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EDITORIAL

STATE, AUTHORITARIANISM, AND CLASS STRUGGLE

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The set of articles published in this issue of *Revista Katálysis* are embedded in the relations among *state, authoritarianism, and class struggle*. It is a timely and necessary combination of articles to reflect on the current concerns and challenges. The articles have a strong connection with pulsating realities in different parts of the world, focusing on dimensions and trends that face the understanding of contemporary capitalism and its living forms of barbarism. From the point of view of the Latin American continent, the texts resume the socio-historical, economic, political, and cultural determinations that characterize the dependent nature of the particular processes at the origin of contemporary capitalism, drawing attention to the references that find its criticism in the totality of social life.

The articles mostly dialogue with aspects of the Marxist tradition, claiming the memory and trajectory of the exploited and oppressed peoples of Latin America, the Caribbean and also Asia and Africa, reconstructing the nature of the state and the social forces in place, and how they face the forms of bourgeois domination and the conjunctures of structural violence.

When situating in the world the state's class nature and its connections with the dominant capitalist classes and fractions, the articles stress the subordinate and peripheral condition of the economies analyzed. They emphasize that the economic and political dimensions are inseparable and indispensable to support the historically effective authoritarian processes and, fundamentally, to make bourgeois objectivity subjective.

When approaching the countries' economic insertion, the conceptual pair development-inequality is used to explain the constructed sociability. Therefore, fundamental elements conforming to the ways of life with bourgeois rationality appear, not hierarchically. It is evident how the dependent economies and their local governments, under different contexts, have abdicated the construction of grassroots bottom-up national projects and have entered the world market in an uneven and combined way, but always leveraging the processes of expansion and reproduction of capital.

In this totality, the domination imposed on the exploited and true producers of the socially produced wealth mainly affected black people, essentially marked by violent forms of expropriation of their lands, lack of social protection, and suppression and control of their struggles. Equally important, authors who evolved on the colonial past and the historical movement of particular realities are evoked, treating them theoretically and methodologically as a unit in diversity. In other words, there are common traits and elements that frame the constitution of these societies, in aspects related to their productive and accumulation dynamics – characterized by the destruction of their natural resources – and different degrees of political, social, and cultural relations that were established between the social classes,



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flowing into political forms that moved between the functions of coercion and consensus of the state – not in an exclusive way – to manage the class struggle.

It is precisely in this respect that the texts correctly refer to the inheritance of bloody dictatorships, particularly in Latin America, to understand the meaning of an obscure period and the annihilation of democratic freedom, at a time when the classes and fractions of the ruling classes acted to expand their capacity to produce bourgeois sociability to ensure the conditions for the reproduction of capitalist social relations.

Civil-business-military dictatorships in Latin America took over states and practiced the most barbaric expressions of violence, developing the most effective methods of controlling and disciplining the workforce and forging ideological mechanisms for naturalizing social inequalities. They regulated legal and political forms of overexploitation of the workforce and its domain, with the permanent activation of private devices of hegemony to prevent popular and party organizations' advance. The most reactionary face of the state and its local governments left destructive marks on social life's proactive and reproductive aspects, which are presented in the analyses published in this issue. The authors have taken these historical references to analyze the emergence, development, and conditions under which Latin American countries' political transition processes and their democratic experiences took place – albeit restricted and within the framework of bourgeois sociability. Their analysis considered the dynamics of the worldwide capitalist crisis, deepening since the 1970s, which demanded effective responses to recompose the pattern of capitalist accumulation and its forms of domination.

When investigating the productive restructuring processes of capital combined with neoliberal policies that spread throughout the world, the authors make analytical cuts in their research objects that give rise to reflections on this process's general determinations and the mediation necessary to theoretically take ownership of the movement of the real life. Thus, the knowledge produced in these articles follows the path of understanding the foundations that illuminate the present and the contemporary and the particular expressions they deal with. The authors are committed to understanding the characteristics of the socio-historical formations of the studied realities, apprehending the new configurations between the world market-state and the movement of classes and, fundamentally, the phenomena produced as a cultural soup emanating from this context.

