

# BEYOND AUTHORITY FOR AN ANTI-FASCISM OF THE FUTURE

Authoritarianism can be defied and defeated: that is the most important lesson of this book. Around the world, countless people, collectives, and movements develop powerful and creative strategies to oppose nationalist, racist, classist, and anti-feminist forces. Many of these strategies go well beyond a narrow definition of “defending democracy” or “resistance”. They do not defend the catastrophic status quo against the far right, but propose different, more just and more democratic ways of being together. These strategies and struggles carry ideas, emotions, and practices that are the seeds of another world. Yes, it is true that imagining a fundamentally different world has become more difficult recently, and yet, it is possible. It is actually being lived out in anti-authoritarian strategies worldwide.

“Beyond Molotovs – A Visual Handbook of Anti-Authoritarian Strategies” brings together first-hand accounts of anti-authoritarian struggles from around the world, focusing on strategies that address the sensuous, emotional, and aesthetic dimensions of authoritarianism. These are neither the only, nor necessarily the most important, strategies of resistance. From classical antifascist organizing and monitoring work on the ground, to mobilizing broad social strata in defence of democratic rights, to militant struggle against oppressive regimes, a wide variety of initiatives is needed to counter the authoritarian attacks on democracy and social rights. By proposing to go “beyond molotovs”, we are not disregarding the importance of these myriad forms of resistance. Instead, we want to enrich them by bringing in new perspectives focused on dimensions that are all too often neglected when we discuss our strategies against authoritarianism.

## Reclaiming futures

Addressing these dimensions is of crucial importance for at least three reasons. The first is that a century of scholarship on authoritarianism has repeatedly shown that authoritarianism operates fundamentally at the level of the visceral. It mobilizes and channels insecurities, fears, and anxieties, and cannot be reduced to rationality. Nevertheless, much of the opposition to authoritarianism still relies on the illusion of the most convincing argument or political agenda. But this hardly ever weakens authoritarian forces. Quite the contrary, it seems that the less they engage in reasoned argumentation, the more successful they are. We, thus, need to ask ourselves: how can we respond to authoritarian populist discourse and its “affective offer”? What other emotions and imaginaries – indeed, what other forms

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of seeing and being – do we have to offer? And how can we *massify* them? This must surely mean actively playing in the field of how people interpret and give meaning to the world, a process that is still too frequently thought to be mediated merely through words and ideas, though it is now clear that affect plays a fundamental role in it.

We briefly alluded to the second reason for focusing on the sensuous: we feel that this is where the *utopian energy* for alternative ways of imagining and living can be found. A lot has been said about the “crisis of the left” and, more generally, about the impossibility of imagining the end of capitalism. There are many reasons for this, but we remain convinced that the ideas of emancipation and social justice are not outdated, nor do we lack proposals for how they can be achieved. Years of neoliberal conditioning – as well as the profound contradictions of historical socialist experiments – have stripped these ideas of much of their appeal and capacity to move peoples’ bodies and minds. In order to re-think and re-invent emancipatory politics and offer a different vision of the future, beyond coherent political programs, we need to revitalize their concrete utopian appeal and energy. In other words, we have to win back *hope*, not as an abstract idea or empty slogan, but as a collectively crafted and lived reality. This book is about producing hope and reclaiming the future even in the most adverse conditions.

The third reason why it is of crucial importance to look at the dimension of emotions and aesthetics is that authoritarian tendencies are deeply inscribed within the affective as well as the institutional landscape of capitalism itself. These tendencies boil up violently in moments of crisis. Thus, we cannot approach authoritarian capitalist affectivity as a phenomenon that is external to us. Instead, we need to recognize and reflect on the fact that as subjects in late capitalism, we are necessarily shaped by these dynamics in one way or another. Capitalism is constantly exploiting our anxieties and desires, be it by commodifying our need for recognition on social media platforms, or by mobilizing our fears and aspirations through meritocracy and competition.

