The Strike that Made a Difference

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On March 8, 2017, more than sixty cities in Italy took part in the first global women’s strike. The protests against patriarchal violence resonated not only in the peninsula’s largest cities, but also in smaller towns, which became the sites of unprecedented feminist organization and mobilization. Italy was one of many hubs in a global uprising that can be explained only in light of a set of diverse circumstances that turned March 8 into an exceptional event. This event has both catalyzed a lasting transnational feminist movement and highlighted an unexpected—and still not fully developed—political perspective on the struggle against neoliberalism.

Some of the circumstances that led to the women’s strike in Italy were, or at least at first appear to be, local. On May 30, 2016, Sara Di Pietrantonio, a twenty-two-year-old student in economics at the Università di Roma Tre, was brutally killed by her ex-boyfriend. This was only one in a long list of episodes of male violence against women, but the last straw that triggered a strong and decisive political response. A national assembly was called in Rome by an alliance of feminist groups: the network Io Decido, or I Decide; the national association Donne in Rete Contro la Violenza (D.i.Re), or Women Connected Against Violence (which connects autonomous support centers for victims of male violence, centers established in dozens of cities in Italy by the feminist movements); and the Unione Donne Italiane (UDI), or Union of Italian Women (an association of women founded in 1945 and rooted in the experience of partisan resistance against Fascism). Hundreds of women’s and GLBTQI collectives, associations, and individuals, along with unions and left-wing parties, endorsed the call and participated in the assembly, held on October 8, 2016. This assembly started the process that culminated in the demonstration of November 26, to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Prompted by collective outrage, the refusal of violence thus connected different political subjects and opened the space in which a mass experience of politicization could take place. On November 26, in Rome, 200,000 people demonstrated in the biggest march to have taken place in Italy in years. The next day, nearly two thousand people took part in the assembly organized to discuss how to continue the protests and how to turn the struggle against violence into a political program, with the aim of drafting a “Feminist Plan against Male Violence against Women and Gendered Violence” to oppose the official plan discussed by the Italian parliament.

Though many local circumstances thus contributed to the growth of the Italian movement leading to March 8—yet another femicide, a large and unexpected alliance, and the parliamentary
debate—this process cannot be fully understood unless it is brought into relation with transnational events. In recent years, women have been the protagonists of a series of uprisings: the mass demonstrations against the culture of rape organized in India in 2012; the immense protests by Spanish women against restrictions on access to abortion in 2014; the impressive mobilization of Latin American women against femicides starting in 2015; radical opposition to the Turkish law that legalized rape by means of “shotgun weddings” in 2016. All of these movements make clear that the murder of Sara Di Pietrantonio was not, in fact, a local episode, since male violence against women is a global social fact, as is women’s refusal to be regarded as disposable sexual objects or merely procreative bodies.

Still, the strike made a difference. The women’s movement saw the strike at work as a form of struggle on October 3, 2016, in Poland, when it was used during what was called Black Monday as a way of refusing an unacceptable abortion ban before the Polish parliament. The Argentinian women of Ni Una Menos, inspired by their Polish comrades, launched a call for a global women’s strike on March 8, 2017. In the following days, the call circulated widely and impressively, and the project of the strike was embraced in dozens of countries around the world, including Italy. The strike thus succeeded in creating transnational connections: not a structured organization—even if, in many ways, direct communication between women’s groups and networks across different countries had in fact been established—but a set of political links that synchronized local and contingent struggles and demonstrations, turning them into a single and compact, though internally diversified, global uprising.

