook: Sweden’s Feminist Foreign Policy*. Available at: <https://www.government.se/4ae557/contentassets/fc115607a4ad4bca913cd8d11c2339dc/handbook---swedens-feminist-foreign-policy.pdf>
23. While the policies Canada has implemented so far do not amount to a comprehensive Feminist Foreign Policy, the state is expected to launch one in the near future, currently in the process of developing an official White Paper.
24. Mexico’s five main elements of engagement have been identified as promoting a foreign policy with a gender perspective and feminist agenda; achieving gender parity within the Mexican foreign office; combatting gender-based violence; making equality visible; and practising intersectional feminism.

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Camp Collapse / Stories from the Future (intervention 24)

ORIGINAL OPEN CALL

Now that the curve has been flattened in the Global North, and the lockdown is slowly being lifted, governments seem all too eager to return to “business-as-usual”. We cannot help but feel distressed at the prospect of going “back to normal” (at full speed). Rather than fast-forwarding, we feel an urgency to pause, and reflect on the very parameters of this “normality”.

The virus left a devastating trail of casualties. But it also momentarily halted the machine of capitalism, and exposed the structural global inequality and the overall unsustainability of the system we live in. It offered a painful reminder of the manner in which this system denies access to support to those already excluded from it.

Why is there such a rush to restart this machine?

In this spirit, with no funding, acknowledging uncertainty as a commonality, we call for allies in Berlin to pause with us, and open up their private thinking to the public, in order to collectively explore the undiscovered land of the post-pandemic. Could this period be a chance to initiate vast and widespread cultural, environmental, economic, social and democratic transformations in systems and mindsets? This project is an attempt at collecting the wide range of contemplations, energies and emotions at play right now, and gives space to critical and utopian thinking in order to start rehearsing new normalities where things could work differently.

In the rush of reactivating the public space after the lockdown, we call out to you - our community, our friends and colleagues as well as other critical minds in Berlin - to contribute to the re-occupation of the public sphere. Each of us will stage, project or frame a moment in (semi-)public space. Put together, these moments will make up a sequence of pauses.

For the duration of a long afternoon in Berlin-Kreuzberg, on Saturday July 4th from 12:00 until 22:00, we will all present public interventions (within current regulations). These can be continuous or momentary, using any possible medium. We welcome artists, designers, architects, musicians, writers, performers, curators, thinkers, educators or anyone else for participation. Activation sites can be balconies, walls, windows, doors, gardens, streets, parks and public spaces in general.

This initiative is based on an open invitation for contributions to a decentralised collective and collaborative participatory event.

Yes, this is short notice, so unfinished, fragmented and experimental contributions are welcomed - but there is a pressing necessity to go public quickly with voices that are currently unheard, and use the post-lockdown momentum. There is no time - this is why we have to pause.

José Délano, Lianne Mol & Yael Sherill
(15th of June, 2020)

beginning
of poem

many suns, on both sides, many twilights, twice daily. the day is a rectangular lump. seven blocks with two suns, are called a week. seven tim

end of poem

ains the same, and three with flat papery days like whiteness. and nothing comes. how many times have the sticky sprouts come up. how many times the days papery and white.



es: a yellow light. a blue light. seven times: a yellow sun. a white sun. the unneeded days get counted. and again the count: a second week, a third, a fourth. a block of thirty suns: a mo

nth. three months of blue skies and sticky sprouts, three months of metallic yellow flowers, birds, and clothes, then three in which everything rem

Day Figures / Ella Ponizovsky Bergelson

**"AND AGAIN THE COUNT:
A SECOND WEEK, A THIRD, A FOURTH.
A BLOCK OF THIRTY SUNS: A MONTH."**

translation:
Jordan Lee Schnee

"Cross Section" is a poem by Deborah Vogel (1902-1942)
published in 1930 on the Yiddish poetry volume "Day Figures".



Patrick Thomas /
Mobile Agitprop Unit

THE LOCKDOWN WAS A TIME OF PAUSE, A MOMENT NOT TO RUSH BACK INTO PRODUCING, WHICH WE ARE TRAINED TO DO. WHEN WE DISCUSSED THAT IN OUR TEAM, WE REALIZED THIS WAS A GOOD POINT TO START FROM. WE DO WANT TO MAKE SOMETHING HAPPEN BUT WE WANT TO PUT THE EMPHASIS ON THE IDEA OF PAUSING BEFORE WE GO BACK TO "NORMALITY". WE FELT THESE VOICES WERE NOT HEARD ENOUGH. WE WANTED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE MOMENT.

Initiator Yael Sherill about the concept of "This is an Intervention!"

THE INTERVENTIONS RELATE TO WHAT IS HAPPENING RIGHT NOW, AND COME UP WITH IDEAS AND APPROACHES TO WHAT COULD HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE, WHEN THIS PANDEMIC ACTUALLY ENDS. HOW COULD WE CHANGE THE WAY WE ARE LIVING? CRITICAL MOMENTS ARE OF COURSE AT THE SAME TIME OPPORTUNITIES. SO WHY NOT GRAB THAT OPPORTUNITY AND TRY TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS.

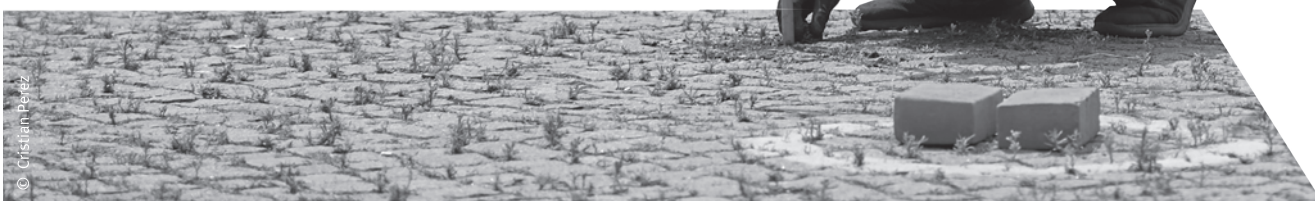
Initiator José Délano about the concept of "This is an Intervention!"



Patrick Thomas /
Mobile Agitprop Unit

Quotes and excerpts from conversations that were held as part of the discursive programme in collaboration with Judith Wajsgus from Cashmere Radio. Find the full podcast on www.cashmereradio.com.

