The Fight Against Ableism

Anarchism and Ableism

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Introduction

Hello there friends, I'm Itxi!

This fanzine, that you hold between your little hands, is very special. The proceeds will go to the "libertarian" (here: anarcho-libertarian) pedagogy project Tartaruga.

The aim of the fanzine is to make ableist violence visible and to fight against the system that generates and perpetuates it.

The fanzine comes out of a previous project, "Lucha Contra el Capacitismo" [the fight against ableism] that was started in 2017, with a blog under the same name.

Apart from the blog, in 2018 I started to give talks and appear on the odd radio show, such as "Degeneradas". After this I decided to create a fanzine, since there exists very little information about anti-ableism in Spanish.

At the end of 2019 three very special people joined the project. They are: Celia (who also started to give talks with me about mental health), Luna and Koa. Together we have formed a network of care plus a half-collective/half-group of friends with whom we intend to come up with very cool projects.

The important thing is that the talks as well as the blog and the fanzine arise out of a necessity, because of the lack of critical information, the invisibility of violence, the taboo that has been generated regarding disability. And above all, to cater to the idea of deconstructing and constructive auto-formation.

Other things about me, that affect the content of this zine, are: I am crippled, bisexual, cis woman, white, I know English (which seems absurd, but it is important because much of the critical anti-disability information is in English), my mapis[1] insisted on taking me to physiotherapy (with the violence this entails and as an attempt of "able-passing"[2].

This is important because the talks and the fanzines have a fairly strong theoretical basis, but they also start from experience, marked by my situation of oppression and privilege. By this I mean is, what I say is not the absolute truth, but it is my vision of reality.

In relation to the use of language and the font used, the fanzine is written using the gender neutral "e" and Arial font.

Finally, all the texts are uploaded as PDFs to my blog, to make them more accessible to read.

If you have questions or want me to pass on more info or the text in PDF:

The PDF in Spanish is found on this Blog: luchacontraelcapaciaciaciaciacitismo

1. What Is Disability?

Disability can be understood from different points of view.

It can be understood as a disease, if we look at it from the medical point of view, as a social construct, if we analyze it from the social theory. For that reason it is difficult to find a universal definition.

One possible way could be through the definition proposed by the RAE (Real Academia Española is a cultural institution dedicated to the linguistic regulation among the Spanish-speaking

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[1] Mapis: mommies + daddies

[2] Able-passing is the term used in the Anglo-Saxon world to refer to those people who physically "do not appear to be crippled".

world). Not because I consider the RAE to be the best reference in terms of the use of language (quite the contrary), but because it is a reflection of what the system imposes on us.

The definition changed in December 2020, before this change the definition of disability was:

> *"Suffering from a physical, sensory or psychic impairment that totally or partially incapacitates him/her for work or other ordinary tasks of life."*

In other words, we are faced with a view of disability as an illness and as an individual problem. The idea of dignity is understood based on productivity and utility. Only a body capable of producing economic benefits will be useful (given it will be productive).

This idea clearly stems from the medical model of disability, a model that considers disability as a disease and blames the person for it. The disabled person is considered as someone not adapted to society, who is outside the norm.

Therefore it is linked to Judaeo-Christian morality, with guilt as one of its maxims.

The medical model aims to medicalize people, with the aim, that they come as close as possible to the idea of normality (normality being understood as those bodies and minds capable of producing greater economic benefit to the system).

The intention with this is, that they be useful (understood through the capitalist prism) and produce a maximum of economic benefit (through wage labor) for capitalism and the State.

In December 2020 then, RAE changed the definition, and disability came to be defined as:

> *"Situation of a person who, due to enduring physical or mental conditions, faces notable barriers in accessing their social participation."* Which is closer to the social model definition of disability.

The social model considers, that disability arises from the interaction of a person with a disabling context. It is understood as a social construct created by the system. In this way violence is collectivized. It moves away from an individual violence and responsibility to an institutional, systemic violence.