The strike made a difference because it allowed feminism to go beyond the borders of the “woman question,” to become both a mass political practice and a means by which to question the whole neoliberal order at the very moment in which patriarchal violence had begun to be recognized as fundamental to it. Yet in Italy this step has been neither immediate nor easy. The organization of the strike through local initiatives and coordination at the national level, including a huge assembly held in Bologna at the beginning of February, was accompanied by an intense debate, one that had already arisen in response to the November demonstration. Should the movement be constituted by women only? Should men, identified as the agents of patriarchy and violence, be allowed to participate in assemblies, demonstrations, and in the strike itself? This debate mainly involved activists and did not take into account the strike’s many other participants, for some of whom this question of separatism was irrelevant. Women went on strike and occupied public squares in order to refuse sexual harassment and violence in workplaces, streets, and houses. They went on strike to oppose the burden of the sexual division of labor. They went on strike to oppose institutional racism and the use of residential permits to turn migrants into a fully disposable workforce and to expose migrant women to sexual violence, often imposed as something that they must accept silently in order to avoid deportation. Women also went on strike to oppose cuts to social benefits and services, cuts that put renewed pressure on women to perform domestic labor and that thus form part of a broader exploitation of sex and gender roles for the sake of profit. Women demonstrated that their oppression plays a fundamental role in the dismantling and monetization of welfare, the precarization of labor, the government of mobility and the maintenance of borders, and the reproduction of relationships of power and domination. In this way, the strike swept away all sorts of
“identity politics”: it went beyond the denunciation of specific conditions experienced by women as actual or potential victims of male violence. The strike was thus also an effort to refuse the position of victims and the disposability of lives, labor, and bodies imposed through violence. By participating in the strike, women drew attention to the neoliberal relationships between patriarchal violence and the violence of capitalist global society, and they pointed to the possibilities of radically questioning a whole system whose reproduction is based on their subordination. This is why the strike managed to mobilize not only women, but also men, precarious workers of all genders, and migrants. Women were the leading force in the organization of the strike, but it marked a horizon for all those who aim to take back their power and effectively fight against oppression and exploitation.

As the statement written by the collective Non Una di Meno, published in this dossier, clearly shows, the strike was possible because a struggle for the strike was fought. This struggle was necessary not only because the precarity of labor under current conditions limits the possibility of striking, but also because the most important trade unions in Italy, beginning with the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL), or Italian General Confederation of Labor, explicitly opposed the strike. Except for the national federation of school and university workers Federazione Lavoratori della Conoscenza, or Federation of Knowledge Workers, and some locals, the CGIL refused to join the strike, its leadership stating that a strike cannot be simply a symbolic action, and that unions are the only collectives that can legitimately call for a strike. In fact, the claim to a monopoly on strikes was a mark of the union's inability to grasp an unexpected moment of mass politicization that pushed the strike beyond the borders of industrial actions or labor conflicts, and turned it into a way of attacking the very conditions of exploitation, and not only symbolically. It is not by chance that the CGIL’s opposition could not stop the strike from continuing. With the support of some grassroots unions—the Confederazione dei Comitati di Base (Cobas), or Confederation of Base Committees; the Sindacato Autorganizzato Lavoratori (Sial Cobas), or Union of Self-Organized Workers; the Sindacato Lavoratori Autorganizzati Intercategoriali (Slai Cobas), or Intercategory Union of Self-Organized Workers, the Unione Sindacale di Base (Usb), or Base Workers’ Union, the Sindacato Generale di Base (Sgb), or General Base Union, the Unione Sindacale Italiana-Asociación Internacional de los Trabajadores (Usi-Ait), or Italian Workers’ Union, part of the International Workers’ Union—women (members of all unions) started organizing in their workplaces, distributing leaflets, and calling assemblies.

It is almost impossible to ascertain how many people actually stopped working on March 8 in Italy. We know that all sectors were involved, public and private: schools, universities, factories, hospitals, logistics warehouses, distribution centers. We also know that the strike was meant to stop all reproductive activities, such as domestic and care work. What is most important, however, is that the women’s strike took place outside all traditional bureaucratic boundaries and that it was made possible by an unexpected subject. By becoming a feminist practice, by being used inappropriately, in the terms of Non Una di Meno’s statement, republished here, the strike was turned from an instrument of collective bargaining into a political weapon and a catalyst for multiple social protests and uprisings. The March 8 strike entailed not only the interruption of working activities, whether waged or unpaid. The mass demonstrations and the occupations of squares and other public spaces that proliferated throughout Italy and the world were also strikes, since the strike can be broadly
defined as a moment of intensity when subordination and the conditions of the production and reproduction of society are refused. Those who engage in this refusal at once expose and deepen a political fracture that cuts through society.

