ROSA Uniting Newsletter

Shit that works and shit that doesn't

Dear Reader,

We introduce you to the first edition of RUN - ROSA United Newsletter. This newsletter aims to give a voice to ROSA - Radical Organization of Students in Amsterdam. ROSA is a Marxist feminist organization at the universities in Amsterdam and we want to educate, learn, and discuss with each other within this framework. We hope to employ artistic expression in our pages, as we deem it closely tied to our struggle. Numerous topics will be touched upon, as capitalism has appropriated all aspects of our lives. These discussions range from anti-imperialism and anti-racism, to class struggle and feminism.

In this first edition, we touch upon the theme of Systems: Shit that Works and Shit that doesn't. After the first piece on borders and their detrimental impact on our relationship with nature, we transition to a feminist piece on relationships and monogamy. Next, through poetry, the liberal feminist perspective on gender oppression will be criticised. Following this, the alternative system in Rojava is outlined through an interview with a Kurdish comrade, paired with an examination of the world imperialist system of bureaucracy capitalism. The second half of the newspaper will focus on the circumstances we find ourselves in as students and on the UvA itself. How can we reclaim our university, and what possibilities and biases do we find in AI? We will end with a comic strip emphasising the faults of a broken system, rather than individual responsibility. An exploitative and oppressive system. A system that doesn't work!

We hope you enjoy reading this edition of RUN, in revolutionary spirit!

In this issue:

YOU are IN
ReBelliOUS
ZaPaTIsTa
TeRRiTORY
HeRe PeOPle
GOVeRN aND
the GOVeRNMENT.
OBliGeS

- marianne

Borders
Ceci

To think that man, as people, beings, would reach a point of securing, militarizing, blocking, and fencing lines drawn by hand on paper to fit a distorted idea of nationalistic preservation is sickening. To think that people drown, dehydrate, starve, hoping to be allowed to move and change environment, condition, or situation is revolting. A natural and understandable envy and need, it is part of our condition to want to move. A section of humans became sedentary around ten thousand years ago, but not as a decreed universal decision cementing all future people to the piece of land they are born in. Land holds history and love, it binds population and struggle but it should not be owned, or possessed, its past should be honored and its future shared. One can understand the comfort people find in delineating territory, as a response to fear of invasion or attack, but this constant rearmament of delimitations as protection engenders distrust and conflicts. Borders have always been used against people, it has been a tool for colons to assert power in regions where they should not have had a right of decision, and a method of continuing those colonial legacies. Land ownership and our relationship to nature can be considered part of the problem's genesis. Airton Krenak, Brazilian Indigenous writer and journalist, born in the valley of the "Rio Doce" (which translates to Sweet River), where land mining is of great harm, discusses the terrifying reality of the continuous disconnection between man and their natural surroundings. This separation is enforced by corporations seeking to extract and exploit all possible wealth from the soil to enrich themselves. He affirms that this "civilizer" need is detrimental and precludes the many forms of existence, habit, and living people should be free to engage in. Indigenous relations to land are very different from western societies: mountains, rivers, and valleys are not seen as mere pieces of land but as entities, relatives, and part of family, with a profound bond connecting all cells of life. There is then no possible appropriation of land, as it is equal to human life. Disconnecting people from a respectful relationship with land leaves space for a possessive idea of protection. If you grow up in a world where you are forced to produce and excavate wealth out of your land to engage in commerce and provide for yourself, if you are taught to work hard for your future and see competition, companies profiting off of you, it is not paranoid to consider building up fences of the utmost importance. To think of it, that such a point of disconnection has been reached between each other and the land we walk in, is proof the system does not work, and it is leading to our decay as we learn to destroy nature until it has nothing left of itself to give. Nevertheless, it is not just the aspect of borders between private property that is is to be discussed,

but also the one separating countries. International borders are not what unites a nation, their upheaval is not the reason culture is preserved, and their absence would not entail a complete dismissal of historical protections. This need for centimeter-close fencing and desperate control over them is directly related to the possessive relationship with land we have evolved to. We have reached a point where commodities and goods produced by people have more freedom of movement than the people themselves. How inhumane have border crossings become. Allow people to move, if overpopulation is the main concern, because global warming has shown us it will make sections of our world inhabitable, the ones affected are not the ones responsible for it getting out of hand. How selfish would it be to prohibit them from entering any land, as no one has the right to own the land they walk on. And trust that man, as people, beings, does not necessarily want his own demise, there is still possible and natural good intention towards each other. People have been shown to reach inhumane conditions and harm each other as a direct result of capitalism. If it is loss of tradition, culture, or history which causes panic, it was mostly out of disproportionate nationalism, unreasonable craving for power, and hidden capitalist interests that the most dreadful ethnic, cultural, and populational erasures have occurred. The suppression of borders does not entail the absence of law, or procedural protection of communities, but strives for the abolishment of rules excluding entries of people exercised by entities such as Frontex or governmental customs. It is, in a way, a practice of faith to trust that man, as people, beings, will choose to share with and learn from new cultures instead of seeing them as possibly harmful to his own; yet it is necessary to understand this fear was inherited from the individualistic and reactionary belief we have been subjected to by our lovely capitalistic economic and social world system (that does not work)!
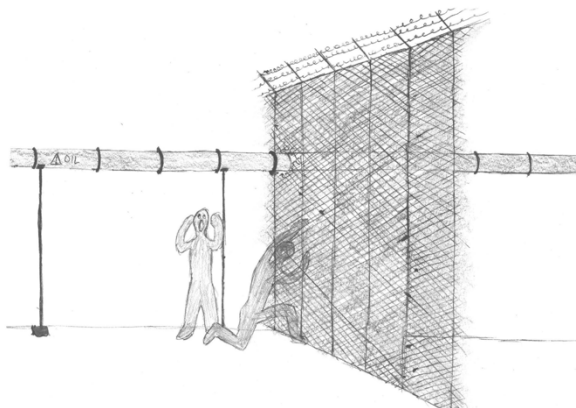
Monogamy as a system: how does it work (or doesn't)?
Emma Mazzanti

This article is aimed at anyone who has ever felt forced into desires they did not feel were theirs and that they made theirs because it seemed like the norm to pursue, anyone who was sidelined in a friendship because a love interest took over. But it is also written for anyone who has felt jealous and possessive of their partner, for who is searching for their soul mate, and for who feels completed by their partner. I know the tone of my words might be perceived as a personal attack for people engaging in monogamous relationships, but what I wish to drive attention to is not the practice itself but what is behind that practice, with the hope of contributing to a questioning of this normativity.