The intimate relation of capitalism and authoritarianism should come as no surprise. Capitalism is based on the exploitation of the many by the few, and on an ever-greater concentration of wealth and power to the detriment of our well-being and capacity to determine the course of our own lives. While democracy is about equality and collective decision-making, capitalism is systematically unequal, hierarchical, and exclusive. This produces constant tensions and antagonisms between the two, and this is why democratic rights have had to be – and must continue to be – conquered and defended against the dominant classes that will try to shield the exercise of power from popular interference. Likewise, from the outset, global capitalism has been intimately interwoven

with patriarchy, racism, and colonialism. They form the very foundation for depriving most people in the world of their rights and facilitating the direct exploitation of both the people themselves and the spaces they live in.

Neoliberal capitalism emphasizes the authoritarian tendencies within capitalism. Over the past decades, popular and workers' organizations, social welfare structures, and mechanisms for the redistribution of wealth have been under attack. Simultaneously, the ideas, images, and concrete politics of social justice, solidarity, and democracy have been increasingly hollowed out.<sup>1</sup> Neoliberalism demands from individuals permanent competition, performance, and flexibility – that is, an active subjugation under the logic of capital – while simultaneously stripping them of any social safety net. It thus constitutes a colonization of life itself. Neoliberal capitalism extends the logic of accumulation, exploitation, and commodification to all fields of our existence, including the very way we experience life itself.

As we explain in more detail below, contemporary authoritarianism constitutes, in many ways, an exaltation of these dynamics but in a neo-Darwinist guise. This is why it would be useless to aim for the sort of restoration of a near past that is envisioned by current liberal opposition to the far right. Rather, we take the authoritarianism inherent in capitalist society seriously, and believe, as such, that consistent anti-authoritarianism must aim to overcome this social form. It must, once again, take up the search for post-capitalist social relations and aesthetics.

### What is authoritarianism all about?

To say that capitalist states and societies inherently comprise authoritarian dimensions does not mean that nothing has changed. For a decade or so now, the world has steadily become a less democratic and more violent place. This trend is often portrayed by focusing on its most outrageous manifestations and their frequently bizarre protagonists, such as Donald Trump in the US, Narendra Modi in India, or Javier Milei in Argentina. The electoral successes of European far-right parties and the openly repressive military regimes of Myanmar and Syria provide further evidence of this disturbing development. In an effort to understand and describe this phenomenon, a number of terms have come to constitute an increasingly important part of our vocabulary, including “populism”, “neo-conservatism”, “illiberalism”, “ultra-nationalism”, “post-fascism”, “fundamentalism”.

Many of these concepts are very useful in describing certain facets of the phenomenon. But we feel that one important disadvantage in this multiplication of terms is that it does not allow us to grasp the simultaneity and commonalities between the different, yet interconnected, processes of global authoritarian transformation. Against this background, we propose recovering and expanding the notion of authoritarianism. In contrast to the reductive ways in which this concept is frequently used, we see it as a complex social phenomenon that is not limited to the state and its institutions. Although there is an authoritarian agenda that is consciously pursued by specific actors, it is not a conspiracy of demagogues and ruling elites who trick the masses into politics that go against their own interests. Though it gains its strength from mass support, it is not just a reactionary “popular revolt”. It's neither exclusively top-down nor bottom-up. Authoritarianism is a redefinition of power relations and mechanisms of exploitation that occurs simultaneously in the social, cultural, political, and economic spheres. As an analytical concept, it does not compete with other descriptions of the phenomenon that are, at times, more specific. Rather, as we have already stated elsewhere, authoritarianism allows us to build “a conceptual arc between the concrete expressions of a global trend towards an increasingly weaponized regime of capital accumulation coupled with processes of de-democratization and brutalization of social and political practices and relations”.<sup>2</sup>

At the heart of the current authoritarian turn of global capitalism lies a shared experience of a world in crisis. This polycrisis of global turmoil sees shifts in the geopolitical balance of power and the ecological crisis coinciding with regional and national political crises, economic dislocations, and a long train of other interconnected and mutually reinforcing crises pertaining to migration, health, and social cohesion. Established political actors and arrangements seem less and less able to deal with the situation, leading to a massive loss of legitimacy in terms of political representation as well as, more fundamentally, the liberal values on which that representation is based.