**Marco Montiel-Soto /
Digging for a structure #43
(intervention 4)**



WHAT IS THE CORE OF ART? AND WHAT IS PUBLIC ABOUT PUBLIC ART? IT IS FOR THE PUBLIC, FOR THE COMMONS. AND ESPECIALLY IN THIS TIME, IT IS A WAY TO OVERCOME ISOLATION. HOW CAN WE BE TOGETHER WITHOUT PHYSICALLY BEING IN ONE PLACE? OF COURSE, I AM ABSOLUTELY FOR PAYING ARTISTS GOOD FEES, BUT SOMETIMES IT IS NECESSARY TO GO ON ADVENTURES DRIVEN BY SOLIDARITY, BY GENEROSITY, BY A NEED.

Curator Joanna Warsza about the concept of “Die Balkone”
(Prenzlauer Berg, April 2020)



“Our experience as a result of the pandemic is a privileged one. While in Berlin we debate reopening clubs, others must debate means of survival.” **Joaquin Brandan / We know that we had a rather privileged quarantine. What are we going to do about it?** (intervention 15)



“During lockdown, as we were spending our time inside, what were our escape windows? Where do we get a bit of fresh air? It can be an actual window, but it can also be a metaphorical window. I was talking to my grandma, or listening to music that brought me “outside”. For “This is an Intervention!” I was sketching pictures of people’s physical or conceptual escape windows, giving the audience a free souvenir of quarantine. The act of sketching requires you to sit and look, and not be in a rush. The pause button is pressed while sketching.” **Pablo Cabrera Ferralis/ Escape windows from Quarantine: Souvenirs 4 free** (intervention 9)



© Susann Zielinski

Initiator José Délano in conversation with Marco Clausen
(Prinzessinnengärten)

J: When we look into the question of what comes after the pandemic, nature, ecology and small-scale gardening could hopefully play an important role. What role could that be? And are we ready to give a more important role to nature?

M: We live in this kind of mental twist. It’s not that we don’t know. We know but we don’t act on it. And everybody knows that. We still think it’s about gaining consciousness, knowledge, scientific facts. But actually we all know about the climate crisis, about biodiversity loss. Politicians have been discussing these topics for decades, yet nothing is happening. So now during the pandemic, what we should be asking ourselves is: What started it, and what can we do about it?

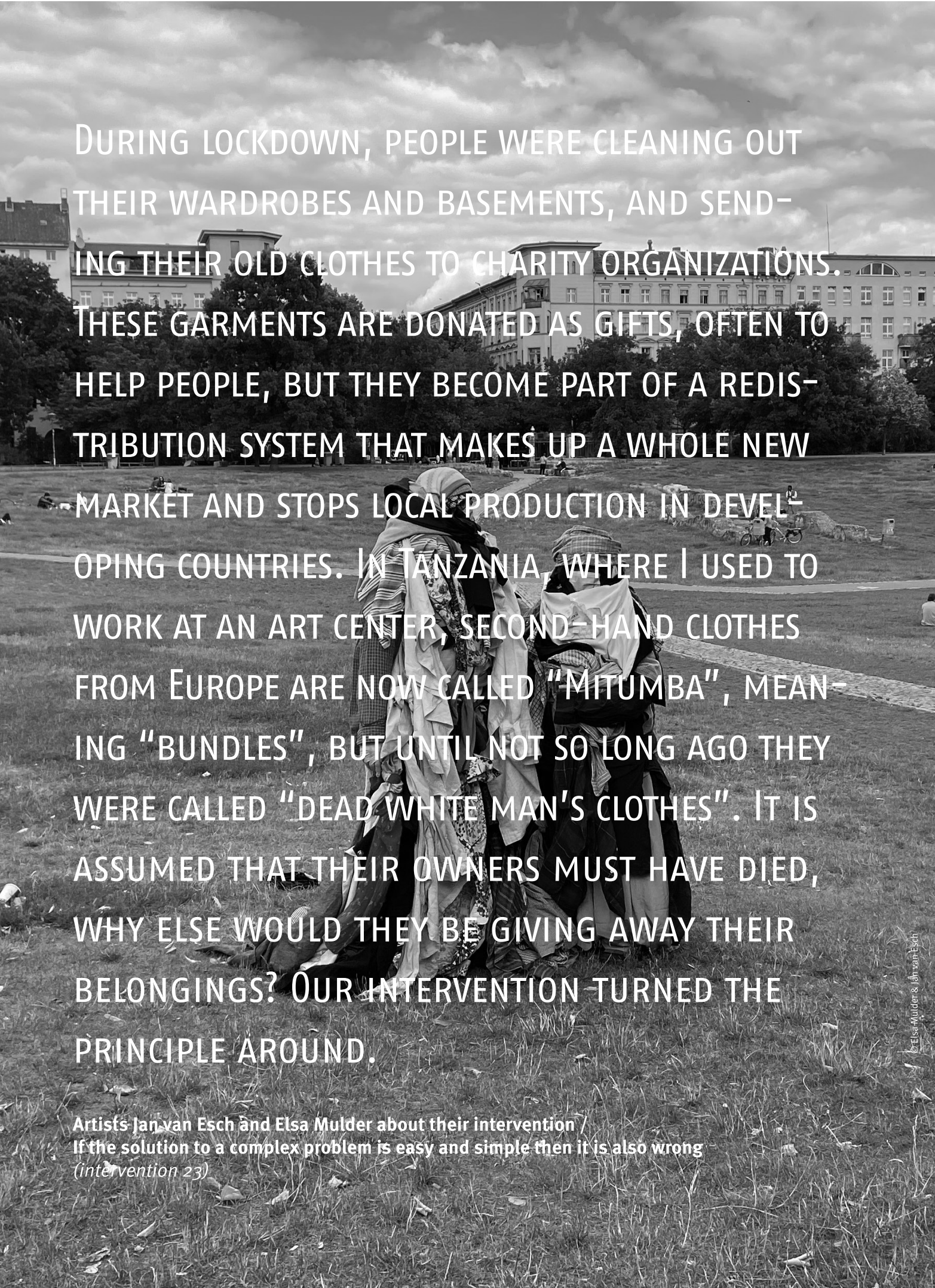
J: What role do you think an urban gardening project could have for generating change?

M: Change is actually easy. We could do it by doing nothing. Working less, consuming less, getting rid of cars. The pandemic showed us how great it is if we have only 10% of car traffic. It isn’t so complicated, and nothing is really stopping us. It is not a crisis of civilization, it is not a crisis of humankind. The crisis is that very few people are benefitting a lot from things being like they are, but most of us don’t.