As a solution, instead of trying to modify people, as the medical model did, it proposes to modify the environment, making it more accessible and "rehabilitating" society. It moves from wanting to cure the individual to wanting to change society.

By understanding disability as a construct, just like gender, it could be said that one is not born being disabled, but becomes disabled.

Important to mention here, a social model fights for the rights of disabled people, which in English is called "disability rights."

The problem with this model is however, despite considering disability as a construct, it separates the idea of shortcomings (the bodily or the mental part) from disability.

It posits that body and/or mind have limitations and that it is the interaction of these limitations with inaccessible environments that creates the idea of disability.

Which implies, if only society will be 100% accessible, the idea of disability will no longer exists as such. People, who previously considered themselves to be disabled may have conflicts with their bodies, given that these bodies or minds have limitations or impairments. The fight does not focus on breaking with the norms that lay the foundations of an ableist system, instead the focus is to make society more accessible.

Apart from these two models, which are the most widespread, others exist that helped to build the ideas that we currently have of disability.

Laying the foundation for the current medical model, are the religious model and the eugenic model.

The religious model (in the Spanish state the predominant religion or at least the one with the highest "tax benefits" is Christianity), may well not be so present nowadays, but it did lay the foundations of the medical model and of the charity idea associated with disability.

The religious model assumes disability to be god's punishment for some act committed by the person (a sin). It not only individualizes disability but also bases it on guilt.

Disability was understood as an individual problem and the cure was to be looked for through forgiveness as well as behavior and morality according to the (Christian) religion.

Judaeo-Christian morality has a great impact on this model, which was going to evolve into the medical model.

The eugenic model, on the other hand, considers disability as a defect of the human race and aims to improve genetic quality. This model proposes reproductive selection, as did the Nazis.

It is a model that is still in force today within medicine and even in the medical model.

The models linked to the social model, on the other hand, came out of the human rights model, which preceded it, and the radical model, which arose out of it and as a response to the social model.

The human rights model is based on the struggle for a recognition of the rights of disabled people, but without focusing on the roots of the problem, which is the ableist system.

Linked to the UN it has pathologizing as well as paternalistic overtones. Following from its premise to consider disabled people as persons, it grants them the rights they have, because they are disabled.

Finally, there's the radical model, which is the one I agree with the most.

The radical model considers disability as a social construct and therefore as a system of oppression.

This model asserts that disability is defined by the group of oppressors, meaning, the non-disabled people. In turn, it links it to other forms of oppression, thereby creating an intersectional concept of disability.

It says that all forms of oppression (gender, race, sexual orientation, …) were at some point in history considered as disabilities.

That's why it is so focused on the deconstruction of the idea of normality, as well as on the demand for justice, which in English is called "disability justice"[3].

This represents one of the primary differences with the social model. While one model calls for rights, the other calls for justice. The novelty in the radical model is that it calls for a political response.

It does not consider there to be an impairment in disabled bodies and minds, but rather looks at modes of normality in bodies and minds which lead to pathologizing those, who deviate from those norms. The premise is to end this mechanism, by in turn ending with capitalism and the oppressive systems that sustain it. The intention being to achieve social transformation through collective action.

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[3] The idea of disability justice arose from the Disability Justice Collective, a group of racialized, queer and trans people in the USA whose aim was to show how disability and ableism were linked to other forms of oppression.

A very crucial part of the radical model is the use of language, its use of words that have been used as insults, to re-appropriate and re-signify them.

Within the radical model there exists the "Cripple Punk" movement.

It is a social disability movement that fights against the idea of disability as a source of ideation for non-disabled people. At the same time, it confronts the mindset that we have to appear to be fine in order to receive help from non-disabled people, instead focusing on mutual aid among crippled people who all break the mold of normality.

This movement is created by and for disabled people, through their own experiences in disability and the violence they have suffered.

It aims to change the views of people with disabilities as people who don't create any problems, who don't find fault and who invest much of their energy in not looking like cripples.