In order to characterize the novelty of the strike, and in an effort to keep open the space of politicization that it created, the activists of ∫connessioni Precarie, or Precarious (Dis)connections, a collective of precarious and migrant workers, women and men, who took part in the experience of Non Una di Meno, insisted on its political, social, and transnational character. Here the term “political” does not refer to the strike as a way of contesting a law or a government in power. Instead it underscores the strike’s capacity to address a gendered form of power, highlighting its global function in the reproduction of domination and exploitation. This is why the feminist strike names not only an interruption in production, but also, and even more importantly, a realization of the capacity to become social, to go outside workplaces, to establish political communication among subjects who are too often isolated and weakened by neoliberal policies. For a moment, these subjects came together to refuse imposed positions, hierarchies, and social roles. This capacity, moreover, was necessarily deployed on a transnational scale. This was the case first, because the subject of the strike is transnational, and rose up against a transnational order of domination and oppression; second, because March 8 was part of a long series of insurgencies and mass demonstrations that, in all quarters of the world—including in the US, where the strike became a watchword during the women’s march organized to protest the inauguration of Donald Trump—not only interrupted production, but aimed to acquire the power necessary to unsettle the neoliberal order materially, and to radically question the hegemonic discourse according to which there is no alternative.

If it is true, as the activists of ∫connessioni Precarie observe, that the women’s strike was the first global uprising against neoliberalism, then the question becomes how to keep open the transnational political perspective that made it possible. The activities of all the collectives, groups, and networks that in Italy and elsewhere participated in the strike are unavoidably rooted in the local, and their everyday struggles are focused on the immediate needs of women, on how to improve their conditions of life and labor, on denouncing the numerous cases of violence reported daily, and on opposing all national laws that seek to limit women’s autonomy. However, it is also crucial to recognize that these local and national conditions can be neither understood nor opposed unless they are situated in a global frame. To be sure, the neoliberal reorganization of patriarchy on a world scale is not a homogeneous phenomenon. Instead it produces differences that are necessary for its reproduction. Consider the intimate relationship between the privatization and monetization of welfare systems in Western countries, on the one hand, and, on the other, the production, through the management of borders and mobility, of a fully disposable female migrant labor force employed in domestic and care work. This relationship points to the urgency of rearticulating even the most traditional feminist critique of the sexual division of labor, by taking into account its transnational dimension and differentiation. To this end, under the sign of the transnational social strike, feminism can gather a multitude to oppose contemporary processes of impoverishment, exploitation, and disenfranchisement.

Though it did not end violence against women, the strike proved that we need to understand this violence not just in terms of the miserable fates of millions of women around the world.
Violence against women is not an exceptional event; its presence in all epochs and in all places clearly indicates that it is a systematic, though historically differentiated, feature of men’s attitude toward women in all existing social and political orders. What is unprecedented is rather its contemporary visibility. A fundamental feature of patriarchy is thus reorganized in the neoliberal global context. Violence against women is a means of reacting to—and even punishing in an exemplary way—the demands for freedom made by women around the world. It is a way of reestablishing and exhibiting male social power. Violence against women serves to compensate for a weakened position of symbolic domination, and must be public and visible given that women’s lives, and the forms of their insubordination, are no longer confined to the domestic sphere. Even when it takes place inside houses and in private spaces, violence against women has become a social weapon for enforcing relationships of domination that women—and not only feminists—undermine with their autonomy. Violence against women is therefore strictly intertwined with the neoliberal reorganization of society. It accompanies the expropriation, privatization, and transnationalization of territories and economies, often with the complicity of states, as in Mexico, Brazil, or Argentina. Violence is a powerful instrument for subduing those women who try to reclaim their futures by crossing the borders established by national and supra-national institutions. Although it takes different forms, violence against women is one face of the violence of society. Therefore, when women reclaimed the strike as a feminist practice, the refusal of patriarchal violence became something more than a bond connecting all women, regardless of their class, race, or legal status. It became an opportunity to question the very conditions of the reproduction of a global order fueled by sexism, racism, and exploitation.