© Susann Zielinski

Plastique Fantastique / iSphere (intervention 22)



DURING LOCKDOWN, PEOPLE WERE CLEANING OUT THEIR WARDROBES AND BASEMENTS, AND SENDING THEIR OLD CLOTHES TO CHARITY ORGANIZATIONS. THESE GARMENTS ARE DONATED AS GIFTS, OFTEN TO HELP PEOPLE, BUT THEY BECOME PART OF A REDISTRIBUTION SYSTEM THAT MAKES UP A WHOLE NEW MARKET AND STOPS LOCAL PRODUCTION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. IN TANZANIA, WHERE I USED TO WORK AT AN ART CENTER, SECOND-HAND CLOTHES FROM EUROPE ARE NOW CALLED "MITUMBA", MEANING "BUNDLES", BUT UNTIL NOT SO LONG AGO THEY WERE CALLED "DEAD WHITE MAN'S CLOTHES". IT IS ASSUMED THAT THEIR OWNERS MUST HAVE DIED, WHY ELSE WOULD THEY BE GIVING AWAY THEIR BELONGINGS? OUR INTERVENTION TURNED THE PRINCIPLE AROUND.

Artists Jan van Esch and Elsa Mulder about their intervention /
If the solution to a complex problem is easy and simple then it is also wrong
(intervention 23)



© Lucila Guichon

3. Lucila Guichon / Leicy Valenzuela / Franco Toledo / Inti Gallardo / Aleksandra Gajda, "ALTAR BERLIN: Station Intervention"



© Julia Kawka

10. Jasmina Al-Qaisi, "Work Less Radio"



© Julia Kawka

1. Paula Anguita / Juan Almarza, "Stairway to Heaven"

"THIS PROJECT FELT LIKE AN AMAZINGLY WELL-PAID JOB WITHOUT CURRENCY."



© Alejandra Ruddoff

14. Alejandra Ruddoff, "Illusion"

"This is an Intervention!" was a spontaneous initiative that was realized without any funding, thanks to the passionate efforts of the participating artists, team, volunteers, and photographers.



© Simon Hassler

- ○
- 17. Patrick Thomas, "Mobile Agitprop Unit"
- ●
- 16. Gabriel Vallecillo Márquez,
"Gargantúa: guerrilla projection magazine"



© Arturo Alejandro

Initiator José Délano in conversation with artist Raul Walch about "This is an Intervention!"

"MAYBE THE CURRENCY WAS TRUST AND UNDERSTANDING."



© Cristian Perez

1. Paula Anguita / Juan Almarza, "Stairway to Heaven"
2. Christoph Rothmeier, "The 1984 Step"
3. Lucila Guichon / Leicy Valenzuela / Franco Toledo / Inti Gallardo / Aleksandra Gajda, "ALTAR BERLIN: Station Intervention"
4. Marco Montiel-Soto, "Digging for a structure #43"
5. Pink Valley Performance Kollektiv, "Experiment with Radical Empathy"
6. Lacy Barry, "A Living Planet Does Not Need Your Money",
7. Ailin Formia / Jonny Sabandija, "Coverage area"
8. Néstor Barbitta / Marcela Sacán, "We, the places"
9. Pablo Cabrera Ferralis, "Escape windows from Quarantine: Souvenirs 4 free"
10. Jasmina Al-Qaisi, "Work Less Radio"
11. TRANSSTRUKTURA, "DOM_séparée with Friends"
12. Ella Ponizovsky Bergelson, "Tagfiguren / Day Figures"
13. Juan-Pedro Guemberena Fabra, 100 Unbekannte
14. Alejandra Ruddoff, "Illusion"
15. Joaquin Brandan, "We know that we had a rather privileged quarantine. What are we going to do about it?"
16. Gabriel Vallecillo Márquez, "Gargantúa: guerrilla projection magazine"
17. Patrick Thomas, "Mobile Agitprop Unit"
18. Topsy Qur'et, "Double check"
19. Petr Dlouhý, "Shared Environment #remote connectivity"
20. Stef Lenk, "Only Love Letters"
21. Álvaro Bezanilla, "Open Workshop: Back to the Origin"
22. Plastique Fantastique, "iSphere"
23. Jan van Esch / Elsa Mulder, "If the solution to a complex problem is easy and simple then it is also wrong"
24. Camp Collapse, "Stories from the Future"
25. Nicolás Lartaun, "Within"
26. Gabriel Hensche, "Almost Heaven"



7. Ailin Formia / Jonny Sabandija, "Coverage area"

© Ailin Formia & Jonny Sabandija

25. Nicolás Lartaun, "Within"

"This is an Intervention!" is conceptualized as a continuous format and platform for intervention in the public sphere. For info about future endeavors, keep an eye on our websites:

www.thisisanintervention.info
www.ccpart.info

Sonic Ecology: Art & Destruction in Wang Chau Village

Michael Leung
– Hong Kong, March 2021

This short text should be accompanied by two distinct sounds: the clicking of mahjong tiles being shuffled by villagers; and a chorus of birds that I am now only starting to recognise. The distinctive Masked Laughingthrush (*Garrulax perspicillatus*) once chirped on the Candlenut Tree (*Aleurites moluccana* (L.) Willd.) that towered 30 metres and generations above me. Today that tree is gone and all the surrounding village houses too, save for one home—which will likely be reduced to rubble this week. This place, a designated green belt where friends and I practiced a “mahjong ethnography” and befriended villagers, some of who have been living there since the 1960s, is called Yeung Uk San Village. The village is in Yuen Long, the north western part of the New Territories.

The New Territories, a name telling of its colonial past, is 95,310 hectares (953.1 km²) in size and located in the northern part of Hong Kong. The area consists of new towns, diverse types of housing, country parks, wetlands, brownfields (contaminated farmland), arable land and outlying islands—and is home to around half the population of Hong Kong. In October 2015 the Hong Kong government announced a plan to turn three New Territories villages, Yeung Uk San Village, Fung Chi Village and Wing Ning Village (often collectively referred to as Wang Chau) into high-rise public housing.¹ The plan proposes to flatten a slope, displace 500 villagers, demolish 200 homes, uproot the green belt and evict its multispecies inhabitants.