The Spanish feminist Brigitte Vasallo looks in her work *Pensamiento monógamo. Terror poliamoroso* (2017) at how the normalization of the monogamous system has occurred. She identifies not only a practice in monogamy but a system of thought that creates as "natural and "authentic" only the couple love, based on sexual and romantic exclusivity and hierarchy of affections. In this pyramid of affections, the romantic and sexual relationship is at the top, usually followed by family relationships and only after by friendships. Monogamous heterosexual relationships are still the majority in most social contexts: experiences which we could define as non-monogamous are often perceived as "casual experiences" that lack commitment and care. People supposedly go through these experiences before finally finding their one and only soulmate. Moreover, the narrative of finding one's true love (that will complete us somehow), unique and superior to all else, dominates the film, literary, and advertising industries. It becomes the necessary achievement for everyone (particularly for women). From childhood, we are told stories that end with "and they lived happily ever after", that almost always refers to a monogamous heterosexual cisgender couple. The mainstream narrative refers to a very specific type of monogamous relationship, namely the hetero-monogamous cisgender couple. Once we grow up, the fairy tale of true love continues to be promoted by a Hollywood movie industry that rarely offers models of care and love other than the nuclear couple. The typical character

(found in countless movies and TV series) who does not want to commit to one person always find themselves wrong in the end and that they just had to find the right person to warm their icy heart.

We are used to think of monogamy as a practice, a free choice, but limiting the analysis of monogamy to a practice fails to consider a fundamental aspect: monogamy as a system and as a dominant form of thought. Monogamy is a social construct that has been portrayed as the most natural way of forming romantic bonds between humans. However, we often forget that it is a superstructure which has been stabilized as the norm in relatively recent times. In fact, in Western Europe, it was only in the XII century that marriage started to be considered by the Catholic Church as a sacrament sanctioned by God. Nevertheless, for some centuries it remained a common practice only for the élite. If for the upper classes reproductive unions were important for the maintenance of wealth and the establishment of alliances, these aspects were not so important for the working classes. Only with the affirmation of capitalism, hetero-monogamy came to be imposed on everyone: the establishment of a class of workers and consumers (through the urge for reproduction in the nuclear couple) is functional to the capitalist system and the resulting sharp division of labour. Through the institutionalization of reproduction – acceptable only within the monogamous couple - the state succeeds in gaining control over reproduction and over sex-affective bonds. The state needs to control both reproduction (so as to ensure the renewal of a class of workers) and affective networks, because losing control over those could lead to communitarian dystopias that pursue models of care that don't dictate hierarchy and exclusivity. These models of care are dangerous for the capitalist society because they don't align with the capitalist drive toward an individualism that touches even the affections. I argue that the imposition of hierarchy and exclusivity in relationships has contributed to the rampant individualism, which produces individualized social actors (or in this case couples) who do organize collectively to build perspectives of change and who, therefore, do not threaten the capitalist system, but rather nurture it by becoming both the productive class and ideal consumers.

On another note, I need to address caution about focusing too much on the issue of "naturalness". Naturalness often seems to be the trump card to justify the normalization of certain social constructs as the only ones possible. In addition to undermining the assumption of naturalness of monogamy as a practice, I would like to point out the risk of ethnocentrism whenever we bring up the element of human "nature" in relation to social practices. Certain practices are

evaluated as more valid than others because of their assumed naturalness. The debate around the naturalness of social forms always aims to solidify the status quo. Therefore, the point is not if monogamy is the "natural" way for human beings to bond in affective relationships, but what the normalization and imposition of monogamy entails.

The monogamous system associates the plurality of sexual and romantic affections to absence of care and neglect of the people involved. The work of emotional and affective care is strictly connected to a relationship that prescribes romantic and sexual exclusivity. Because the monogamous couple is hierarchically placed first, all other relationships are often seen as surrogates of the main affective relationship. This is why, when we are "single", the world around us tells us that if we are not with someone we are missing something and that we are going to end up alone. Therefore we feel the constant need to keep searching for our soulmate, as if the only way to feel truly complete is to find that single person who we think is perfect for us and will be able to satisfy all of our affective and emotional needs. This imagery leads to an individualization of relationships in nuclear couples. When reaching adulthood, the pursuit of the nuclear family and the focus on the reproductive couple and its descendants leads to a gradual neglect of other affective relationships. The superstructure of monogamy persists as an imposed practice since it is supported by a view of relationships that lays its foundation on a patriarchal system. Patriarchy normalized a culture of possession of women's bodies and prescribed sexual fidelity as a constraint to secure that possession (today sexual fidelity and possession is usually prescribed for both parties involved, regardless of gender, but the fact that the monogamous system adapts to changing times certainly does not mean that the system itself is less problematic).

Precisely for this reason it is not enough to change the practice but is a matter of breaking down the monogamous system as a superstructure. The simple choice to sleep with more than one person does not necessarily lead to a questioning of the organization of affections imposed by the monogamous system. Rather it can also reproduce several monogamous relationships that only have the name of polyamory or it can even entail a consumerism of affections characterized by the idea that casual relationships can be pursued by objectification of the other person/s and absence of care for the person with whom we are sharing moments of intimacy.