It is impossible to determine exactly where or when this crisis began, but many people point to the financial crisis of 2008 as the first, and most spectacular, manifestation of what is increasingly experienced and understood as a general collapse. Since then, neoliberal capitalism has been losing its hegemonic aura and appeal, and at an ever-greater pace. It seemed, at first, that we were in the midst of a hopeful and transformative moment. In the aftermath of the crisis, there was an eruption of powerful social movements, from the Arab Spring to Occupy Wall Street, from Hong Kong to Chile, and from Gezi Park in Turkey to the *Indignados* in Spain. However, rather than finally giving up the ghost, neoliberalism has returned as the living dead. Stripped of its liberal imagery and its promises of an institutional rule of law, of a borderless market economy in which any conflict can be resolved, of liberal social values, and of a better future, it now wanders the earth as naked commodification, exploitation, propertization, and precarization.<sup>3</sup>

We are experiencing what Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci referred to in his writing on Italian fascism as an *interregnum*, that is, a crisis which consists in the fact that “the old is dying but the new cannot be born”, and in which “a great variety of morbid symptoms appear”.<sup>4</sup> Authoritarianism is a symptom – and thus an indication – of the helplessness of both the dominated and the dominant. The first “no longer believe what they used to believe” but have, thus far, not come up with a viable alternative to a system that produces ever more suffering and destruction. As for the ruling classes, there is no longer any consensus in terms of how to move forward. The implosion of the political landscapes around the world speaks to the profound conflicts within the elites as to how the general and, indeed, hegemonic crisis should be addressed.

An increasingly weaponized, authoritarian version of neoliberalism, which is systematically insulated from democratic interference (and for which the European Union can be seen as a prominent example) is currently competing with an active and reactionary ideological mobilization that is represented by authoritarian populism. This “solution” to the crisis – which currently seems to be the more successful – combines authentically neoliberal ingredients with others that are both reactionary and, at this stage, all too familiar. We, thus, see an unhinged market economy coupled with familialist, religious, and racist topoi, and unlimited individual “freedom” with updated versions of social-Darwinism.

If we take a close look, it becomes clear that authoritarian ideological components often converge in specific amalgams from one context to another. But what all these manifestations of authoritarianism have in common is that they activate resentment and hate against particular Others who are generally perceived as weak and, at the same time, menacing. As such, authoritarianism addresses real needs and desires. It channels people’s frustrations, fears, and a genuine, though often unarticulated, longing for things to *change* – because change they must, given that these frustrations and fears are very real. However, authoritarianism leads them down a destructive path, one that can only deepen the existential malaise. In exchange for the momentary pleasure of superiority – as Whites, males, patriots, and so on – the infrastructure of suffering is left intact.

## An anti-fascism for the 21st century

This constellation poses huge challenges to those fighting for a just and democratic society. The global expansion of authoritarianism and the disintegration of the liberal consensus requires us to re-think our strategies. One fundamental premise, as we mentioned above, is that we have to go beyond “resistance”: there is no going back, and the defence of what is, is simply not an option.

If historical anti-fascism in Europe after World War II has proven anything, it is that a successful anti-authoritarian strategy must address people’s needs. Anti-fascism has never been solely about morals, symbols, or humanist convictions. In order to be effective as mass politics, it must safeguard against corporate power and redistribute rather than concentrate wealth. But human needs and desires extend beyond the materialistic and into the psychological. In our everyday experience, the economic and the cultural are inseparably intertwined. In this book, we are interested in how counter-strategies interact with material and immaterial needs and desires, and how they respond to the authoritarian ways of addressing them.

One key aspect of contemporary authoritarianism is that it allows for what has been termed a “conformist rebellion”; that is, it serves as a valve for frustration and rage that lack an addressee. It thus channels both the desire to “change everything”, and the desire to have everything remain the same, insofar as the existing relations of power and domination go completely unchallenged. If we want to achieve real and enduring social change, it is thus pivotal to understand the sensuous and sociopsychological dimension of counter-strategies. As psychotherapy shows, change cannot be imposed from the outside but must arise from within, as rooted in a genuine desire.