They intend to break with the stereotypes generated about us, among them with it the negative ideas that most people have about disability.

To understand Cripple Punk three important points are:

1. Mutual support

2. A basically fabulous experience

3. Improvement to the quality of life

We can see how the idea of disability is very diverse. In fact, if we take the social and radical model as a reference, we would not have a concrete definition of what a disabled person is.

It is a person, outside of the imposed capitalist and ableist norm, oppressed and violated because of it.

However, for a social construct there is no concrete solution (which can also be seen with the idea of woman, that presents itself different for each woman).

The important thing is that each one of us is granted the ability to label ourselves, to decide whether we are disabled or not. Theoretically this is something simple, but in reality, as we mentioned earlier in the radical model, not so much.

Currently the State decides whether we are disabled or not, using scales to pathologize and pigeonhole us into unrealistic percentages.

The problem, apart from the fact that it is the State who has all the authority to decide whether or not we are considered to be disabled (as such taking away our power to decide over our bodies), is that such scales do not and cannot reflect the actual conditions for all people.

In addition, decisions to grant a disability card or not are subject to economic terms.

If you live in an Autonomous Community (sort of like regional states in Spain) with "ample economic resources" dedicated to the aid for people with disabilities, you will have a greater chance of receiving the card than if you live in a community with low resources.

2. What Language Do We Use?

Language structures thought, and it is a reflection of social reality. At the same time, our use of language allows us to modify the reality we inhabit. By naming invisible oppression we are able to foreground the violence we suffer, we give it the importance it deserves and it acts as a first tool in our efforts of deconstruction.

When analyzing the words we use when talking about ableism, we find many. We can divide them according to the models [as described above] that create or use them.

Then there are others that act as synonyms, which are euphemisms and have paternalistic and ableist overtones.

On the one hand, the medical model uses the word "handicap", and as such is referring to the value of the body. It considers a person's worth according to his or her level of productiveness as they move closer to or further away from the established norm.

Following the social model, the use of two words dominates, "functional diversity" and "disability."

The concept of functional diversity arose as a result of the "Independent Living Forum", a group of people with functional diversity who fight for the rights of people "with functional diversity".

I think this term has pros and cons. On the pro side it is the only term that was created by the oppressed people themselves, and as such it is avoiding the dynamic that the oppressor group defines us.

In spite of this, even though this particular term may have been created by the collective, the fact remains that it is the oppressors/the State who define us, since it is the State that administratively recognizes who is and who isn't disabled.

There are several cons that come to my mind when analyzing this word though.

On the one hand, the concept is an euphemism, one that confirms the preconceived notion that disabled people are pitiful and fragile.

When we talk about diversity we try to establish that all people are different, but it does not imply that we should not have the same rights.

In a utopian society where there is no system of oppression, I could accept this conception of disability as a valid one (although not in its entirety, since we could fall back into an understanding that there are bodies that are normal and others that are not).

But, in an ableist society such as the Spanish State, I personally believe that using this term serves to mask ableist violence. It would here be equating oppressors with oppressed people, and ignore the reality of disabled people.

It is important to emphasize here, we are not only different, but that the fact of being different leads to society identifying us as inferior and undesirable (which is exactly where ableism starts) and therefore we are murdered, raped or discriminated against.

Using functional diversity would be comparable to talking about people instead of women in feminist studies.

Clearly, women are people, but talking about women [instead of people] puts the focus on the violence we suffer because we break with cis-male norms. Continuing with the analysis of the word "functional diversity", using "functional" refers to the bodily part of people, and already by that we are pathologized.

By speaking of functional is a return to the medical-rehabilitative model, seeing the person according to his or her productive capacity or only as his or her body, not as the entirety of a body in society. By that it ends up falling into the claws of capitalism.

To continue with that terms that are used or created from the social model, there's word disability. This word arouses lots of controversy within the concerned group itself.