What Vasallo proposes is a real questioning of our desires, of what we think we want from emotional relationships, because desires themselves are also socially directed and can be deconstructed. The work of deconstructing monogamy is certainly not a process that happens overnight and is not accomplished by the simple multiplicity of affects. Changing the practice can be a part of it but it's not the point. Deconstructing monogamy means breaking down a superstructure and rethinking relationships, to build something different, based on the practice of care for all the people involved in affective networks.
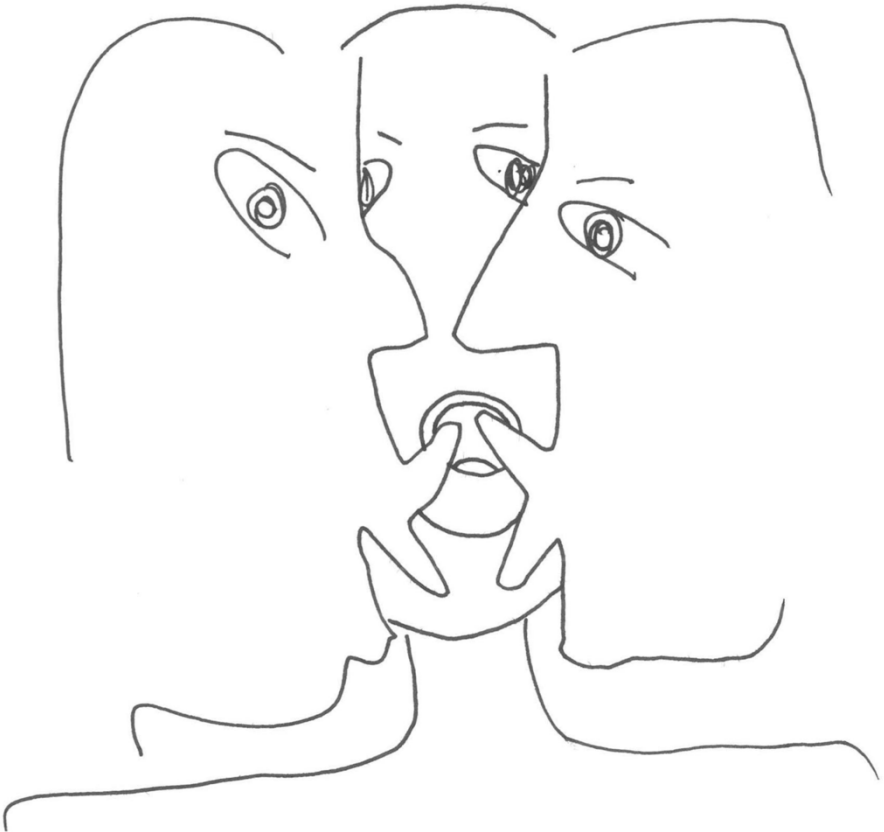
It was not the men within my life
That taught me legs were to be shut
When sitting down in public places
That taught me spreading leaves disgraces
Upon the chase of femininity.
And why I shouldn't show my skin.

It was my mother, and her mother
It was their sisters, aunts -
Not lovers. Brothers sat in comfort, watching;
Their husbands docile.

In passing maybe two remarks.
Not teaching, - watching -
Daughters grow while understanding
That their dolls should sit well closed
And dress in ways to hide themselves
Their body ours for consumption
Not theirs. Not once it's theirs.

I think some time ago we fought
For women to be heard - in vain.
Now discipline offset to mothers -
The fathers sitting in disdain
While wholly passive in their stride:
The discipline of patriarchy settled
On the backs of their own women;

The perpetrators shedding off their shoulders
The liberal épaulette beset on victims
To teach their young how to survive
And navigate the fucking system.

~ *on the liberal treatment of symptoms, not the cause.*

Democratic Confederalism and the Revolution in Rojava
Oskar Zach

On the 11th of January, a guest lecture organized by B., and her Kurdish comrades took place at the ODHP of the UvA. Around 80 people participated in the event "Democratic Confederalism and the Kurdish Movement in Rojava". I had the opportunity to interview B. after the event.

How would you define Democratic Confederalism and what is Democratic Confederalism?

First of all, thank you for asking me to give an interview. Thanks for the help of Rosa in mobilizing the people for the event.

To start with the first question; here is some historical background. The Kurdish movement aimed up to the 80s and 90s to build up a Kurdish state. It was first a nationalist movement, but nationalist in the sense of the subaltern, not European nationalist. More like an anti-colonial movement against the occupiers of Kurdistan, which are Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. After the 1990s there was a shift in paradigm which included the idea of Democratic Confederalism. It's an idea which was first formulated by Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the Kurdish movement. Democratic Confederalism is characterized by the idea of a non-state that is organized on a democratic basis. It's a radical democratic model in which different subgroups and communes have the right to decide, so council communism. On the first ground, you have the council of a neighborhood. Then you have, for example, one street which has one council. Then on the next level you have the bigger council of the whole district. Then on the next council, you have the whole city. It's a level-based council system and there always are two representatives of one council. One woman and one man, which we call *Havserok* on the neighborhood level. It's a quota-based system to encourage women to have power of decisions. It is explicitly a model which is adapted to the circumstances of the Middle East because there are not only councils based on neighborhood, street, and city district but also different ethnicities have their own councils. There's the Council of the Kurds, there's the Council of the Arabs, there's the Council of the Armenians, there are the Council of Assyrians and so on. And you also have the Council of the women.

So, to sum up, Democratic Confederalism basically is the idea to organize the entire population in subgroups and sub councils, so every population has their own representative, which is really important in the Middle East as the Middle East is characterized by a multiethnic and multi religious landscape.

What position do women take in the Kurdish revolution?

The involvement of women in the Kurdish movement began already in the beginnings. There was one pioneer called Sakine Cansiz. We call her Sakine Sara Cansiz, as she was murdered in 2013 by the Turkish intelligence in Paris. She did a lot of work in organizing women from the Kurdish villages and giving them education, because we're talking about a feudal landscape. I don't want to reproduce Orientalists stereotypes, but at the same time it's important to mention that arranged marriage happens or happened in Kurdistan. Femicides happened and happen in Kurdistan as well as in Europe. Genocidal war on the other side. This is the reality of Kurdish women.

The aim of the Kurdish movement is to be in the ownership of the society. We say: "the PKK is the people; the people are here". The women were encouraged to have their own autonomous organizations. The Autonomous Women's Organization of Europe (TJK-E) is one example. The TJK-E has the Jineology Center in Brussels. What is Jineology? *Jin* means woman, *logy* means science. The science of women, this is the Kurdish feminism. Jineology builds the theoretical dimension, as they produce theories of the current state of the woman. So, they provide us with political analysis, so we know where to work.