To make people yearn and strive for fundamental change, we must understand our emotional attachments to the world as it is. Our beliefs and convictions serve important psychological functions for our self-perception, for coping with existential problems, and for stabilizing our precarious existence in a world full of uncertainties. In fact, many counter-strategies understand and address the wounds within neoliberal subjectivity and the way authoritarianism engages them affectively. Often without consciously spelling it out, they develop affective countermeasures.

One cross-cutting theme in this book is the resistance to the cult of death that unites authoritarianism and capitalism, especially in the face of crisis. At the heart of capitalism lies destructiveness: of nature, of living bonds, of any hope for a future, of life itself.<sup>5</sup> The authoritarian solution to this destructiveness is to fetishize it. As Walter Benjamin put it, facing the rise of fascism: “[humankind’s] self-alienation has reached the point where it can experience its own annihilation as a supreme aesthetic pleasure.”<sup>6</sup> Today’s counter-strategies must address the authoritarian reverence for death and destruction, for compartmentalization and alienation. Consequently, one crucial aspect that binds all the contributions in this book together is that they celebrate life over death, connection over individualization, multiplicity over reduction, and chaos over order.

## Counter-strategies as potentiality

Not all anti-authoritarian movements achieve lasting social change. In fact, most of them do not. But even though they may fail to achieve their immediate goals, they often go beyond themselves, changing the people involved. By that, they transcend their own particular historical moments and can reappear elsewhere, on another occasion and in another guise, much like in the famous saying: “they buried us, but they didn’t know we were seeds.” By looking at counter-strategies in practice, we understand the marks they leave in the world beyond the direct political change they aspire to.<sup>7</sup>

In examining these practices, we also begin to grasp what actually makes people resist and fight authoritarianism, even against seemingly improbable odds. Indeed, as anybody who has blocked a road or participated in a strike knows, the sense of joy, comradeship and empowerment is as important as critical analysis.

There is another reason why we should engage with struggles, including – indeed, with particular attention to – those that seem to have failed. That history unfolded the way it did does not mean that this was the only way it could have happened. This contingency makes it worthwhile to revisit the moments of ambiguity and of multiple possibilities, as well as learning strategic lessons from them. Our focus thus shifts towards the concrete *potentiality* of the moments of struggle: to the glimpses of possible worlds. These moments, when social antagonisms become explicit, are privileged sites for gaining knowledge about the world that is, and about the world that can be. As conceptual fetishes implode, moments of social and political creativity open up, and *other* identifications and social relations momentarily become a reality.

One of the key questions that underpin this book is how anti-authoritarian struggles affect us, and how we affect others. This is why all the struggles portrayed here bear some relation to arts and aesthetics, as they often have the greatest power to touch and affect us. Everything in this book is art, whether it be graffiti scribbled by protesters, chants sung by mass movements, an anti-authoritarian board game, or an exhibition in a museum. All the contributions in this book speak of a transformative affect that is the essence of art.

### Decentering anti-authoritarianism

Notwithstanding the many cross-cutting themes and concerns, the contributions in this book are very diverse. One reason for this is that authoritarianism takes on different forms in different contexts. There is no reason to believe that authoritarianism in Brazil will look exactly as it does in Myanmar, and the same applies to “colonialism” and “patriarchy” (or neoliberalism, for that matter). Nevertheless, they exist and have enough features in common for us to name and think about them together, as well as to recognize our many struggles against them as one.

This is also how we approached the issue when we reached out to the contributors for this book. Rather than formulating an explicit definition, we reckoned that those who know best what authoritarianism actually looks like in each context are those who are organizing against it. What is more, we realized that we can learn a great deal about *global* authoritarianism and its different manifestations by looking at *local* struggles and strategies against it.

