

Interview with Gorka Martija of OMAL

1. Why does the Observatory of Multinationals in Latin America (OMAL-PcD) participate in an observatory on the fair distribution of wealth?

The work of OMAL-PcD is fundamentally linked to the critical analysis and alternative proposal in the face of what has been called corporate power, that is, the architecture of economic, political, legal, cultural and social domination that derives from the ever-increasing power accumulated by transnational corporations and big capital (investment funds, etc.) in all these areas. This is our main task, what defines our existence, and from which various priority lines of work/research are derived: analysis of the global trends and mutations of 21st century capitalism, analysis of the morphology of capitalism at both state and Basque level, critical study of public policies for business internationalisation and attracting investment, trade and investment treaties, design and debate of eco-feminist and community alternatives in the face of this hegemonic corporate power, etc. We have also recently opened a powerful line around the *European Next Generation* funds and their by-products at state level (*Spain Can*) and in the Basque Autonomous Community (*Euskadi Next*). All these lines and strategic orientations of the observatory are conceived from a prism that is unequivocally critical of the dominant model, from the desire to contribute our grain of sand to the accumulation of forces for the creation of counter-power, in the face of a capitalism that is increasingly predatory as it becomes more and more immersed in the current systemic crisis.

From this perspective, it is clear that the inexorable advance of corporate power in all spheres of life is reflected in a growing accumulation of material wealth and capital in an ever smaller number of hands, the greatest exponent of this global trend being the emergence of technological giants such as Amazon or Facebook, which exacerbate the monopolistic inertia of the free flow of capitalism, in this case by taking advantage of the most innovative trends in digitalisation, etc. The counterpart of this trend is the growing impoverishment of broad strata of the global population, who suffer from the constant adjustment of their material living and working conditions, and whose access to the basic resources necessary for a dignified life is increasingly limited.

We are therefore faced with impacts of the first order, typical of the deployment of corporate power around which all our work as OMAL-PcD orbits. Therefore, our participation in the observatory on the fair distribution of wealth derives from the full connection of its objectives and starting parameters with our main lines of work. Likewise, we understand that we share not only the same field of work, but also the same viewpoint centred on parameters of confrontation with respect to the prevailing model and an emancipatory vocation in the face of the critical reality that we have described. Coincidence in areas of work and alternative views is what makes us present in the observatory.

2. Why is the accumulation of wealth and the resulting inequality it generates a problem?

As we said before, we are at a key moment in the history of capitalism, characterised by an evident systemic crisis of capitalism. Unlike previous cyclical crises, since the outbreak of 2008 it seems clear that the capitalist model is facing a series of structural dykes that limit its capacity to persevere in the indefinite expansion of the global mercantilist frontier, at least with the momentum it has had in previous historical phases: despite the excess of money flooding the markets, the growth margins of the global economy remain at very meagre figures, insufficient to deploy new virtuous cycles of substantial economic growth; the biophysical limits of the planet

also constitute an element that directly confronts the capitalist logic of incessant search and reproduction of new market niches, on the basis of the mantra of eternal economic growth: thus, climate change, global warming and the depletion of fossil resources that have driven the last century of industrial capitalist development, place us before a scenario of objective unfeasibility of the capitalist systemic parameters as we have known them. The care crisis or the employment crisis are some of the expressions of this context of structural crisis.

In this context, the emergence of business, economic, governmental, geopolitical and even social logics that are increasingly aggressive and more and more openly based on an imaginary of exclusion of growing portions of the population - in the full awareness that, in the near future, and if mercantilising logics and the accumulation of wealth and capital remain in force, there will be no "cake" for everyone - is, increasingly, the panorama that is imposing itself on our social life. In other words, we are facing a scenario in which, unless the course of global and local economic governance changes radically, it will be materially impossible (as it has been for some decades now) to reconcile inherently predatory and dispossessive capitalist logics with the access of the bulk of the population to the minimum material resources for life, which are increasingly contested. Therefore, the imaginary of the Welfare State is collapsing by leaps and bounds, which will mean that the objective exclusion of more and more portions of the popular classes from access to these minimum vital material resources will become the acceptable alternative for those who benefit from this capitalist social construction. The inexorable impoverishment of the middle class and the increasingly extreme adjustment to which the working class is subjected are far-reaching phenomena, and which not by chance have been combined in recent years with the emergence of reactionary phenomena of an openly racist and anti-feminist nature - and which, in the Spanish state, add to this a Spanishism that has been an inherent part of the discourses of political and social exclusion.

