

Commune on Democratic Confederalism and Prefiguration

This commune proposes that we can and must make revolutionary change, *now*, by changing patterns of everyday life and popular participation rather than waiting to take state power and *then* transform society. State-centered revolutionary change has always reproduced hierarchies of control and oppression. We can avoid this if communities use the tools for democratic transformation that they already have within their hands.

Two related concepts are at the center of liberatory democratic transitions. **Democratic confederalism** is political self-administration, where all groups and cultural identities can express themselves in local meetings, general conventions and councils. **Prefiguration** is the idea that instead of waiting for the right circumstances to build a new society, we begin to build the world we desire now, by organizing institutions and practices of democratic confederalism.

Instances where communities escaped state and capitalist control and created forms of autonomous participatory governance include the Zapatistas in Mexico and Rojava in Syria. Yet urban communities can also appropriate institutions *within* the system, starting at the municipal level, to resist the state system and transform it.

All inhabitants, especially the disenfranchised, have the fundamental right to access, shape, and benefit from their cities, towns, and villages. This can happen when communities take resources that have been privatized by corporations and *re-common* them, practicing mutual aid. *Special attention must be given to the importance of households in the sustenance of human life and especially the role of women not just in providing necessities of life but in creating and maintaining bonds among people.* While it is important to uncover positive examples and possible ways of setting prefigurative communities and practices in motion, it is also crucial to examine their limitations and possible ways to transcend these limitations.

Research questions:

What are positive examples of attempts to establish democratic communities?

What are positive examples of attempts to create democratic practices in everyday life?

How central is women's freedom to the success of democratic confederalism and prefiguration?

What factors encourage or limit mass participation and mutual aid?

What factors lead to the re-emergence of hierarchies of control; how can they be avoided?

How do communities protect their democratic institutions and practices against the state?

How do you solve problems of scale, to connect communities and their experiences, to move from local democracy to regional and global democracy?