Consequently, some of the struggles portrayed in this book could also be understood as feminist, some as environmentalist, others as fights for democracy or for indigenous rights and so on. The contributions also vary in scale. Whereas some engage with shared symbols of political mass movements, others explore the bonds that result from co-creative practices carried out in small collectives, or explore the effects of patriarchy on the life of one’s own mother through a single painting. Some speak of struggles that transgress national boundaries, while others look at struggles that are highly localized. Some are meticulously organized, while others are spontaneous and chaotic.

We do not aim to reduce all these approaches to a list of universal lessons. In fact, this would defeat the very purpose of the book. Although we decided to call it a handbook, rather than a step-by-step guide, this book is an exploration of the beauty of anti-authoritarian resistance. It combines diverse accounts from different contexts, showcasing a relational approach to producing knowledge, referred to by the political philosopher Boike Rehbein as *Kaleidoscopic Dialectics*. The aim is not universality, but an appreciation of the complex web of traits shared

among different counter-strategies, like the *Familienähnlichkeiten* (family resemblances) described by Wittgenstein. No single trait is shared by all the counter-strategies, so we cannot distil universal traits of affective counter-strategies. Yet, each counter-strategy shares a trait with certain others. These intersections and overlaps are where understanding beyond the individual case emerges. However, this understanding only reveals itself when we look at the entire mosaic. In this, our approach to editing resembles the “decentering” that is proposed on pages 242-247, where contributions and their arrangements are understood as “zones of encounter marked by the remarkable ability of ideas to touch and travel”. One of the many possible learnings from this relational approach is found in the table of contents (one of three) titled “Strategies” and is explained in more detail below.

### Zones of encounter

When it comes to knowledge production, we engage in decentering insofar as we do not maintain the paralyzing and illusory boundaries between academic theory, art, and activism. Most contributions to this book unite different approaches in unique ways. Nevertheless, we decided to separate some texts from the rest visually, as they constitute broader reflections, based upon a prior reading of, and critical engagement with, many of the other contributions. The articles by Eva von Redecker, Gustavo Robles, Lorena Zárata and Firoozeh Farvardin thus offer key ways of understanding – as well as possible pathways through – the mosaic of struggles and strategies within and outside this book.

To highlight the multiplicity of connections between the contributions, we propose three different ways of looking at their relations, which are represented by the three tables of contents. The most straightforward, *Places*, groups the contributions by physical location, highlighting similarities and differences because or in spite of geographical position. But the map also reveals the limitations of our positionality as editors. It would, of course, be problematic – not to mention impossible – to attempt to represent the entire world in a book, but we did strive for geographical diversity. Nevertheless, some regions – principally Europe and Latin America – are relatively overrepresented as compared to others, most notably Africa and Oceania. This is due, in part, to the fact that our search for contributions was limited by the networks we have as editors, by linguistic frontiers, and, very likely, by certain differences in understandings of authoritarianism. The second table, entitled *Contents*, follows a narrative flow that escapes clear categorization yet appeals to our own intuitive perception of the relations between the contributions. This is also the sequence that the contributions are in if you read the book from beginning to end.

### Anti-authoritarian strategies through the kaleidoscope

The third way of ordering the contributions is called *Strategies*. The strategic dimensions we refer to are neither the methods they employ nor the political demands they formulate, but the ways they address the sensuous and the affective. The focus, here, is on the things that happen while protesting, striking, resisting, and defying, on the collective emotions cultivated, on the subject states experienced, on the bonds that are woven, and the senses that are tingled. It is an approach that also involves distilling what we conceive as their underlying idea of transformation. These six categorizations represent the main

learnings from the kaleidoscopic approach mentioned above. The similarities and overlaps in their affective approach help to give us a more general idea of how counter-strategies aim to achieve profound transformation. Given that the affective can often only be approximated by language, each chapter is represented by three words that triangulate what we see as the essence of the strategic approach discussed in each case.