Today in the Wang Chau development zone, only five homes remain. The rest of the development zone has become a dusty construction site, fenced off to the public and surveilled by security guards, with five excavators operating during the daytime—some equipped with a muffler that claims to reduce the exhaust sound pollution. The government tells dispossessed villagers that their sacrifice is “appreciated” by those on the eight-year-long list for public housing. This rhetoric aims to soothe and dismiss other possible locations for public housing that are arguably less expensive and more suitable for construction, such as nearby brownfields—once fertile land, that now lucratively function as car parks, waste recycling yards and container storage.

Michael Leung is an artist/designer, researcher and writer. He was born in London and moved to Hong Kong in 2009. His projects range from collective urban agriculture projects such as *The HK FARMers' Almanac 2014-2015* to researching *Insurrectionary Agricultural Milieux*, territorial struggles and communities connected by wormholes.



Goo Jei's home in Yeung Uk San Village under a Candlenut tree, Wang Chau, Hong Kong, 6 November 2020. Photograph by Michael Leung.

These socio-political and environmental entanglements, residual from colonial policies, have resulted in an ongoing five-year land resistance by Wang Chau villagers that is difficult to describe through text and images, and off-site. It is for these reasons, on invitation by the Hong Kong New Music Ensemble to speak at the *Sonic Ecology* digital conference last December 2020, that I planned with villagers' consent, to conduct a village walk amidst an eviction that persists during the pandemic. Writing about the walk, a recurring action, three months later, I think of artist Tiffany Sia's acute questions: "What is the shortest distance to communicate? What is the shortest distance to empathy? What is the shortest distance to solidarity?"²

The 20-minute village walk equipped with stickers, brought online attendees to a part of Wang Chau that has been acquired and concretised by a property developer called New World Development; who previously submitted an application to the government's Town Planning Board to rezone green belt-designated land into three 37-storey luxury apartment blocks, a commercial/club house building, new roads and even an Anish Kapoor-like sculpture that on architectural drawings resembles a giant red bean. The red bean is likely part of New World Development vice chairman Adrian Cheng's endeavours, through the non-profit organisation K11 Art Foundation, to place artworks in and around development projects such as the art and design district on Hong Kong's harbour that Cheng once brashly described as "[...] Roppongi Hills-slash-Miami Design District-slash Hudson Yards, everything combined together into my vision."³ Speculating a red bean ontology poses questions relating to colonial monuments, art-washing and the absurdity in placing enlarged seed-like sculptures on concretised once-fertile lands.



Above: Demolished village houses, including Goo Jei's home, in Yeung Uk San Village with removed Candlenut tree (right of excavator claw), Wang Chau, Hong Kong, 31 December 2020. Photograph by Michael Leung.

Left: New World Development plan, Wing Ning Village, Wang Chau, 22 September 2020. Extract from government document.

During the walk I passed doorless and dispossessed homes and shared an extract from anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's book where she wrote, "It is in listening to that cacophony of troubled stories that we might encounter our best hopes for precarious survival."²⁴ I thought of a villager called *Ah Hon* who is skilled in modifying electric bicycles and the high-pitched whizzing sound of his Mad Max-like bicycle when a friend Sallie and I once twisted the sensitive throttle and rode freely around the village. *Ah Hon* used the blue bicycle and self-built pink trailer to carry materials to the recycling station in exchange for money. Today he lives in cramped conditions in the government's Transit Centre anticipating possibilities for more permanent housing. I wonder what has become of his cyberpunk bicycle?



Ah Hon's modified electric bicycle, Wing Ning Village, Wang Chau, 22 September 2020. Photograph by Michael Leung.



Left: Jackfruit tree at the centre of a garden, Wing Ning Village with 94 jackfruits, 27 June 2017.

Right: Ms. Lam's small village house and umbrellas at the entrance, 15 September 2020.

Photographs by Michael Leung.

The village walk introduced 打水 which directly translates into English as “hitting water”—a method of collecting water by hand from a well via a rope and bucket. When hitting water there is an echoed gulping sound from when the metal bucket becomes submerged inside the well. Villager Mr. Wong no longer hits water but continues guerrilla gardening, supported by another villager who kindly gives him access to a water supply. At the centre of the garden that is cultivated by Mr. Wong stands a jackfruit tree that currently bears 127 jackfruits. Hopefully the jackfruits will be harvestable this July for the fifth Wang Chau Jackfruit Festival, which for the past three years has taken place in the Au Yeung family's village house and front garden. Walking past the hammering sound of deconstruction by government contractors I shared a photograph of a scene that showed a possibility of two social movements coming together—the ongoing villagers' resistance and the 2019 protests that revolved around five demands. It

was a personal reflection which grappled with my positionality in the village—as an outsider but someone in solidarity with the villagers’ plight and in protecting everything living.

Today the village destruction continues at an alarming pace. In *Breathing: Chaos and Poetry* the theorist Franco Berardi writes that “[...] power is no longer constructed by silencing the crowd (for example, through censorship, broadcast media, or the solemnity of political discourse), but is based on the boundless intensification of noise.”⁴ Despite the government’s acceleration and amplification that comes in the form of whirling chainsaws and clashing metal claws, I hope that the remaining Wang Chau villagers are able to rest and stay determined; and for the other 18 villages currently threatened with eviction in Hong Kong, that all villagers have the energy and agency to share tactics and create a sustainable and just world together.



1. The government originally had plans to develop on more land to create 17,000 public housing units, but this was later reduced to developing the three villages and downsizing to 4,000 public housing units. <https://hongkongfp.com/2016/09/21/govt-records-reveal-yuen-long-housing-plan-was-scaled-back-to-avoid-confrontation-with-rural-leader>
2. Tiffany Sia, *Too Salty Too Wet 更咸更濕* (Hong Kong: Speculative Space Press, 2020): 18.
3. Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015): 34.
4. Franco “Bifo” Berardi, *Breathing: Chaos and Poetry* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2018): 26.

Geopoetics of a Radical Elsewhere

Zsolt Miklósvölgyi &
Márió Z. Nemes



Aleksandr Delev: These Signs Again, 2020, digital image

The following essay is a transcription of a keynote lecture we have presented last year in the RA/UPTURE: XENOFUTURITIES, SPECTERS, ANACHRONY conference. The title and thus the leitmotif of the conference was the vocal amalgam of the words rapture and rupture. By extracting the prefix *dis-* from the double negation disruption and attaching it to the other composite rapture, the two-days long conference that took place at NadaLokal in Wien (as well as in the parallel virtual spaces of Zoom), aimed at launching a deconstructive analysis of contemporary tendencies by using the term: *dis_rapture*. In the context of the conference the notion of *dis_rapture* implied the intentional, hypothetical deconstruction of ideologies that may have already manifested themselves in critical discourses. By using *dis_rapture* as a method the participants of the conference encouraged the development of a variety of ideas we could have about the future and the past.