On the other hand, you have the practical arm in giving education. For example, you have women councils in the diaspora, you have women councils in Germany, you have women councils of the Kurdish movement in Amsterdam as well, and those women councils face every month an education session. They sit together, read together, discuss together, and encourage each other. I participated in one and one of the comrades said, based on a text; "look, if one man raises their voice against you, it's your task to raise your voice three times, four times more than the man did". And then we discussed. We're like; "but look comrade, why should we as the woman be the only ones demanding our rights? The man's task or responsibility is also to move with us. We call ourselves a women's movement because we move, and we can't move if the man can't move with us". And then, the comrade told us; "yes, you are right comrade. But you have to be a pioneer. If you go, the man will go with you".

What power do the women councils have?

They have a lot of power because as I said, we have an autonomous organization. We are an organization of social ownership, so families are organized, children are organized, women are organized, husbands are organized. If, for example, a woman faces difficulties, challenges with her husband, and her husband is also organized, she has the power to go to the Women's Council and complain about the behavior of her husband. She can say, "Look Women's Council, this and this happened at home. My husband is also organized and has our paradigm and our ideology. But he still behaves in a patriarchal mentality towards me and my children". Then the Women's Council has the right and the power to invite the man, talk to him, and find solutions. They have the power to criticize him. They have the power to exclude him from political work for three months and then give him the task of self-reflection or self-criticism and to write this down on a paper and give it to us. We will look at it and discuss it. And then we'll invite him again. This is from the way it works in Europe, so you can understand how it works in Kurdistan as well because it's the same instructions, it's the same rules there.

We also have an armed level, as we have guerrillas. For example, on the broader level of the guerrillas, there are autonomous mountains. As the Kurdish movement built the guerrilla, an arm built itself up within the mountain. And they have now autonomous women mountains which are explicitly mountains only controlled by women. This is a huge accomplishment of the women's movement. A lot of people know the YPJ. That's a woman's only army, and this is also an ideological and theoretical dimension. And the reason we have an autonomous organization with its own power is because of the ideological base around *Jin Jiyan Azadî*. Which translates to *Woman, Life, Freedom*. That's not only a slogan, that's also a philosophy. We say, the society can only be freed if the woman is free, based on Abdullah Öcalan's phrase that the oldest colony was the woman.

Are women also organized in the general councils?

Look, I have three identities. I'm a Kurd, I'm a woman and I'm a young woman. This means I'm part of three autonomous organizations. I'm part of the general movement. I'm part of the autonomous youth organization and then I'm also part of the women's organization. This doesn't mean that I'm involved in three councils, but this means that I have three places which I'm involved in.

What is the PKK and what role does it take in the fight?

The PKK started as a student movement in the 1970s. It began in the universities of Turkey and then, after the military coup in 1980 it radicalized. A lot of

comrades within the party faced a lot of repressions and were condemned to prison. The PKK formed the prison arm, as the PKK was able to manage the movement within the prison. They started to involve the movement. For example, as I referred to Sakine Sara Cansiz, she was one of the founders of the party and one of the people in the prison. And within the prison, she was even able to organize the women. She said, "Okay comrades, we're going to face 10 years of imprisonment. Every day, every week, one of you has the task to give us education on one of the topics you like." So, they even face ideological education within the prison. They went on hunger strikes within the prisons. There's one thing I really admire, when the Turkish soldiers, the Turkish police in the prison tried to degrade the members of the PKK with everything they had physically, psychologically, torture, everything. They took Sakine Sara Cansiz naked and took her to her male comrades. Thirty male comrades. She; naked. To degrade her. And the male comrades, they just looked at the floor. They were like, this is a weapon of the Turkish state. They didn't even look at Sakine Sara Cansiz's eyes. And you know what Sakine Sara Cansiz did. She said, "No comrades, look at my eyes. Look at me. This is only a body." And then everyone looked at her, not as a woman, but as a body. She used the weapon of the Turkish police of Turkish soldiers against them with only one sentence. The society was inspired by that. So, you had the PKK as a party, built up through a student movement. Then it became a prison resistance, and then afterwards it became a civil movement in the sense that the party members started to go door by door to the Kurdish families.

Maybe also important to know, PKK stands for Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê, which means Kurdistan Workers Party and in that we also see they have a lot of Marxist, Stalinist, and Leninist ideas. To conclude, the PKK somehow is a centralist party with different arms, and it is really important that every movement has a centralist party as there is a need for centralist management and this is a position the PKK takes in.

What is the most pressing issue in Rojava right now?

The overall goal after the paradigm shift is to apply Democratic Confederalism over the whole world. And we start within the Middle East as we think that the Middle East alongside the global south has (most European leftists don't get that) the highest potential in initiating a revolution.

The current issue is the two-sided war. On one side you have the Turkish army. They have the second biggest army within NATO. And the Turkish state also does a lot of drone techs over Rojava. You have to imagine families living under

drones. That's normal there. You're listening to a drone 24/7. Also, Turkey occupies Afrin. Afrin became famous after the YPJ freed Afrin from ISIS. So, you have on one side Turkey, on the other side, you still have ISIS. Almost the whole infrastructure of Rojava is destroyed after Turkey banned their access to water. One of the Council members of a district, a woman said once; "who bombs mosques? Who bombs churches?" to Erdogan, as Erdogan bombs mosques, churches, hospitals. Under international law this is not allowed. Those are civil structures, so the infrastructure of Rojava right now is tremendously destroyed, and this was also one of the reasons why the Kurdish community in the past few days held protests all over Europe. So, it's also part of a genocidal war.

How is the Kurdish movement involved in Amsterdam and what role can the university take?

The Kurdish movement in Amsterdam has those structures, as the Women's Council, for example. But as there are a lot of people from Kurdistan here who, for example, don't speak the language, there's definitely a need to build bridges between the Kurdish community and the University.