When the range of what is speakable and imaginable is minimal, and the beautiful multiplicity and chaotic fabric of life is reduced to compartmentalized reductions and reproductions of the “normal”, what remains is the orderly tyranny of capital and commodification. Authoritarianism wants nothing more than for you to sit back on your sofa and not care. The anti-authoritarian interventions united in **disrupt retake transfigure** break through numbness, resignation, and the retreat into the private, through the unidimensionality imposed on discourse, life, and space. They make visible what has been suppressed. With huge wall-paintings and tiny stickers, naked bodies, rap songs, dwarves, and street signs, they remind the world that they are still here, that they have a voice, and that there are other ways of living. They can be silent reminders, or the gong that shatters the illusion. They reconquer public life, revitalize the streets, defy “common sense”, and bring back what has been repressed.

Authoritarianism often works by rewriting both the past and the present, by distorting perspectives and silencing those who are inconvenient. As the contributions brought together in **expose accuse remember** show, exposing tools of deceit and mechanisms of power, and crafting a counter-narrative, can be an effective counter-strategy. Be it through a viral campaign that exposes government killings, or by counter-cartographies that unmask continuities of colonial violence, such strategies can lift veils, incite anger, light fuses, stir up the collective unconscious.

Keeping score of injustices and atrocities is also important not to lose yourself amidst relativization and gaslighting. These strategies direct our gaze to where systemic violence and destruction reveal themselves. They make us feel the brutality of the status quo, be it through poems, performances, drawings, paintings, or maps. When they want you to forget, remembering can be an act of resistance. But it can also open a pathway to a radically different understanding of ourselves, our relation to others, and to the world, for example when “mapping decolonial Berlin” (see pp. 234-241).

In the chapter **subvert hijack divert**, we bring together struggles and practices that use authoritarianism’s own tools and expressions against it. They appropriate, sabotage, and repurpose the oppressive meanings, materials, and intentions inscribed in advertisements, monuments, political parties, memes, and riot fences. In the face of a seemingly omnipotent, all-penetrating authoritarian apparatus, making use of whatever it throws at us is a necessity. But it is also a powerful way of affectively taking back control. The one thing that can never be fully subjugated is how we feel about things. As Albert Camus’ smiling Sisyphus knows, our own emotional response can become the last refuge of self-determination, as well as a powerful resource for regaining agency. It is enormously liberating to laugh at the things meant to instil fear, to turn the tools of control into agents of emancipation, and separators into vessels of relating. The strategies turn destruction into creation, silence into communication, and forbidden fruits into resistance.

Only when we get a taste of liberation, can we truly strive to be free, and desire change both in the world and for ourselves. This is why it is important to create spaces in the here and now where we can experience glimpses of a liberated life, a process we have given the title **explore transcend desire**. Even if these spaces are only islands of performative

prefigurations, these real utopias are powerful antidotes to authoritarian neoliberalism's suppression of softness, and its destruction of hope and future time. The strategies in this section write dreams on walls, overcome failures of communication by taking on the role of boardgame players, find utopian ways of life amidst a city in revolt. They explore the aesthetics of utopian communities, radically different ways of looking, of collective editing, and staring into the abyss while getting a taste of utopia.

At its core, liberation always contains a notion of universalist humanism. This is why it is crucial to make sense of the world collectively, to make common cause with others who are fighting to define and create a world in which we can all flourish. Recognizing ourselves as one in spite – and, indeed, because – of our differences while being recognized, in turn, by others, is powerfully transformative. The contributions in **sense convey assemble** speak of creating spaces for collective resonance and reverberation; a shared language, made of songs and symbols, rituals, artefacts, and gestures of defiance. These strategies use pots and pans, songs, post-its, scarves, hand gestures, lightning bolts, and Pokémon. They ignite passions, circulate ideas, create shared identity, and unite in collective creation.

Finally, **link weave nurture** pays tribute to human creation as, and in, social relation. We can only reproduce in society what we experience in our lived relations, and finding the courage for radical change often depends on the strength we gain through our surroundings and our relations to others. Fighting against the forces of authoritarian violence, precarity, atomization, and dispossession means finding new ways of feeding, nurturing, reproducing, and reclaiming life. These contributions speak of the materialities of solidarity, of companionship, and of collective action. They weave networks by cooking, eating, drinking, marching, or sewing together. They explore the materiality of resistance by looking at tarpaulin tents and artwork made from food wrappers. They develop powerful infrastructures of tenderness and solidarity, they cross oceans and take back the means of (re-)production.