Parts of our essay we have compiled for the current issue of Free Berlin are based on our following previous texts: *Hungarofuturist Manifesto* (2017); *Xenotopia or a Place of Radical Openness* (2020); *Terraforming Post-Hungarianness* (2020). The text also contains unmarked quotes and references from the following authors: Armen Avanessian, The Beach Boys, Homi K. Bhabha, Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, Sándor Kovács, Mahan Moalemi, Slavoj Žižek.

*

Kokomo

During this weird summer of 2020, maybe also to escape the brutal and often claustrophobic spatial reality of the pandemic, its quarantines, closed borders and lockdowns, we became obsessed with the idea of Kokomo. By listening to the legendary Beach Boys song, we couldn't resist not immersing ourselves into the imaginary tropical landscapes and otherworldly beach resorts depicted in the lyrics. For weeks, as if it were some sort of personal mantra that will allow us to escape from the reality of the viral apocalypse we more and more often call as the new normal, we have been repeating to ourselves the locations named in the song:

*“Aruba, Jamaica [...]
Bermuda, Bahama [...]
Key Largo, Montego [...]
That's where we want to go, way down in Kokomo”*

Sitting in front of a laptop looking at Google Streetview images of various islands of the Florida Keys where, according to the Beach Boys song, “there's a place called Kokomo”, we first took Pegman, the little yellow man of Google Maps from the down-right corner of the screen and dropped him off at the legendary U.S. Route 1, somewhere between

Manatee Bay and Long Sound. After a smooth landing with Pegman, we could have rotated the view towards the North heading towards Miami, and then to Jacksonville, Raleigh, Richmond, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York City, Boston, all the way up to the U.S.-Canadian border somewhere at New England. Instead, we have rotated the view towards the Atlantic Ocean, towards the Florida Keys, looking obsessively for the real Kokomo beach. We have first reached Key Largo, another magnetic place in our mind we all know from Sade's famous song, *Smooth Operator*. Through the Overseas Highway, our journey has continued to Tavernier, then to Plantation Key. Following the route further down to Islamorada and to Lower Matecombe Key, then to Layton and Vaca Key, we were still looking for the exact location of Kokomo Beach. Meanwhile, the route has turned into an otherworldly architectural complex where sections of highway roads and bridges have blended smoothly into each other. Once crossing the Seven Mile Bridge, somewhere between Summerland and Sugarloaf Key, just before arriving at Key West, at the Southernmost point of the Continental U.S., where Hemingway has also lived and written his novels, our anxiety has started to increase as we still couldn't find any beach called Kokomo...

What if this place is not “here”? – we have started to ask ourselves? What if there's not even such a place in reality called Kokomo? What if Kokomo is actually not a place, but a non-place, a metaphor of a desire for such a place of tranquility that, at the same time, could have been somewhere down off the Florida Keys? What if Kokomo is neither real, nor completely unreal, but somewhere in between the cartographic reality and the psycho-geographical fantasy land of the Florida Keys? One of the most interesting Reddit sub-channels we have found related to this topic where commenters with similar questions in their mind have gathered was about posting photos of various beaches of the Keys often with palm trees, bright blue skies and white sand melting into the deep blue ocean that best reminds them to the spatial idea of Kokomo.

By zooming in and out of the virtual maps of the Florida Keys and scrolling through seemingly endless feeds full of kitschy images of sunsets, beaches, and palm trees, Deleuze and Guattari's concept of maps came to our mind:

“What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real. The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious. It fosters connections between fields, the removal of blockages on bodies without organs, the maximum opening of bodies without organs onto a plane of consistency. It is itself a part of the rhizome. The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group,

or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation. [...] A map has multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes ‘back to the same’. The map has to do with performance, whereas the tracing always involves an alleged ‘competence’.”

The Politics of Alien Geographies

As Homi K. Bhabha worded it very precisely: “Counter-narratives of the nation that continually evoke and erase its totalizing boundaries — both actual and conceptual — disturb those ideological manoeuvres through which ‘imagined communities’ are given essentialist identities. For the political unity of the nation consists in a continual displacement of its irredeemably plural modern space, bounded by different, even hostile nations, into a signifying space that is archaic and mythical, paradoxically representing the nation’s modern territoriality, in the patriotic, atavistic temporality of Traditionalism. Quite simply, the difference of space returns as the Sameness of time, turning Territory into Tradition, turning the People into One. The liminal point of this ideological displacement is the turning of the differentiated spatial boundary, the ‘outside’, into the unified temporal territory of Tradition.”

The dissemi_nation of such counter-narratives was also a primary goal for us when we coined the term of XENOTOPIA, which also serves as the title of our Hungarofuturist magazine project commissioned by the OFF-Biennale Budapest 2021. According to our understanding, the very notion of XENOTOPIA is based on the concept of the Alien Elsewhere, or the metamorphosing spatial alterity, which enables the Hungarofuturization of the so called “homeland” of the Hungarians. XENOTOPIA, therefore, is not a place, but a non-place where the post-Hungarian virus is being produced. The old homeland was a quarantine, which, according to the laws of territoriality, wanted to settle the Hungarians in a claustrophobic interiority. But we are all interstellar nomads who are constantly transgressing the binary logic of interiority and exteriority. The quarantine logic of nationalism, as it has been reflected in the xenophobic interventions of many nation-states following the global pandemic of 2020, only breaks the nation’s body into fragments, thus producing schizophrenia instead of health. Hungarofuturism, on the other hand, divides faster than schizophrenia and is more contagious than health. The concept of XENOTOPIA aims to suspend this false quarantine logic of nationalisms by providing space for hyperviral and interscalar nomadology of ideas, metaphors, and aesthetics from a nanoscopic up to cosmic scale.

As we have declared in the *Hungarofuturist Manifesto* (2017): “We demand a Hungarian Outer Space instead of a Conservative Sky! This is not escapism; instead, it is a new Hungarian land-taking that does not so much suspend the previous one but rather rewrites it, incorporating other narratives. Hungarian Outer Space in this context is not another place; instead, it represents a geophilosophical concept, a desire for another place.” The declaration of the post-Hungarian program also demands XENOPOLITICS and XENOAESTHETICS, which, from now on, should also be supplemented with the demand for XENOTOPIA.