This opportunity is still open. The March 8 strike was both experimental and extraordinary, and it therefore raises questions of continuity and organization. In Italy, discussions in assemblies and on mailing lists turned to possible ways of formalizing the Non Una di Meno network. Some activists suggested establishing a permanent structure, one made up of delegations from all local assemblies participating in the network. As the collective writing of the “Feminist Plan Against Violence” has shown, both this proposal of formalization and the goal of sharing a common program confront some major difficulties, resulting from the diverse composition of Non Una di Meno. The network consists of many different groups, collectives, associations, unions, and individuals without preexisting political affiliations. Brought together by their shared refusal of patriarchal violence and by the project of the strike, the members of Non Una di Meno might nonetheless differ radically from and even oppose one another in their everyday activities and political discourses. This internal heterogeneity makes it difficult to produce a programmatic synthesis of these different and competing discourses, so that the “Feminist Plan,” whose final draft was presented and circulated on November 25, 2017, during another mass feminist demonstration in Rome, is regarded as an “open process,” a platform that can be further deepened and even changed according to the political circumstances of its use. The challenge also involves avoiding the risk of turning the “Feminist Plan” into a platform that would recast women as victims seeking protection from benevolent institutions, rather than recognizing them as a driving global political force organizing for a radically changed society. In fact, the “Feminist Plan” operates at two levels, since it includes both very specific and local demands—for instance, the demand for women’s access to abortion and for the reform of existing national legislation—and other sorts of claims, including demands for a European minimum
wage, welfare, and residence permits. The feminist articulation of the latter set of demands seeks to keep open the space of connection with others, including precarious and migrant workers, not only women, and to keep alive the transnational perspective established by the women’s strike.

Then again, it is crucial to recognize the gap between feminist activism, on the one hand, and the global mass uprisings that took place on March 8, on the other. Such immense numbers of people cannot be contained by a single, permanent structure. So, while the local struggles of feminist activists, their daily attempts to improve women’s conditions of life and labor, are a political resource that cannot be discounted, the question is whether these struggles can also create a space for the continual renewal of the project of the strike. This possibility has been re-opened by the call for a second global women’s strike on March 8, 2018, recently spread by Ni Una Menos Argentina. In Italy, Non una di Meno has answered the call.

The strike, defined as a feminist practice, was able to pose a global question by politicizing a particular condition and calling for its refusal. In this way, the strike could continue to make a difference: both as a process and as a project, it could provide a transnational political infrastructure—a connecting tissue among different subjectivities and conditions on a global scale—capable of turning the refusal of patriarchal violence into an inescapable urgency not only for women, but for all those who oppose the neoliberal order.

**About the Author**

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Tomorrow Is Already Here: March 8 and the Women’s Strike

fconnessioni Precarie
March 7, 2017

Translated by Ramsey McGlazer

Tomorrow is March 8. The global women’s strike is irrupting with unprecedented force in over forty countries, but this is not simply an event. For months already, March 8 has marked the time for millions of women in the world, lit up their imaginations, incited their desires, nourished their ambitions to be protagonists, enhanced their claims to power. March 8 arrives tomorrow, but its effects are already being felt, have already begun.