On the one hand, there are people claiming that the use of this word only encourages greater discrimination, since it carries a number of negative attributes that reinforce already defined stereotypes, and because already in a grammatical sense it implies that we are less capable.

On the other hand, people prefer the use of "disability" as a way of re-appropriating the term.

It allows us to redefine it and strip it of all those negative attributes that were established by the ableist system.

The use of the term disability in the radical model intends just that, defining this word as a form of struggle, as it is the one that allows us to reflect reality, how it is society that disables people, and in this way the term is re-appropriated, one that was to insult us. Even as a form of struggle against the State that defines us, as it would be breaking with the idea of disability as something negative and that conveys sadness.

As Leonor Silvestri wrote (in Games of Chron), to use the word "disability" in a sentence and replacing it with "woman, blonde, lesbian..." would be offensive.

In a similar way, I have used it as a way to counteract the speeches of some organizations or political parties that aim to define us, such as ONCE or PP.

Both do use the word disability, but they do not do so from a critical point of view, quite the contrary.

They do so from a position of power, one in which people who are not disabled take advantage of the work of disabled people for profit, such as ONCE does by hiring disabled people under precarious conditions.

To the question whether it is better to use "disabled" or "with disability", I prefer disabled/ disabled person, since it allows me to express that it is society that disables the person.

On the other hand, using "disabled person" tends to blame the person for his or her situation, thereby pathologizing him or her, treating it as if it was a cold or the flu. What is implied here is that it is a disease to be cured.

When we talk about other forms of oppression such as gender or sexuality, we have no doubts which words to use, we refer to people according to their status as women, lesbians or racialized.

At no time do we have any doubt whether to use words like "person with womanism", "person with lesbianism" or "person with racialism". This is because neither gender, sexuality nor race are considered to be diseases, whereas disability is. Therefore, I prefer to use "disabled."

Another type of words, used to define within the social model, here with an intention to cover up, are euphemisms such as "differently abled."

These get used as a way to avoid the word disability, out of fear, but are actually even more offensive.

They are used because the word disability itself has such negative connotations, but also because we are considered to be so fragile, that any word or comment can offend or hurt us, which only serves to avoid at all costs to mention us or to talk about our reality.

In this way, a taboo gets constructed around disability that feeds the invisibility we experience.

But, at the end of the day, each person has the power to decide how she wants to be designated, with which word she feels most comfortable, and no one should have the power to deny her this decision.

The negative idea of disability has given rise to a large part of the insults we use in our daily lives in Spanish.

Without realizing it, what we are doing is perpetuating the negative conception of disability while at the same time oppressing through language.

Some examples of this are insults such as "retrasade" (retarded), "mongole" ("mongoloid" as an offensive term for people with Down Syndrome with all its racist connotations), "lisiade" (cripple) or even the very idea of discapacidad (disability) or discapacitade (disabled person).

As we have mentioned before, Leonor Silvestri talks about exactly this, when she observes how the word disability has taken on catastrophic or offensive overtones, but I maintain it should only be offensive when it is used as an insult. Personally, I neither advocate to stop using them nor to continue using them, but to take time to reflect on the use of language.

If such words remain a part of our vocabulary, reflect from which perspective we use them, what the purpose is, what we want to achieve with them and if there exists an alternative word with which to replace it.

In the end, language not only modifies society, but also modifies our mind and the conception we have of reality.

If we stop using this type of words because we consider them to be offensive or out of place, seeing that being crippled is not a bad thing, what we do is to value disability and change all the ableist ideas linked to such insults.

If we decide to keep using them, we must be aware of the position from which we are doing so, what we intend to achieve with such use of language and in what context we do so.

It is necessary to analyze if we are doing it from the side of the oppressor and thereby perpetuating the ableist violence.

Or if, on the contrary, it is done from the oppressed side with an objective of empowering ourselves through such words that have historically been used to subjugate and/or hurt us.