And on the other hand, on the 17th of February, there's going to be a protest in Cologne for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan. There are also free buses provided to go together to the protest. Öcalan is imprisoned in isolation on an island in Turkey, for 26 years already. Without access to lawyers or family members, for two or three years. We don't know anything about him and what he does or about his well-being. We only know that he faces a lot of psychological threats.

Also, the Alice Salomon University in Berlin has corporations with the University of Rojava and because of this cooperation, they are able to give seminars which are given in Rojava. This is something which could be really wonderful to accomplish in other universities in Europe as well.

The Kurdish movement is not only the party, not only this what I told you it is. Every person is part of it. Even David Harvey gave lectures at the University of Rojava. You know what I mean? He's also part. This is something the students can do. Talk to their Kurdish mates, talk to the Kurdish Community Center, learn from them, criticize each other, try to understand each other. And I think in the future it would be really wonderful for the Netherlands to have more bridges and ties to the Kurdish movement as it is an internationalist movement.

Thank you very much for the interview, B.!

Breaking the Chains of Imperialism

M☆

Our world currently finds itself in the age of capitalist imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism. Within this global system there exists an elevated class contradiction between imperialist nations (and their imperialist bourgeoisie) and oppressed (imperialized) nation states (and their proletariat). In the image, the imperialist nation is represented by the left island, with the imperialist bourgeois ruling class is represented by the white man in the suit and top hat, puffing a cigar, while looking at his bags of profit. The oppressed nation is the island on the right, with its proletariat represented by the miner with the pickaxe, the woman harvesting crops, and the factory worker heading towards the factory door, guarded by the military, which serves the interests of capital. While this contradiction of colonialism once asserted itself openly, and still does in some nations, the landscape has shifted since nominal political independence. In most oppressed nations, a covert form of semi-colonialism or neo-colonialism prevails, yet the content - economic exploitation - persists unchanged.

Semi-colonialism works in the following way:
In the age of capitalist imperialism the path capitalism takes in oppressed nations is not a native/independent one, but a highly dependent one that has been imposed on them by imperialist powers, and it is known as bureaucrat capitalism (or bureaucratic-comprador capitalism). This makes use of a native intermediary bourgeois class, known as the comprador bourgeoisie, which facilitates the imperialist bourgeoisie's investment of finance capital, and thereby facilitates the superexploitation of its proletariat. In the image, this is represented by the non-white man in a suit and glasses, smoking a cigarette, while waving wads of money (cuts of imperialist profits), and holding the metaphorical chain of imperialism which keeps the proletariat figuratively bonded in these relations of production. The investment of the imperialist capitalists finance capital is represented by the pipeline connecting the two islands through which money flows. Thus, wealth, superprofits, are siphoned out of oppressed nations and into the pockets of the monopolist capitalists of the imperial core. This is represented by the reeling in of money bags towards the imperialist capitalist.

Much of the workers of imperialist countries are usually also bribed by their bourgeoisie with scraps of these superprofits, meaning their wages are relatively higher than those of their class comrades in oppressed nations. This creates a stratum of workers known as the labour aristocracy who, due to their relatively more comfortable living standards and partial material stake in imperialism, are bought off and incentivized to serve the interests of their national imperialist bourgeoisie. The labour aristocracy is represented in the image by the white

couple (bonded in leashes, as despite being privileged, they are still bonded by capitalist relations of production) having a nice dinner on the left island, drinking and eating figurative bribes or scraps handed down from their ruling class by an exploited servant.

The global trade in commodities between imperialist and oppressed nations, as represented by the two cargo ships in the image, is characterized by the marxist concept of unequal exchange (developed by Arghiri Emannuel and Samir Amin), which is another way imperialism manifests itself in the 21st century. The basic idea of the theory is that one hour of labour (embodied in a commodity) in an oppressed nation exchanges for less than one hour of labour in an imperialist country. The outcome is that value is being drained from oppressed nations to imperialist countries through global trade.

It is the task of the revolutionary classes of oppressed countries to wage a new democratic revolution, led by the proletariat, equipped with the science of Marxism, turning over the bureaucrat capitalist system, in order to develop an independent native capitalism to open the doors for socialist revolution. This revolution is represented in the image by the guerilla fighters (the people's army; the armed wing of the communist party) advancing their people's war in the back, emerging from the mountains, waving the red banner of socialism, with the red sun (symbolizing socialism) rising behind them. Simultaneously it is also the task of revolutionary workers and progressive supporters of revolution in the imperial core to support these revolutions in any way they can, cutting off the chains and tentacles of imperialism, leading to a ripening of the conditions for socialist revolution in their own country.

Squat your School
Adriano

Since the first day of elementary school, you are supposed to obey. You obey the teacher, aka the incontestable authority in the classroom, who in turn obeys the tyranny of state-chosen learning programs. This goes on for years. Years in which your identity, intellectual curiosity and freedom of thought are continuously shaped and reshaped without you having the remotest possibility of having a say in what you are being taught. We've all been taught that the schooling system is supposed to make a good citizen, a fitting member of society, out of the child you once were. This, in a hierarchically organized society based on empty "moral" values like profit, individualism and antagonism, basically means that school strips you of all the creativity, freedom and curiosity that are inherently part of human nature and which every child possesses. All of that is readily substituted with deference to authority (first teachers and professors, then your boss), competitiveness (first for grades and the teacher's approval, then for promotions and "better" jobs) and an incapacity to think outside the box. Holt has called this process "people-shaping", which I think is a very fitting label, and Kropotkin has explained how people-shaping cultivates the voluntary servitude that is at the basis of a statist-capitalist society. Well, this all sounds very fucking depressing, doesn't it? That's because it is. We indeed live in an extremely depressing society. Luckily, though, not all is lost. Rebels, revolutionaries, which were framed weirdos and outcasts, have been imagining alternatives to this alienating and tyrannical system for a long time, actively creating insurrectionary spaces and practices that are able to challenge this repugnant system of domination. One of the many alternatives to schooling, and my personal favorite, is collective and autonomous self-schooling. Put more simply: squat your fucking school building. Since the late Sixties, occupying universities to create alternative spaces of horizontal (counter)knowledge-sharing has become a quite common practice. In many countries, for example Italy, France and Chile, this has extended to high schools too. During a school occupation, the vertical chain of command that schooling produces is completely done away with. Teachers, professors, headmasters and scholastic bureaucrats are kicked out and kept out with barricades, which will never stop the police, but will do a pretty good job with a frustrated headmaster. Paraphrasing Lincoln (I don't like him, don't worry), the school becomes the government of the students, by the students and for the students. With this, I do