In that sense, the notion of XENOTOPIA can be interpreted as an attempt to situate the Hungarofuturist project within the array of other emergent ethnofuturist tendencies. Accordingly, XENOTOPIA functions both as a sensual, as well as a discursive space for (para)academic analysis and artistic interpretations of Hungarofuturism in various ethnofuturist contexts. This endeavor also aligns with the concept of Mahan Moalemi’s “relational futurism”. By outlining the bases of a para-academic disciplinarity of Comparative Futurism, Moalemi urges for a certain kind of comparative sensitivity or a compassionate “recourse to relational immanence, one which allows each ethnofuturism to remain responsive (as in both absorbing and reflecting) the radiation of another ethnofuturism.”

By focusing more on the specific trans-regional contextuality of Hungarofuturism, it is also worth mentioning Ulrike Gerhardt’s researches that aim to map out various counter-futurist narratives of post-socialist Eastern-European art scenes, thus rewriting the geopoetical narratives of the region in a form of a nuanced and up-to-date cultural topography. In doing so, she embraces different *Easternfuturist* movements and weaves them together into a detailed tapestry that allows us to understand the cohesive patterns of seemingly divergent artistic strategies beyond the hegemonic, Western-European narratives of possible futurities.

Gerhardt’s attempts are also resonating in the collaborative projects of the LAND 3C collective, whose name also refers to a fictional entity constituted by the hypothetical union of the landmass between the Baltic, Black, and the Adriatic seas. In this fictional scenario of the collective that has been established by artists of Bulgarian, Lithuanian and Czech origin, the world has undergone a process of hyper-homogenization where LAND 3C emerged as an alternative geopolitical strategy to preserve that which was believed to represent the cultural singularity of the region it constitutes. These kind of spectral cartographies are also inspiring the geopoetic imagination of the Hungarofuturist project as they are haunting the here and now not from the past, but from a future that is yet to be drawn.



Mark Fridvalszki: Hagere Perspektive, 2017, digital collage

Reprogramming the Nation-Machine with a Hammer

In 2010, after the second re-election of Viktor Orbán and the FIDESZ party, in the name of a new authoritarian—or in Orbán’s terms, “illiberal”—state, a massive attack immediately commenced against the free press, academia, non-governmental organizations, civil initiatives, and cultural institutions. Underlying this orchestrated offensive was the intent to rewrite historical, political, and cultural consensuses and to establish a new, entirely FIDESZ-dominated, social and aesthetic narrative. These tendencies were an important motivation to launch the Hungarofuturist movement and to proclaim the *Hungarofuturist Manifesto* in 2017. As opposed to resisting the paranoid specters haunting our deep European existence, the *Hungarofuturist Manifesto* aims for a creative rechanneling of narratives of origin that restore our hope in future pasts.

Often informed by a pan-peripheral experience, nationalism is perceived as an inward movement, which employs negation, the definition of the almighty “Other”, as its primary common denominator. By contrast, Hungarofuturism, as a mythical fiction and aesthetic strategy, proposes to transform the cultural and historical imagination in both a spatial and temporal sense.

The reprogramming of the “nation-machine” does not create organic knowledge and narratives, rather anachronisms, phantom-like events in which the incompatibility of the various elements hybridizes history and the cosmos until the very moment of “overidentification”. Overidentification is the tactic of overtaking and overplaying dominant codes. According to Slavoj Žižek, in the art works and performances of Laibach and the IRWIN art collective, the political aesthetics of Stalinism, National Socialism, and other totalitarian regimes are acutally being roasted in the form of an aggressive and inconsistent hybridization, in which liberal, left-wing critique is also distorted to the point wherein all twentieth century ideologies become their own ironically ritualized copies. Through overidentification, the total system’s secret is unveiled: the superego of power no longer has anywhere left to hide as it becomes ever more entrapped in its rhetoric. This would be the oppression of oppression, when the daytime and nighttime aspects of ideology are revealed as two sides of the same coin, in an infernal pact of parasites.

In this parasitic sense, the forms of artistic expression of classic avant-garde art (such as the “movement”, “manifesto”, “collage”, etc.) have also become objects of overidentification. In the case of Hungarofuturism, the notion of a movement or collective itself also often manifests in reminiscent visions of national statehood, while adapting fictitious strategies, such as hashtags, memes, and Facebook groups at the same time. They challenge populist weaponry, gendered norms, and customary beliefs to annex the past

into the future: “overidentifying” with them, enabling a cynical distance.

One of the primary examples of Hungarofuturist “overidentification” is best demonstrated in the example of hijacking and appropriating the most common pseudo-myth of the esoteric subcultures of the Hungarian far right. According to a thoroughly constructed and enthusiastically shared belief in this occult and pagan reactionary faction, Hungarians did not arrive in the Carpathian Basin between the eighth and fifth centuries BC with nomadic tribes from the territory between the Ural Mountains and the Volga River, as mainstream history claims. Instead, Hungarians—as the so-called “chosen ones”—originated from outer space, namely from the Sirius star system. Faced with this surprisingly widespread pseudo-origin, various Hungarofuturist authors and artists started to appropriate its key motifs for their own political and poetic purposes of the movement. Such a gesture of appropriation can be found in the following quote from the first paragraph of the *Hungarofuturist Manifesto*, which elucidates the cosmology of Hungarofuturism: “We demand a Hungarian Outer Space instead of a Conservative Sky! This is not escapism; instead, it is a new Hungarian land-taking that does not so much suspend the previous one but rather rewrites it, incorporating other narratives. Hungarian Outer Space in this context is not another place; instead, it represents a geophilosophical concept, a desire for another place.”

Similar to Afrofuturism, which—along with other ethnofuturist movements—represents a continual resource of inspiration for Hungarofuturism, this is an experiment in poetical imagination, based on a radically ironic exaggeration of minority identity. In this regard, the Hungarofuturist Movement aims to oppose the notions of an ethnic, biopolitical, and racial essentialism of Hungarianness as promoted by the far-right government of Viktor Orbán. By contrast, Hungarofuturism is an alternative concept of what it means to be Hungarian, namely the discovery of post-Hungarianism. As the *Hungarofuturist Manifesto* declares: “The key to this Hungarofuturist mutational identity is the notion of metamorphosis as a destination. Transformation is not a pathway: it is an end in itself. We arrived here as the People of Sirius, and it is there that we shall return! For now and forever!” Anachronism as a practice is the method of the post-Hungarians. As Sándor Kovács argues, “[t]he ‘post-Hungarian’ is far from new. The ‘post-Hungarian’ is radically un-new. The ‘post-Hungarian’ works through conferring antiquity, going beyond mere reconstruction [...] while never forgetting that this aesthetic construct uses old, even archaic elements. This is the history of self-redefinitions. It is not so much a thing or the characteristic of a thing, but rather an act, or the logic of a particular type of action.”