In either of case language must be valued, its purposes investigated, since it can act as a double-edged sword.

To finish up with language, but leaving it by way of how we call ourselves, we could look at the way by which we call people who are not disabled. When we talk about other forms of oppression, such as gender or sexuality, we always know ways of both naming the oppressors and the oppressed.

They are categories that define us within one group or the other, that are constructed through a denial of norms (the oppressors). For example, looking at the sexuality category (within a society and a hetero-normative system), what is considered normal is to be hetero, and resulting from a denial of these norms the rest of the sexual orientations get constructed.

The same thing happens in disability, considering that disability arises from the denial of a normative body and mind model, but here there's no category that defines the oppressing group.

The consideration goes as follows, not being disabled is normal, so such a word has not been created, and therefore, non-disabled people usually do not reflect on or analyze their position or their reality. Disability is not usually understood from the viewpoint of oppression, but from one of disease.

After much reading and research I have decided to use the Spanish expression "non-disca" or non-disabled to define the oppressor group.

In English "able" or "able-bodied" is used, which sort of means capable, but in Spanish this is not an established word.

I use "non-disabled" because even though it would be logical to use "able", doing so reinforces negative stereotypes, that have been imposed on us. Above all, at a moment when the anti-ableist

struggle within the state has barely started, which means that there is very little information in Spanish about the struggle and it can easily be misinterpreted.

After all, words and language are tools that allow us to define reality and define ourselves, so we should give them the importance they deserve.

Not only because of their power to facilitate change, but also because of their power to change ourselves.

The fact of being able to define [these terminologies] for ourselves, without the need for state or institutions to do it for us, or the power we have to change what these institutions want us to believe.

To create alternative definitions to the RAE signify a valuation of our power of getting active in the face of a society that tries to silence us and lock us in our homes, into institutions.

3. What Is Ableism?

When talking about disability, it is inevitable to talk about empowerment. It is a word that we are beginning to hear more frequently in social movements, but its meaning and implications usually are not discussed in much depth.

Ableism is the social, political and economic system that discriminates against disabled people just for being disabled. It is a system in which bodies and minds are valued according to standards of normality, intelligence and excellence.

These values are determined by capitalism (and the state). The idea of a "perfect" person is a artificial one, created by the system to extract the maximum economic benefit out of people's work. Our value is therefore measured in terms of our usefulness to other people.

Any person who deviates from this concept, because he/she is unable to work, or even supposedly unable to work, is dis-criminated against and dis-abled, no longer considered a "person" and loses all his/her rights.

That is why it is said that disability does not exist per-se, but instead is a social construct, because it arises through discrimination of and barriers against people not fitting or following the norms.

A person is not born disabled, only in his or her relationship to the systemic context and how this imposes limits on him or her, disability is created.

Some of the [historic] strategies used by the system to exercise violence are sterilization, incarceration or even murder. These strategies have evolved as the capitalist system has evolved.

These strategies arise from the need of capitalism to create and promote the idea of an efficient body, capable of producing maximum economic and social benefit. Since industrialization, what prevailed was the body understood as a source of labor.

The efficiency of the body, linked to health standards set by medicine, looked for the body's functionality. The medical standard defined the expected efficiency of the body, and thereby linked bodily health to economic productivity.

With consumer capitalism, production becomes so consumer-driven, that advertising, visual and aesthetic ideals take precedence. Social success, therefore, gets linked to the physical, and social ascent, will reflect how well your body conforms to aesthetic ideals, to the norm. (The fact that consumer capitalism is evolving and with it medical violence is changing does not mean that the previous idea of industrialization is no longer present, but rather that they now coexist).

Medicine under consumer capitalism will be responsible for promoting health linked to the aesthetic field, bodies that resemble the idea of consumer beauty will be considered healthy. Which in turn leads medicine to standardize bodies in order to achieve both health and beauty, creating the ideal of healthy, beautiful, good, slim bodies. Bodies will be adapted to fit this standard, which legitimizes the non-genuine.