## About us

This book is a collective effort that started three years ago. It was born out of discussions that showed us again and again that although we know a lot about the workings of authoritarianism, we know astonishingly little about counter-strategies, and even less about the way they emotionally engage us. Virtually none of the literature on anti-authoritarian struggles seems to express how we actually feel and what we share with friends about these struggles. What makes us join ant-fascist rallies or roadblocks, and what happens there? What makes people, even in the most adverse circumstances, oppose authoritarian regimes? How do they do so? And what potentiality do these struggles have for a fundamentally different world?

Particularly in view of the globalization of authoritarianism, we realized that we need spaces where we can systematically exchange experiences and reflect on counter-strategies. Opposition to authoritarianism operates under extreme pressure and heavy surveillance. Those who fight often lack the time and resources to document, archive, or reach out to others that are not immediately connected to their cause, especially to those in other countries and on other continents. Considering this, we also wanted to provide an infrastructure within which we can exchange and engage, we can bond with and recognize one another, and we can celebrate the courage and creativity of anti-fascism.

For the authors of this introduction, the International Research Group on Authoritarianism and Counter-Strategies (IRGAC) that brings together around 20 scholars and activ-

ists from the so-called Global South, has served as a key space to discuss and advance these issues. Similarly, the work of kollektiv orangotango, which is somewhere between activism, artistic intervention, and counter-cartography has been an important source of inspiration. Particularly their book “This Is Not an Atlas”<sup>8</sup> shows how to produce and curate collective, decentred knowledge, as well as materializing that knowledge in the form of beautiful and powerful objects (books, maps, graffiti, and so on).

In 2021, Aurel Eschmann and Bõrries Nehe formed an editorial collective together with Paul Schweizer and Severin Halder from kollektiv orangotango, IRGAC fellows Inés Durán Matute, Ailynn Torres and Julieta Mira, as well as Nico Baumgarten, who is also the designer of this book. The collective soon devised a call for contributions that was translated into several languages, and disseminated via the networks of the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, the IRGAC, and kollektiv orangotango. We received over 130 proposals from 46 countries. Reading them was an indescribably encouraging experience as it demonstrated, first and foremost, just how many resistances, strategies, and forms of struggle there are, how little we know of them, and how much we can learn from each other.

After selecting around forty proposals, we identified many possible connections between them as well as certain blind spots. We then reached out in order to fill some of those gaps. We approached this task much as an artisan might build a mosaic or weave a tapestry. Without ever aiming to definitively represent the incredible multiplicity of struggles around the globe, we assembled and arranged, linked and weaved, in a collective process that combined theoretical reflections with considerations that were artistic and, in that sense, consciously subjective. We hope that “Beyond Molotovs – A Visual Handbook of Anti-Authoritarian Strategies” will be a tool for the internationalist anti-fascism that our times require, and a testimony to emancipation.

## Endnotes

- 1 For a detailed discussion, see, for example, Wendy Brown, *In the Ruins of Neoliberalism: The Rise of Antidemocratic Politics in the West*, New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2019.
- 2 International Research Group on Authoritarianism & Counter-Strategies, *Global Authoritarianism. Perspectives and Contestations from the South*, Bielefeld: transcript, 2022, p. 9.
- 3 See: *Affective Counterstrategies and Heterotopic Interventions*, p. 172.
- 4 Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971.
- 5 See: *Counterstrategies for Life*, p. 96.
- 6 Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings*. Edited by Marcus Paul Bullock, Michael William Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1996, p. 270.
- 7 See: *Other Feminisms: A Subversive Gift to the World*, p. 286.
- 8 kollektiv orangotango, *This Is Not an Atlas: A Global Collection of Counter-Cartographies*, Bielefeld: transcript, 2018.