More than mere escapism, Hungarofuturism is not a rejection of the cultural landscape, rather the reconfiguration

of Hungarian culture within the framework of the old, building with chunks of a history that was always constructed. This specific constellation differentiates Hungarofuturism from previous incarnations of Futurism. Distinct from the latter, with its militantly modernist emphasis on the radically new, the post-Hungarian viewpoint is distinguished by a post-ironic affirmation of its own “non-new” state. This necessarily entails an ironic relation to the supposed, metaphysically grounded “newness” of the old avant-garde. Instead of eliminating the old and jumping forward to some kind of future utopia, Hungarofuturism tries to create a time-space loop, warping history. Against revolutionary newness and passéism, Hungarofuturism performs a type of spectral retrofuturism, a returning which is not quite a repetition, a strange recombinant recoded aesthetic timewarp, which is also a time-swamp, complicating the deceptive simplicity of the Hungarian Plains.

The same can be said about the spatial strategies of the movement; for Hungarofuturism, the concept of “Outer Space” does not represent a place of desire for a total exodus, as this would still suggest the possibility of nostalgia and melancholic escapism. On the contrary, Hungarofuturism prefers the spatial torsion caused by a tactical time-space loop: you leave the ground, take a step back to be able to return, and return as something else, becoming something else, altering yourself toward new possibilities, new organs, a new past, and a new future. This is the futurist or sci-fi metaphorical aspect of the movement, which manifests in becoming a cosmic being—in a xeno-aesthetic transformation. This is a metamorphosis in a Deleuzian sense, which is also an expulsion to the cosmos, while at the same time we are also coming back from there. For, at the end of the day, UFOs are also here, with us. The being of the UFO traveler means that we have come to hijack. The cosmic traveler researches the intersection of Earth and Outer Space. This is the point where the traveler understands things and practices xenopolitics. Hungarofuturists do the same thing, and there is nothing special in this, for in this way Hungarians can transform their strangeness in something friendlier, now able to assume their extraterrestrial origin and future.

Chronocommons

For a better understanding that Hungarofuturism is not just an isolated, lonely struggle on the battlefield of a culture war shaped by the authoritarian regime of the current Hungarian political power, and an illustration of how our critical distance takes place against the backdrop of historical Futurism of the classic avant-garde, a poignant quote by Armen Avenassian and Mohan Moalemi is useful here: “A new vision of the future, therefore, seems crucial, one which both exploits technological potentials and takes the

political weight of ethnic and racial diversity into account—not as a lip service to an alleged integration policy, but in terms of historical peculiarities that are informed by power dynamics across planetary scales. Now is the time to depart from the concept of historical Futurism, given its racist, sexist, and warmongering appetite for technological progress, only to relativize or estrange it from within the lived conditions of those who have long been estranged and alienated by its accelerating legacies. The question has to do with how to approach a notion of chronocommons, the futuristic resources whose radiations have already infiltrated the here-and-now, beyond any fantasy of ethnographic authenticity.”

The notion of *chronocommons* also implies a particular type of community-unifying sensitivity toward the old-new, which is, in fact, a retrofuturist openness, as certain gestures in opposition to the past have themselves become historical events, whereas many utopian movements have later become mere residues of their primordial promises. This does not mean that a past only exists in purely archival sense, rather that imaginary practices of the future as critiques of the present are only possible by opening up ourselves toward the past. Hence, the creation and sustenance of any chronocommons (meaning a fabrication of communal time based on a shared *sensus communis*) is always anachronistic as it simultaneously means the production of an alternative past and an alternative future, which mutually intersect each other.

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SPEECH BY AILTON KRENAK, ON
09/04/1987, AT THE CONSTITUENT
ASSEMBLY, BRASILIA, BRAZIL

...this process of conflict of interests has shown to be unethical lately. I hope not to go with my speech against the rules of this house, but I believe that you will not remain silent, you will not be able to remain unaware of this aggression driven by the economic power, greed or ignorance of what it means to be an indigenous community.

Indigenous people have a way of thinking, a way of living. They have fundamental conditions for their existence and for the expression of their lives and culture that has never threatened the existence of the animals that live around the indigenous villages, even less, the existence of human beings.

I believe that none of you could ever point out acts or attitudes of the indigenous people of Brazil that have put life at risk, be it the patrimony of any person or of any human group in this country. And today, we are the target of aggression that seeks to destroy our faith, our confidence that dignity still exists, that it is still possible to build a society that respects the weakest, that respects those who do not have the money to maintain an incessant defamation campaign, that knows how to respect people who have always lived in spite of all their wealth. People who live in straw-covered houses, that sleep on stands on the ground, should not be identified in no way as people that are against the interests of Brazil, an enemy of the interests of the nation and that puts any possibility of development at risk. The indigenous people have watered with blood every hectare of the 8 million square kilometers in Brazil. You are witnesses of this.

I am grateful for the presidency of this house, I am grateful, gentlemen, and I hope that I have not attacked with my words the feelings of you who are in this house...

Translation by Octavio Camargo,
Curitiba 2021.



Ailton Krenak is an indigenous leader, environmentalist and writer. Born in 1953 in the state of Minas Gerais, in the Middle Rio Doce region. At the age of seventeen, he moved with his family to the state of Paraná, where he learned how to read and write, and became a graphics producer and journalist. In the 1980s, he began to devote himself exclusively to the indigenous movement. In 1985, he founded the non-governmental organization Indigenous Culture Center (Núcleo de Cultura Indígena), which aims to promote indigenous culture. During the Constituent Assembly of 1987, Ailton produced a striking scene: in a speech at the podium, dressed in a white suit, he painted his face black to protest against what he saw as a setback in the struggle for indigenous rights. In 1988, he participated in the founding of the Union of Indigenous Peoples (União dos Povos Indígenas), an organization that seeks to represent indigenous interests on the national scene. In 1989, he participated in the Alliance of Forest Peoples (Aliança dos Povos da Floresta), a movement that seeks the creation of nature reserves in the Amazon, making possible economic subsistence based on extraction of latex from rubber trees, as well as collection of other forest products. He returned to Minas Gerais, where he dedicated himself to the Indigenous Culture Center (Núcleo de de Cultura Indígena). Since 1998, this organization has held, in the Serra do Cipó region, in Minas Gerais, a festival designed by Ailton: the Festival of Indigenous Dance and Culture, promoting the union of different indigenous populations.