Such regulations often involve taking away our control over our bodies. In my case, for example, when I was 3 or 4 years old, the doctors decided that in order for me to walk "better" (that is, without limping or holding my feet in a tiptoe position, because that was not considered aesthetically pleasing) what they did was to cut my Achilles tendon. What they were trying to achieve was to take away my control over my foot, to make it sink under the weight of gravity, and therefore they were playing a normative walking game, but without me having the power to decide over my own body. Disabled people have always been regulated and rehabilitated by medicine, with the idea of seeking a cure that brings us closer to bodily legitimacy. Pathologizing disability, to establish a logic of subjugation and hierarchization.

4. Relationship to Anarchism

The anti-ableist struggle and anarchism are linked because in their analysis of reality there are certain common aspects, such as the desire to abolish wage labor or their stance against ideas of what defines normality. But this has not always been the case.

Anarchism until relatively recently has not been a safe space for disabled people (and it may well still not be safe in environments, where activists perpetuate ableist ideas in discourse and action).

As one [historic] example, during the Spanish Civil War [among the anarchist forces], when comrades were getting wounded in battle (which can be read as them getting disabled), they were sent home to be "taken care of by their wives", since they were considered to be useless, unable to contribute anything to the struggle (as ableist and sexist as this decision may sound today).

Or even Emma Goldman herself, whom I value so much and who is a reference for so many of us.

She defended the use of contraceptives stating that "if birth control wasn't promoted by the State, it would be promoting the growth of the destitute, of syphilitics, epileptics, addicts, cripples, sick people, alcoholics" [i can't find the source of this quote] and she even was in favor of the internment of disabled people because they were a hindrance to society.

But newer approaches to anarchism propose practical solutions against ableism, which makes anarchism one of the movements most involved in the issue.

When the fight against ableism is understood as a clear and real objective, [anarchism] can be seen as a totally compatible movement, since, as was already suggested in the beginning, it aims to destroy wage labor and the State, two of the main forces oppressing "the crippled".

The State acts as a factor of oppression when it dictates who counts as disabled and who doesn't, when it institutionalizes disabled people, decides who deserves to receive aid, imposes special education programs or segregation.

By using medicine as its tool to promote eugenics through an ideal of healthy, abled and fit bodies as the only valid body. It promotes forced sterilizations, coercive abortions and abortions of disabled fetuses.

In anarchism we not only propose to fight against this type of state violence, but we also promote the idea of collectivizing homework, care and accessibility.

We strife for collective responsibility that will allow everyone's needs to be met. Circles of support are one of the [practical] solutions that we propose. These consist of alliances between people (usually two non-disabled people and one disabled person) who are friends and together take care of the accessibility needs of the disabled person.

This idea is a crucial one since this type of care acts horizontally, by considering all the involved parties as active components in the relationship.

It is a relationship of reciprocity, through which both disabled and non-disabled people contribute to each other.

This nuance is important here, this is what differentiates [a circle of care] from personal assistants (PA), a relationship with a PA is always unidirectional.

Wanting to put an end to wage labor facilitates a shift in the conception of what constitutes ability in people and what makes them valuable. By ending wage labor, people will no longer be judged as valid based on their economic benefit, rather people will be considered a valid part of society by virtue of the simple fact of being people.

Most importantly, they will be considered to be political subjects, and not just observers of reality.

With the abolition of wage labor, the idea of utility will be abolished. People will no longer be forced to be productive, will instead do what they can, and want, without the fear of being judged nor feeling guilty about it.

Some of the solutions proposed by anarchists to put an end to ableism:

- Giving disabled people an active role, while ableist society has tried to silence them through confinement and historical erasure.

- Building an anarchist, critical model of disability and neurodivergence, one that enables us to strip them of all the stigma and stereotype that they currently carry.

- Analyzing the work of disabled activists and researchers.

