

**“Our aim is to create an international movement  
able to change the capitalist drift that humanity  
is suffering”**

Internationalist Commune

February 9, 2018

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*On December 2017 a solidarity committee made this interview, but for different reasons, it has not been published until now. We think is a good interview which can help people to better understand the project of the Internationalist Commune of Rojava so we decided to publish it.*

## **What kind of work have you been doing so far?**

Before the commune, the internationalists in Rojava were different people from different countries, doing different civil work in Rojava. After a collective reflection and debate process, we decided to continue with our works in a more organized way. Before us, other projects with internationalists had been working in Rojava, but it was difficult to give continuity to this works, cause internationalists use to come and go. With the experience of these past projects, we decided to start with the internationalist commune as an organizational frame, to mark the internationalist face of this revolution and, in the future, to try to facilitate the participation of other internationalists.

As a commune, we are involved in the building works of the internationalist academy, and we are organizing a tree cooperative to help to reforest Rojava. We are also working in different structures of the society, especially related with the youth movement, learning what this revolution means for the people and for the society.

## **What kind of education are you giving people, and how long is the education?**

The education is a constant reality in Rojava, there are a lot of self-managed academies in constant use: when one group finish, the next enter. There are education courses of a few weeks, and educations of several months. With this enlightening environment, the project of the internationalist academy started to take form and to gather the internationals that wanted to take part in this process.

While building the academy, we are discussing how is going to be used, and really interesting debates are happening. Nowadays, the most accepted idea is to organize international delegations of people who can stay at least 6 months, for have 3 months education and then let the internationals choose where they want to go for work in the society. The curses will include kurmanci lessons and ideological education in democratic confederalism, and also trips to different cities and institutions for see the reality in the Northern Syria Federation. The theoretical works will be combined with practical works in the ecological cooperative of trees we are organizing, to help to reforest Rojava. This is just an idea that can change, but as we learned in the time we spent in Rojava, the most important education is the communal life itself: to learn to be interdependent with the people and independent from the state.

## **Is it possible to come at any time or is it just at certain dates?**

Coming to Rojava is not easy. Nowadays, the embargo and the attacks of the surrounding forces make the access impossible. The internationals who came to Rojava need to find their own

way, but we are working to try to solve this situation. We still have a lot of work on building the academy, but once we finish it, we will focus our priorities on this point.

Here the situation is changing really fast. At the beginning of the Rojava Revolution, a lot of internationals came to Rojava from Bakur, crossing the Syria-Turkey border. But after the bomb attack to the 'Amara' cultural center in Pirsus (a city near Kobanê, renamed as Suruç by the Turkish state), the border was deeply militarized. Now there is a wall with barbed wire watched 24 hours a day by Turkish soldiers, with orders to shoot everything that goes close to the wall. In the last years, most of the people who came to Rojava came it from Bashur, crossing the Syria-Iraq border. But after the referendum of independence in Bashur, the Iraqi state launched a military offensive to regain control of some cities, and the situation became even more difficult. We don't know how the situation is going to be when we finish the academy, but we are planning to make a callout once we are about to start the first course to organize the different people who want to come.

## **Do you only search for people with special professions or is anyone welcome?**

All the internationalist people who want to work in the civil society of Rojava, who want to learn about this revolution and who want to defend the values and principals of the democratic society that is being developed here, are welcomed in the internationalist commune.

Of course specific knowledge can be very useful, but everyone can contribute to this revolution. There are specific needs that have more priorities to others, but most of the works that we are doing are not based on 'professional' skills that you can learn in western universities. We saw very different people coming to Rojava, and we can say that the ones who adapt faster and better to the needs that we have, are usually the people who already have a militant background doing activism and different political works. Here the society is fulfilling its own needs without intervention of a central state, and you can take the knowledge that is required from the people who are already working on what needs to be done. But you need to be an open minded person, ready to learn and to challenge your own personality and socialization, facing the capitalist mind-set the system implemented on our societies and to deconstruct the patriarchal and orientalist mentality we have inside.

## **What is your short time goal for the commune?**

The Revolution in Rojava is the first revolution in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and is the first revolution in history that puts the focus on womens liberation. We want to use this opportunity to learn and grow, to be able challenge the hegemony of the capitalist system and the patriarchal oppression.

The commune is working in different committees and every committee has their own roadmap and goals, but as a commune, we are planning to finish the academy and to start with the tree cooperative as soon as possible. The short time goal we can say is to start with the courses in the academy, but there is a lot of work that needs to be done before the people start to come with regularity. Right now, at the same time we are building the academy, we are organizing the tree cooperative, we are connecting our works with the youth movement, we are meeting different institutions related to Tev-Dem, we are visiting local families in different cities, we are gathering

research and study material about internationalism and other topics, we are taking care of our website, social networks and international relations... And we are able to do it because of the help and support we are receiving from the kurdish movement and the northern Syrian society.

## **What is your longtime goal for the commune?**

The longtime goal is to contribute to raise an international revolution that allows humanity to overcome all kind of oppression. The hegemony of the nation states and the capitalist system is, today, a reality that drains the vitality and the creativity of the people and the societies. This system is fixed to productivity and profits, creating a mentality that focuses the attention on material values, forgetting about the ethic and political values that allow us to become a society. The centralized power structures are trying to cut the bonds between the people, making us totally dependent on the bureaucracy and the institutions of the male-ruled nation states. This is contrary to democratic values and social ecology, and we want to struggle to defend the world we want to live in.

Our aim is to create bridges and connections with people and movements who share this paradigm and this vision, to organize an international movement able to change the capitalist drift that humanity is suffering from. We believe that humanity is able to have a better existence, living in harmony amongst ourselves and with other living beings together on this planet. For that, we need to learn how to live and respect all kinds of life, and we need to be ready to fight to defend these values. We are going to stand always at the side of the oppressed against the oppressor, developing self-defense mechanisms that brings all kinds of oppression to an end.

## **What kind of work is expected after the education?**

After the education, we expect that the people understand better why it is important to defend and to expand this revolution. The education is not going to be only the three months in the academy, education is going to be every experience you can have working in a collective and organized way. After the introduction course, the people will be sent to different tasks according to their capacities and their needs, having always connection with the Internationalist Commune in case some problems happen or some difficulties became too much for someone.

On that point, it's not clear what's next. We are learning with every step we are taking, and we expect to learn more and have a wider perspective with what internationalists from all around the world can bring to this commune. Everyone who comes here will bring their own backgrounds and connections with other people, movements and societies, and we expect them to find the best way to put this knowledge and experience in the organizational frame the Internationalist Commune of Rojava is trying to develop.

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