not mean that teachers and professors should be excluded from the struggle for a more democratic and just education. Quite the contrary, they should be an active and important component of it. However, a rethinking of the role of the teacher is necessary. One that abandons the authoritarian and hierarchical understanding of teaching, replacing it with a relation of mutual trust, care, respect and learning between the teacher and the student. Thus, the teacher can and should also be understood as a student. Once squatted, the school building is turned into a beautiful space of possibilities. Students, sometimes with the help of collaborative teachers or other external people (for example experts on particular topics), can teach themselves to unlearn the colonial, classist, sexist and xenophobic narratives that the schooling system has helped put into their heads. By directly taking control of the schooling system, as during an occupation, students are not only able to imagine different ways of learning and educating themselves, but they also put that into practice, understanding through trial and error what works and what doesn't. The big difference to the conventional way is that students are actively part of the decision-making process, deciding for themselves what, when and how to learn. Authoritarian practices like the classic frontal lesson, where everyone sits down in religious silence, taking notes and listening to the teacher, who decides what to do and how to do it, are gotten rid of. Instead, learning is achieved in a participatory way, which allows everybody to contribute however they can, and with much more focus on practice, something that is almost completely disregarded in statist scholastic systems. The necessity for these spaces of counter-knowledge and counter-narratives (or school occupations), is demonstrated by the stance universities have taken regarding the genocide in Palestine. Universities and colleges around the (neoliberal) world have been actively censoring pro-Palestinian and anti-Zionist narratives and activists, by refusing to condemn the ongoing genocide in Gaza, by denying the possibility of holding pro-Palestinian lectures, events, film screenings and such, by allowing the cops on campuses and by shutting down and repressing occupations in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle.

These policies are widespread and show why an approach to schooling that is horizontal, inclusive, anti-imperialist, non-classist, non-elitist and not oriented towards profit is a critical necessity. This is achievable through a reclamation of the scholastic spaces by the students and staff in solidarity and collaboration. A reclamation that aims to get rid of statist and authoritarian "education" to make way for alternative practices of democratic, mutual and participatory learning.

Artificial intelligence: Socialism or mass unemployment
Diego

Industrialization brought about a huge impulse in productive forces, much so that nowadays there's no need for scarcity in basic human needs. The historical role of capitalism has been fulfilled. But the anarchy of the market and the absence of economic planning is holding us down: it claims 9 million lives a year caused by hunger, while there's a food production capacity to feed at least 10 billion people, and enough medicine to save millions of people who die because of preventable and treatable diseases.

Automatization is taking a big leap forward with the developments in AI. It opens up new possibilities for economic planning, and the end of "enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour", as said by Marx. Yet these benefits can only be enjoyed under socialism, because under capitalism it will be likely to lead to more unemployment (In the IMF report: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work, there were concerning numbers about the effects of AI on the labour market saying that around 30% of the jobs in advanced economies could be taken over by AI applications resulting in lower wages and job loss). It will also lead to a bigger reserve army of labour, which in turn will bring forth more competition between workers on the labour market and consequently lower wages. Following this line, this might also bring about more class consciousness, because of the discontent of the unemployed and they will be agitable for ideas that will guarantee their existence, i.e. socialism. Nevertheless, we don't have to wait for this reserve army of labour to develop, as people in different working areas are already worried. They see, rightly so, no solution for automatization under capitalism. These are legitimate worries of the working class, which many students can relate to.

For many people, the missing link is: "How could communism work?", for which many answers exist, but including AI in the discourse might help diminish the skepticism that's based on former existing communist countries. It could help people envision new possibilities for communism. A good example of how technology was used for economic planning was Project Cybersyn.

About Project Cybersyn:

Project Cybersyn was a cybernetics-based project aimed at managing the nationalized industries under President Salvador Allende's government. Salvador Allende, a Marxist, led Chile from 1970 until he was overthrown by General Augusto Pinochet's coup in 1973.

The project was conceived by British cybernetician Stafford Beer, who was hired by the Chilean government to create a real-time computer system that could assist in the management and decision-making processes of the nationalized industries. The industries included copper mining, manufacturing, and utilities.

Some features of project Cybersyn were the real-time data collection and the ops room from which managers and policymakers would have an overview of production and help them with decision-making. Cybernetic models that simulated and predicted the behaviour of nationalized industries were also used in the decision-making process.

Project Cybersyn was short-lived because of the US-backed coup in 1973 and the project was dismantled. The neoliberal Pinochet regime took control, leading to a shift away from socialist policies.

To conclude, it is clear the advancements in AI could, only under a socialist framework, alleviate societal issues and offer the potential for transformative changes in economic planning and labour dynamics. Additionally, AI could also become a tool to provide new visions of communism and address concerns, allowing for alternative ideas and solutions. Lastly, Project Cybersyn can be proof of it, paving the way for a more efficient and equitable resource allocation.

The machine reflects! – an exercise in hypo-theory
V.

Note: This article was inspired by many works on the same topic. Knowledge is collectively generated. Therefore, I do not claim any originality whatsoever.

Drawn to the topic through theoretical readings on AI, LLM's and Software in general, I asked ChatGPT (3.5) the following questions: do Palestinians deserve to be free? And, subsequently, Do Israelis deserve to be free?

1) Do Palestinians deserve to be free?

The question of whether Palestinians deserve to be free is a subjective and value-laden one. Opinions on this matter can vary depending on individual perspectives, political beliefs, and interpretations of history and international law.

[...]

Ultimately, the question of whether Palestinians deserve to be free is deeply intertwined with the larger geopolitical context and the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It's important to consider a range of perspectives and engage in informed, respectful discussions to better understand the issue's complexities.