- Speaking in a simple, easily understandable way, just like Malatesta or Emma Goldman always did, and valuing graphic novels as sources of information, as for instance V like Vendetta or Persepolis demonstrate.

- Making our talks, conferences (workshops, meetings), writings and actions accessible to all.

- Creating anarchist anti-ableist [teaching] materials and a radical pedagogy that allows us to deconstruct ableism [at its root].

- Building crisis houses and self-care groups, valuing self-care.

- Understanding mutual aid as the basis of interpersonal relationships.

- Valuing rest and naps. Naps are revolutionary, since they allow us to rest from all the violence that the system exerts on us.

- By deconstructing non-disabled people.

5. Tips for Deconstruction

Apart from the solutions proposed by anarchism, to achieve a real deconstruction we have to reevaluate weakness, vulnerability, dependence and fragility.

Knowing ourselves to be vulnerable brings us closer to the other concepts, at least to interdependence. This implies breaking with the health system that divides us into healthy and sick. This implies fighting for diversity without falling into the idea of an idealized human. Without taking as its reference that perfect body, always strong and healthy.

A very important step to take into account is to accept that people with disabilities do not want to stop being disabled, since there is nothing wrong with our bodies and minds.

We do not dedicate our lives to fight *against* our bodies, but instead accept ourselves with our weaknesses, we know ourselves to be vulnerable and are proud of it. To assume that we disabled people want to stop being disabled is authoritarian, ableist thinking. It implies that there is a hierarchy of health and of bodies/minds, where at the top are the non-disabled people and where all those, who do not reach this ideal, will have to strive against themselves to reach it.

Finally, we must do away with the idea of "quality of life".

This is a ableist idea, which assumes that there are lives that are worth to be lived and others that are not. These are ideas based on a conception of productive life, in which one lives to work, in which bodies and minds are mere tools at the service of capitalism.

Quality of life must be determined by the person him- or herself, to decide whether or not their life is worth living.

6. Reflection on Militancy

Translation: No more spoons, only knives are left (I refer here to the theory of spoons, explained in the glossary).

What role do we the disabled have in social movements? And what do we mean when we talk about struggle?

When we talk about demonstrations, about reasons to attend them, about "not staying at home to rest" and other reasons that we believe to be irrelevant or absurd for not going to a demonstration/eviction[housing struggle?]/mass meeting, doubt arises in my mind. Who are we thinking about [with these questions]? When such reasons are mentioned they never consider actually disabled people, and when we point out how violent such statements can be, people respond that they are not referring to disabled people but to "the people who struggle."

Why don't they think of to us as possible participants in demonstrations?

Why are we only considered when there is talk of ableism? Can't we be anti-fascists? Abolitionists? Anarchists? Is our only space for struggle anti-ableism?

At the same time, we usually feel uncomfortable having to point out such behaviors, the feeling conveyed to us that instead of strengthening the struggle, we are holding things back. But isn't it rather the case that we are the ones being held back by those who make such comments?

They might be "inoffensive" comments, but they stem from internalized ableism, logical to exist because of state, school, media, family... it is what they convey. But why are we not allowed to fight? Or if we are allowed, why are we questioned, or why do we not rather look for ways to make the spaces a little more accessible?

Call me postmodern, or claim that such a discourse comes with the times we live in, but the only thing this does, is to get in the way. Because the efforts have to be directed where they have to be directed, but is anyone still noticing who is allowed to fight and who is excluded? Are we not reproducing the same shit the system has imposed on us in our own spaces?

I am not at all saying that demonstrations should stop or that we have to be "politically correct", just try yo think beyond the white, cis, hetero, non-disabled man to be the one who fights. The way to fight is not the same for all.

With this I don't want to victimize us or take away any responsibility in the struggle. Obviously we all accept the responsibility, being disabled does not make us less capable of fighting.

Besides, perpetuating ideas of victim-hood is quite ableist. But what I do say is, that it is a matter of all of us creating new ways of understanding our struggle.