In short, two paths are open to us: or, in a sort of collective suicide, to go deeper into the logic described above - betting on a capitalist model that will increase the accumulation of wealth and global capital in a few hands, as well as the correlative exclusion of large masses of the population from the system and from access to minimum vital resources, in a context of increasing hate speeches that are functional to these same oligarchic logics -, or to turn the rudder in the opposite direction, in favour of decommodification, de-corporatisation, collectivisation and democratisation of the processes of social reproduction. And in this context, the fair distribution of wealth obviously plays a fundamental role. In short, the accumulation of wealth and the resulting inequality that it generates are not only profoundly unjust and therefore undesirable phenomena, but, in the current scenario of the structural crisis of capitalism, they are two key elements of a downward trend that is leading us inexorably towards economic, political, social, ecological and community collapse.

3. What are the proposed solutions?

The solutions are under construction and are not univocal recipes, but are the fruit of the collective construction of the popular movement, in the Basque Country as in the world.

It is true that in recent decades the bodies that control both material power and the production of meaning favourable to the status quo have a much greater capacity to impregnate the social and community fabric with their ideological constructs, which have been deployed in a dominant way since Thatcher's famous *There Is No Alternative*, and which today it is very difficult to overshadow, given the degree of penetration they have achieved in the collective consciousness. And with even greater risk at a time when certain factions of the status quo are relatively successfully promoting an openly fascist derivative of this ideological construct in defence of

capitalism in constant mutation in order to circumvent the crisis of its foundations. In this sense, the construction of solutions and alternatives faces an adverse scenario and decades of setbacks in terms of the social presence of emancipatory and rupturist imaginaries.

In any case, as we said before, this construction of alternatives - in which the distribution of wealth is obviously at the heart of the matter - is based on the decommodification, de-corporatisation, collectivisation and democratisation of the processes of social reproduction.

Specifically, in our report *[Emancipated labour in the face of the capitalist offensive](#)*, we pointed out some strategic keys which, centred on a broad and diverse conception of work (understood as the set of tasks, activities and human capacities that are articulated within a social whole in order to provide a collective solution to social and community needs), directly concern what represents a fair distribution of wealth as part of a broader transformative horizon. This is so, moreover, insofar as, in a capitalist context, submission to wage labour has become the main way of obtaining the economic resources necessary for life, a horizon whose necessary overcoming we clearly propose, both to achieve a fairer distribution of wealth and to achieve another series of changes in the DNA of our societies in a liberating sense - starting with the flipside of this wage labour: the performance of unpaid care work in the home under clearly patriarchal parameters. Thus, in our report, we set out three strategic commitments with a direct impact in terms of both work (beyond employment) and the fair distribution of wealth. We present them here in schematic form:

- To decommodify and collectivise the resolution of social needs.
 - To de-labourise access to rights and prioritise non-market ways of accessing the material, social and cultural resources necessary for the development of a dignified life.
 - To remove labour/salary relations from market logics, dignifying current conditions and increasingly moving towards community and solidarity-based socio-economic logics.
- Reorganise socially necessary jobs in emancipatory terms.
 - Redistribution of jobs
 - Revalorisation of work
- Collectivise/communitise the control of economic and social planning processes.
 - Collectively and democratically defining what, how and for what purpose to produce/work; which economic sectors are promoted, which jobs are necessary and which are dispensable or even harmful to the social collective, which economic units should be placed at the centre.
 - Relocation of economic circuits

These proposals do not exhaust the potential arsenal of alternatives in the hands of the popular movement for the transformation of living conditions in an emancipatory sense, but they constitute our modest contribution in this specific area so that, together with many other contributions from other subjects, the necessary bloc of popular counter-power for another socio-economic model in the Basque Country and in the world can be strengthened.