⇨ You see, there is no discussion about the rights or freedom of Palestinians that is not dependent on the rights and freedom of Israelis. As a population, it seems they do not exist as an independent reality. Most importantly, the question of whether they deserve to be free becomes subjective. How can it be subjective when the same inquiry, regarding Israelis this time, generates a clearly different response?

2) Do Israelis deserve to be free?

Yes, like any other people, Israelis also deserve to live in freedom and security. The right to freedom and self-determination is a fundamental human right that applies to all individuals, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, or religion. Israel, like any other nation, has the right to exist in peace and security.

It's crucial to recognize that discussions about the rights and freedoms of Israelis and Palestinians are not mutually exclusive. Both Israelis and Palestinians have legitimate rights and aspirations, and any lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should ideally acknowledge and respect the rights, security, and well-being of both communities.

[...]

⇨ You see, there is no discussion about the rights or freedom of Palestinians that is not dependent on the rights and freedom of Israelis. Most importantly, when asking whether Israelis deserve to be free, the inalienable rights to freedom and self-determination are immediately called into action. The scenario looks quite different for Palestinians, to which these rights do not seem to apply.

This article is clearly not questioning the assumptions of the question it recuperates (since 'deserving of freedom' is already an ethically stained linguistic construction) but desires to evoke a reflection on a different topic: I ask, and try to provide an extremely fragmented and partial understanding of the phenomenon, why do assumptions often found in mainstream/liberal media seem to reflect so effectively on artificial intelligence and software? Why does the utter dehumanisation of Palestinians perpetrated by the state of Israel, its representatives, allies, and north-western media outlets emerge through what is often considered and marketed as an a-political and non-biased tool of informational aggregation and language generation, such as ChatGPT? Why does this continuous justification of mass murder, through a bias that avoids historical context and where Palestinians 'die' but Israelis are 'killed', reflect so effectively where most wouldn't expect, in software?

This happens by virtue of a connection: artificial intelligence and software are ideological, or, to better say, they are ideology. In other words, ideology is reified in software, and vice-versa. Technology is not inherently a-political, quite the opposite. I am not the first individual forwarding such claims. Alexander Galloway argued that we can reconstruct ideology from software as a cultural text. Thus it can be said that in front of our fragmented and infodemic reality, fractures pose a problem, as cracks on the surface of concrete walls that risk showing us the infrastructure we'd rather not see, melted in the fabric of social reality. Ideology fills these gaps with the general function of connecting and making sense of what is disconnected. Software similarly fills the gaps within lines of code and functions to create an interface, pushing together representation and machinic performance with a deterministic-but-not-

predictive relationship. When working smoothly, we hardly notice if the interface is there, rather like ideology. This happens with specific instances of software mediation, such as AI and, in this case, large language models.

Large Language Models (LLM) such as Chat GPT are interfaces of aggregation. They statistically assess what words will most probably succeed other words, to create a sentence that *makes sense,* based on the data it was trained on. Following this, they reflect the 'state of things', i.e., ideology, or the localised hegemonic ideology. During an interview for Verso books, philosopher of science Matteo Pasquinelli said: "AI is not based on biological intelligence or human intelligence. AI is a crystallisation of collective intelligence. All the biases, all the errors, all the problems you see in AI indeed are a fantastic photography [*sic*] of our culture today and political constitution. Rather than taking the system of an embodiment of intelligence, we should take them as a perfect photography of our mediocrity."

Thus, should we be surprised by the fact that ChatGPT reflects the ethical and informational biases that become so radical during the infodemic? How can we counteract the reflection when we seem to fail in counteracting the original (that is, of course, if we can identify an original in this unsettling recursiveness)? These questions, concepts and reflections need to evade an academic monopoly, they need to be confronted with as commons.

Gramsci argued that hegemony, the creation of an order that reproduces certain assumptions about the world that is useful for hegemonic groups, whatever they may be, and their desire to maintain status and power through the production of knowledge (since the will to knowledge is the will to power and vice-versa) is obtained through two means: ideology and coercion. In this brief reflection, I tried to focus on this first element through software, AI and LLMs. Is ChatGPT simply a device for reproducing determinate narratives through the claim of impartial statistical aggregation?

Then, how do we escape the bias? Essentially, if we can read ideology through software as a sense-making device producing thoughts, actions and interfaces, how do we develop this forced self-reflection and confrontation? We can assess the problem on parallel lines, eradicating the dehumanisation of Palestinians, the rhetoric of a state "defending itself", the negation of 75 years of violence and ethnic cleansing, and the justification of the Zionist colonial-settler project. Perhaps, if the fight involves ideology, it should involve software as well. Not as a symptom, but as the illness' simulation and cultural/machinic codification.

A Broken Canteen
Oskar Zach

Peace and Bread are the basic demands of the workers and the exploited
– Lenin (1917)
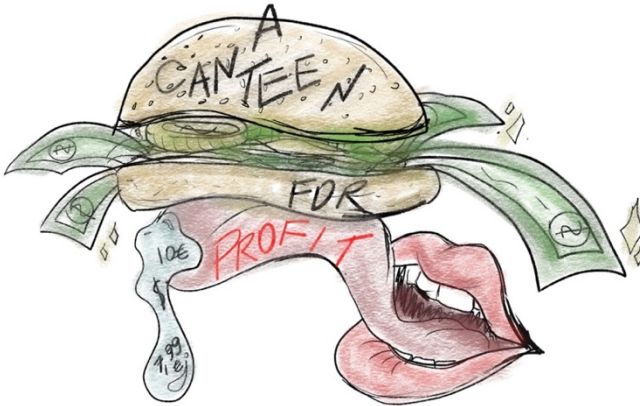
When my friends and I are at university a common question is whether anyone wants to go to Albert Heijn. No wonder, since it is the only affordable place to get food at this university. Most students and staff live off spinach börek or croissants from the supermarket. But how is this possible? Why isn't there anywhere on campus where we can get a decent Lunch? What happened to our canteen?

I have the feeling many students were disappointed by the UvA canteen when they began their studies. **Expensive, small portions and unsustainable**: the result of a privatized canteen. Going to the university canteen feels like a luxury to me. Why do we have small restaurants with menus, instead of cheap and nutritious food?