Let's not pretend to want to continue to fight like back in 1936 when society was completely changed [reference to the Spanish Civil War, where anarchist forces lost].

As much as we might abhor new technologies, change, progress or postmodernism, we do live in a post-industrial, post-modernist society where technologies are at the order of the day, so what else can we do than to use them for our own benefit.

(I just want to remind you that Anonymous is cyber-activism, I don't see anyone criticizing them, and cyber-activism can be something more than a tweet).

As Celia said in a party at a communist place: Adapt or die.

(This just a brief reflection, the fruit of anger and rage, to anyone who reads this and wants to talk about it, debate or disagree with me, I'm all ears/eyes).

7. Glossary

Translation: I am not your inspiration, thank you

Able-passing: is a term inspired from its use in other forms of oppression, such as "cis-passing" or "come on, you don't look like a dyke." It implies that socially you are not read as disabled, which can be a benefit in some occasions, but at the same time it can lead to very violent situations.

There is a debate within the collective as to whether or not this can be a privilege. It is clear that there may well be times when it is, such as a job interview, when hiding your identity can help you to get hired.

These acts can lead to violence and oppression against us, since we are denying ourselves, hiding who we are in order to be subservient to the system.

In some cases, "able-passing" is supported by a medical system intent on modifying us in order to bring us closer to the norm and make us useful, which means, we are facing quite strong violence for large parts of our lives.

Mutual aid: "But it is not love and not even sympathy upon which Society is based in mankind. It is the conscience—be it only at the stage of an instinct—of human solidarity. It is the unconscious recognition of the force that is borrowed by each man from the practice of mutual aid; of the close dependency of every one's happiness upon the happiness of all; and of the sense of justice, or equity, which brings the individual to consider the rights of every other individual as equal to his own." ~ Peter Kropotkin — Mutual Aid

Personal assistants: Working people, in charge of helping disabled people to perform tasks of their day-to-day life. They are currently considered to be tools for the disabled person, i.e., completely dehumanized.

Crisis houses: "Open houses, with voluntary admission, inhabited by people at risk of being hospitalized, who in many cases are unable to care for themselves at this time." Shirley McNicholas

Care: Unpaid jobs, and as such made invisible to society, that nevertheless sustain life, health (physical and mental) as well as affective networks and that historically fall on people socialized/read as women.

Spoon theory: This is a theory linked to disability and people with chronic illness stating that these people have limited energy.

The energy gets represented in the form of spoons and each activity that we perform in our daily lives is said to consume a certain number of spoons.

For each person this will be different, they hence have to plan their life around this concept, taking into account how they may be affected when running out of spoons at the end of the day.

Criticism of this theory and explanation: I personally criticize this theory because I believe it is based in capitalism. It determines how our lives must be lead in order to be considered valid and normal.

I am also aware of how representing energy in such a way can be useful for some people in order to better plan their lives. The image however is a critique of that theory, and intents to convey the idea that we have no energy left, it only leaves knives for us to fight with. Which also counters the danger of falling into the representation of disability as eternally good-mannered and non-violent people with nothing to fight for.

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"If I can't dance, is it my revolution?"

On the one hand, the phrase itself seems very powerful to me, because it motivates the struggle from joy and defends joy. But also, if we can't dance/move around a space it follows that this space is not accessible, therefore, such a revolution does not represent us.

On the other hand however, what would happen if we can't dance? Is the revolution not our space? Do we have nothing to fight for if we are not able or allowed to leave our homes?

We have to try to do work on consciousness raising and deconstruction (if we really want our struggle to be intersectional), so that the the spaces of struggle, the people we fight for and the issues we fight for, include all of us.

It may seem complicated or unattainable, but with simple gestures like not chanting ableist slogans at demonstrations or changing their routes, we would already be making it possible for many more people with disabilities to attend and feel more comfortable.

The revolution will be accessible and anti-ableist or it will not be one.

<div align="center">(A)</div>