...neste processo de luta de interesses tem se mostrado ultimamente aéticos e eu espero não agredir com a minha manifestação o protocolo desta casa, mas eu acredito que os senhores não poderão ficar omissos, os senhores não terão como ficar alheios a mais esta agressão movida pelo poder econômico, pela ganância, pela ignorância do que significa ser um povo indígena.

O povo indígena tem um jeito de pensar, tem um jeito de viver, tem condições fundamentais para a sua existência e para a manifestação da sua expressão de sua vida e de sua cultura que não colocam em risco a existências sequer dos animais que vivem ao redor das aldeias indígenas, quanto mais dos seres humanos.

Eu creio que nenhum dos senhores nunca poderia apontar atos ou atitudes da gente indígena do Brasil que colocaram em risco seja a vida, seja o patrimônio de qualquer pessoa, de qualquer grupo humano nesse País. E hoje nós somos alvo de uma agressão que pretende atingir na essência a nossa fé, a nossa confiança de que ainda existe dignidade, de que ainda é possível construir uma sociedade que sabe respeitar os mais fracos, que sabe respeitar aqueles que não têm o dinheiro para manter uma campanha incessante de difamação, que saiba respeitar um povo que sempre viveu à revelia de todas as riquezas, um povo que habita casas cobertas de palha, que dorme em esteiras no chão, não deve ser identificado de jeito nenhum como um povo que é inimigo dos interesses do Brasil, inimigo dos interesses de nação e que coloca em risco qualquer desenvolvimento. O povo indígena tem regado de sangue cada hectare dos 8 milhões de quilômetros quadrados no do Brasil. Os senhores são testemunhas disso.

Eu agradeço a presidência desta casa, agradeço os senhores e espero não ter agredido com as minhas palavras os sentimentos dos senhores que se encontram nesta casa...



In Tribute –

In 1972, a group of women and men including Joan Nestle, mostly gay, who worked or had been educated in the City University of New York and had participated in the liberation movements of the 1960s, founded the Gay Academic Union (GAU). Dedicated to representing the concerns of lesbian and gay students, teachers, and workers, GAU also launched projects to ensure gay inclusion in course content. At the first conference of the organization, a bomb threat emptied the auditorium, but the conference continued.

As was common in the early 1970s, after a year of working together, several of the women decided they needed a separate meeting space to discuss sexism in the organization, among other things. Two consciousness-raising groups were formed and one of them, which included Joan Nestle and Deborah Edel, became the founding site of the Lesbian Herstory Archives. At one meeting in 1974, Julia Stanley and Joan Nestle, who had come out before the Gay Liberation Movement, talked about the precariousness of lesbian culture and how so much of our past culture was seen only through patriarchal eyes. Deborah Edel, Sahli Cavallaro and Pamela Oline, with histories ranging from lesbian-feminism to political lesbianism, joined in and, thus, a new concept was born – a grassroots Lesbian archive.

Later in 1974, a larger group of women started meeting on a regular basis to work out the deeper vision of this undertaking. One of the first tasks the group undertook was to send off a news release to all of the then existing lesbian, feminist and gay publications announcing the groundbreaking undertaking. This was a testing of the waters, to see if the community shared in our vision. The answer was “yes”, and in the next year, 1975, LHA published its first free newsletter.

Support the ongoing work of the Archives, see:
<https://lesbianherstoryarchives.org/>

Lesbian Herstory Archives

Newsletter 16 — December 1996

Finally...



*A Home
of Our Own*

Statement by German cultural institutions on the parliamentary BDS resolution by the Bundestag / December 12, 2020

As representatives of public cultural and research institutions in Germany, we share a mandate from the state to promote arts and culture, historical research and democratic education and to make these accessible to the general public. Toward this end, we rely on a public sphere that welcomes controversial debates in accordance with the norms of the German constitution. We are further committed to paying particular attention to marginalized and disregarded voices that stand for cultural diversity and critical perspectives. At the center of our initiative lays a common struggle against anti-Semitism, racism, right-wing extremism and any form of violent religious fundamentalism. Today, a specific challenge lays in the responsibility to convey the particularities of the German past—which is characterized by the singular genocide of European Jews, on the one hand, and, by a late and relatively hesitant confrontation with Germany's colonial history, on the other—to our cooperation partners around the world, so that we can work together toward a common present and future. This also entails an active commitment to heeding a diversity of Jewish positions and openness toward non-European perspectives.

It is unproductive, even detrimental to the democratic public sphere to exclude vital voices from critical dialogue, as occurred in the debate surrounding Achille Mbembe earlier this year. Germany's historical responsibility should not lead to a general delegitimization of other historical experiences of violence and oppression, neither morally nor politically. Their contestation and examination must be tenable especially in the publicly funded cultural and discursive realms. Against this background, the application of the parliamentary BDS resolution by the Bundestag is cause for great concern. We reject the BDS boycott of Israel since we consider cultural and scientific exchange to be essential. At the same time, we consider the logic of counter-boycott, triggered by the parliamentary anti-BDS resolution, to be dangerous. By invoking this resolution, accusations of anti-Semitism are being misused to push aside important voices and to distort critical positions.

For this reason, we have established the "Initiative GG 5.3 Weltoffenheit" (world openness) to consolidate our expertise and efforts in order to defend a climate of diverse voices, critical reflection and an appreciation of difference. The name is a reference to Article 5, Paragraph 3 of Germany's Basic Law, which guarantees freedom of the arts and sciences. Weltoffenheit (world openness), as we understand it, requires a political aesthetic of difference that understands alterity as a democratic asset, and art and education as spaces, which should tolerate ambivalence and permit divergent views. This includes guaranteeing open space for a diversity of voices and critically confronting one's own privileged position as an implicit norm.

We stand in defense of a world-open society that will struggle for the equality of all people through the rule of law and public discourse, allowing for dissent and multi layered solidarities. It is this foundation, which permits the arts and sciences to continue to exercise their original purpose: to critically reflect on our reigning social orders while remaining open to alternative visions for our shared world.

<https://www.e-flux.com/announcements/366777/statement-by-german-cultural-institutions-on-the-parliamentary-bds-resolution-by-the-bundestag/>