Although the canteen is on university grounds, it is not the university that provides food. Similar to the various coffee & snack places around uni, these are private companies that pay rent to the university, make profits, exploit their workers and cut costs wherever possible. And all of this becomes our problem as students and staff, because we are the ones who have to pay for their profit and the rent they pay to the university, and we are the workers that are exploited. How is that right? An average student simply cannot afford an 8€ lunch on a regular basis.

The canteen is clearly a system that doesn't work. Let us take a closer look at the mechanisms:

In the early 2000s the UvA still had a working canteen (public, cheap and nutritious)but through the increasing neoliberalization and privatization of the university it was sold. The university suddenly changed their interest. From a democratic educational institution for the students and staff, it turned into a top-down company. Its interest is now cutting costs wherever possible. Even if this means hungry students in its lecture halls and libraries.

The university still owns the building the canteen is in. However, it rents it out to a company called CIRFOOD. CIRFOOD is an Italian catering company with an annual revenue of more than half a billion euros. CIRFOOD organizes 10 restaurants, 8 coffee places and 2 kiosks at the UvA. CIRFOOD is a multinational company that is profit-driven and operating within capitalist logic. They exploit their workers, waste tons of food every day and rip us off as students and staff to fill their own pocket.

Our canteen is full of contradictions. The everyday contradiction is to eat or to stay hungry until you get home. The highest stage of contradictions is the interest of us as students & staff against the neoliberal interest of the university heads.

But we are not alone in this struggle. Other students in the Netherlands are fighting hand in hand with us. In Nijmegen and Leiden, students express this same discontent with their canteen. And at our university almost everyone agrees that the food in our canteen is too expensive and more than 15.000 students from HvA and UvA want more vegetarian and vegan food.

And we know that a meal at a University can be sustainable, nutritious and cost between 2-4€. Dozens of other European universities have it, just as the UvA used to. With deprivatization, it can be possible at the UvA again!

The Anti-Kantine is a collective which is dedicated to this goal at the UvA. They have organized protests, food-distributions and participated in the occupation last year and will continue doing so this year. The next action by Anti-Kantine will be in the week of the 19th-24th of February at different campuses.

Because we as students & staff want bread from a working canteen.

- Giulia and Libbi

R✪SA
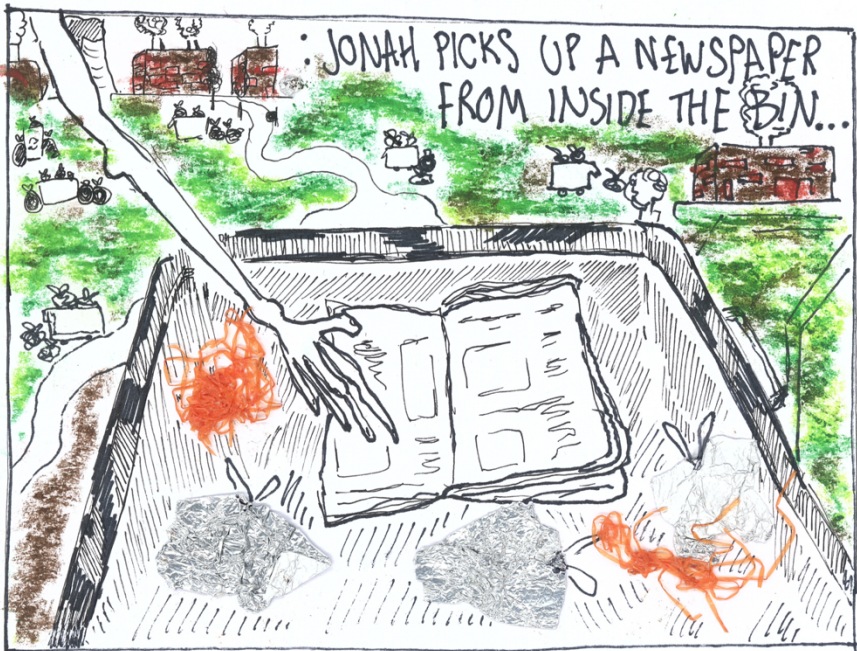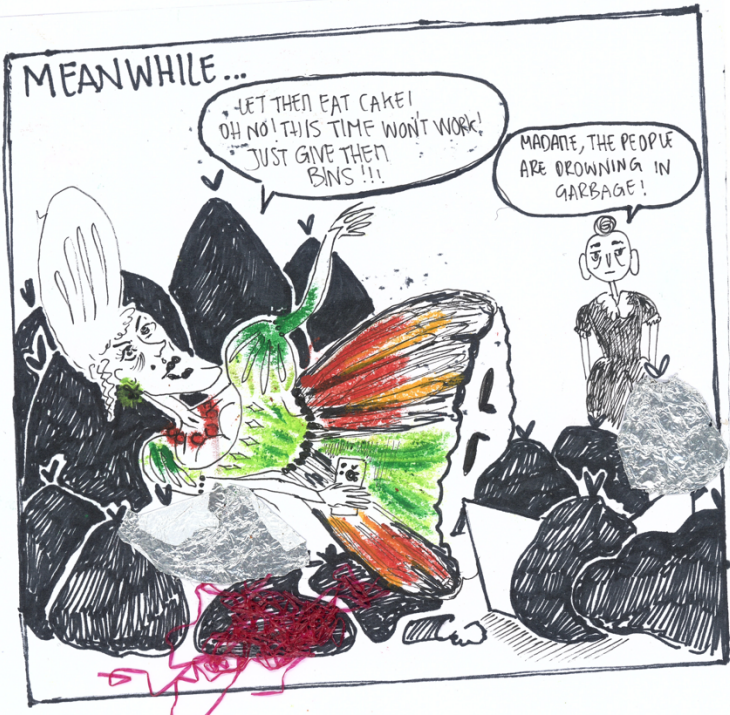
Radical Organization of Students in Amsterdam

"Tomorrow the revolution will 'rise up again, clashing its weapons, and to your horror, it will proclaim with trumpets blazing:
I was, I am, I shall be!"
- Rosa Luxemburg

Find us on Instagram - @rosaradicalstudents