The context of solutions to the world crisis brings objective issues such as increasing inequalities, unemployment, pauperism, informality, and environmental devastation. It also comes together with the elimination of social protection, persecution and genocide of black, indigenous, quilombola populations, young people from poor areas surrounding large cities, women, and LGBTQI+ movements. It is a context that gains strength and expression on subjective issues through a project of intellectual and moral reform conducted by the world bourgeoisie and its reactionary and conservative fractions, whose biggest phenomenon and threat is the rise of extreme right-wing movements on the transnational spectrum.

The counter-reforms of ultra neoliberal nature that deregulated the world of work and collective sociabilities, combined with the organization of rights at the international level, set the tone for the deep regression of civilizing processes. Mechanisms and forms and means of bourgeois domination have been realigned and updated, both via the state's control and via the private hegemony apparatuses, from which the media, churches, and civil society organizations stand out, represented by the intellectuals of capital.

The attack from the right-wing groups, embedded in national governments with international ramifications, ranges from preparing intellectuals and activists to be aligned with their project to an amplified and increasingly efficient network of information using from social media to strong and organized corporations. They adapt and shape ways of life, spreading values, ideas, and representations of the neoliberal subject. It is also worth highlighting, in this process, the profusion of neo-Pentecostal churches that bring together an army of followers around their proposals and ideologies and that, in the center of the discussions, place the valorization of family, tradition, work as prosperity and moralization in the ways of being and living.

The studies portrayed in this issue of *Revista Katalysis* focus on several aspects related to the profusion, capillarity, and incidence of these political and/or religious movements on social practices and struggles. This context reveals the permanent tension and disputes regarding the agenda of preserving rights, especially for minorities, and the criminalization of these minorities' resistance to the limitless moral attacks against the right to life.

Fundamentalisms, media outlets that broadcast fake news, denials of science, irrationality, and historical revisionism operate in a molecular and sophisticated way, finding in government officials the justifications for their alienating and reproductive initiatives of the bourgeois social order.

In the wake of this general dynamic, the Trump elections in the United States and Bolsonaro in Brazil exemplify the path and actions of the extreme right movements. Not that they did not exist, but the context of the capitalist crisis sharpened the counterrevolutionary ravages, leveraging what was already seen in European countries, through xenophobic, racist, sexist manifestations, of hatred of immigrants and the new poor of developed nations. This was a favorable scenario for governments to legitimize institutional violence against subordinated groups and assume coercion as a natural and everyday practice. In particular, in Brazil, the neo-fascist government of Jair Bolsonaro has fulfilled this role, supported on a parliamentary and militaristic basis.

The rise of nationalist, conservative, and reactionary movements in the world provoked, *pari passu*, the mobilization of sectors of society, with emphasis on the wave of protests led by feminist movements and anti-racist movements that adopted creative organization dynamics and knew how to give visibility and capillarity to their claims.

From the economic point of view, the crisis management went through the erasure of the so-called neo-developmental or social-liberal experiences, carried out in several Latin American countries since the 2000s. It also underwent a consequent recovery of the liberal economic principles that would allow, through adjustment and reform programs, lower labor force reproduction costs and boost capitalist profits. Class conciliation and the “nostalgia for Fordism,” as we know it, no longer offers possibilities in this context, either because of the impossibility of reconciling democracy and capitalism or because financialized capitalism and the rentier fractions of the dominant classes do not accept any commitment to distribute socially produced wealth.

These are the general lines and trends pointed out in the articles published. Many of them reflected, in the light of the COVID 19 pandemic, the permanence and deepening of inequalities, and the fraying of collective forms of sociability, marked by the coexistence of archaic and modern forms of overexploitation of the workforce and new forms of real subsumption from work to capital.

Contradictorily, the social tragedy that these historical forms of bourgeois domination produce daily throughout the world also sparks struggles. Furthermore, the prospects for renewing the struggles are highlighted within the articles in this issue, demonstrating that the researchers have accumulated analyses and recognized the needs and possibilities of analytical understanding of social processes through the historical and totalizing analysis of each concrete situation. Therefore, it is crucial to consider that the organizations of the subordinate classes have the challenge of incorporating the claims and guidelines of the different social movements and giving meaning and direction to the *new* that cannot yet appear.

Recife, November 30, 2020.

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