Tomorrow is March 8, and there will be a political strike. Women will strike because they are no longer willing to accept being exploited, raped, and oppressed. The goal is not an agreement with the boss, but the radical transformation of society. The women’s strike does not seek to support a labor contract or to resolve a labor dispute. For this reason, the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL), or Italian General Confederation of Labor, has refused to endorse the strike and continues to define it as merely “symbolic.” The CGIL is more concerned with defending itself against the “inappropriate” use of the strike than supporting the women who are striking. And yet every day for the past several months, countless women, including those who are members of the CGIL and the Federazione Impiegati Operai Metallurgici (FIOM), or Federation of Metalworkers, have been committed to making the strike a reality, in schools, factories, offices, warehouses, hospitals, and universities. With tomorrow’s strike, these women materially refuse to let anyone claim a monopoly on the strike. They show everyone a way to make the strike into a global effort to counter oppression and exploitation.

Tomorrow is March 8, and there will be a social strike. Women will strike against an order that, everywhere and uninterruptedly, alternates between the violent negation of women’s capacities for acting and the democratic inclusion of women, but in subaltern positions. With the strike, women refuse to be confined to the social and sexual roles that are obstinately assigned to them even when they do not work. They refused to be reduced to the status of domestic, aesthetic, and sexual objects. For this reason, the women’s strike is global: it does not address workplaces only, but break apart the relations of power that reproduce themselves through a sexual hierarchy that serves to intensify everyone’s exploitation. With tomorrow’s strike, women demand that their own power prevail over an order that is being imposed on millions of humiliated and impoverished lives rendered precarious.
**Tomorrow is March 8, and there will be a transnational strike.** Women will strike against a neoliberal and patriarchal order that, in various ways, uses borders, builds walls, and sustains institutional racism to crush the demands for freedom made by millions of men and women. The force of the strike has transformed an outcry from Argentina into a global tide that seeks to end the political blackmail of borders. With the strike, women add collective force to the refusal of every form of confinement. With their movements and their struggles, migrant women have been the first to practice this refusal and to point to the possibility of a liberation that is both individual and collective. From the United States, where women are leading the effort to counter the institutional and patriarchal racism of the Trump regime, to Europe, overwhelmed in recent years by the so-called “storm of migrants,” tomorrow’s strike gathers its force from migrant women’s demands for freedom, and throughout the world it is creating the conditions for them to be protagonists.

**Tomorrow is March 8, and there will be a feminist strike.** Women will strike because the strike allows every woman to give voice to her own singular condition, while at the same time making a collective and massive force prevail over intolerable positions. What unites women in every part of the world is not a sexual or gendered identity, but the demand to subvert a global order that wants all women, as women, to remain subordinate, exploited, and oppressed. For this reason, the women’s strike is not only an event that will take place on March 8: it is an infinite desire to be free, the affirmation of a freedom that is also the power to transform every moment of the present.

March 8 arrives tomorrow, but the effects of this political, social, transnational, and feminist strike have already begun. Starting with women, but not only for women.
The Inappropriate Weapon of the Feminist Strike

Non Una di Meno Roma
March 10, 2017

The images from Italy and from throughout the world should leave no doubt about the success of the global women's strike. But demonstrations are not the only way to form a clear picture of this success: the partial data show a participation rate of twenty-four percent of dependent workers. (We are using the data from Dario Di Vico's article in Corriere della Sera, although he is not clear enough on his references.) This was happening while the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL), or Italian General Confederation of Labor, the main Italian trade union, was calling for assemblies in the workplace, in open opposition to the strike. We should add as well data that are not observable or detectable, attesting to the participation of casual workers, freelancers, volunteers and non-regular workers.

During the past decades, the right to strike has been denied to a growingly wide range of workers. Therefore this instrument of struggle has lost meaning and effectiveness. But the global women's strike has given it new significance, restoring its original strength. A general strike, opposed by the unions, has been practiced in every corner of the country to make political and practical issues central again. It has not been at all “symbolic,” if by symbolic we mean testimonial and abstract.

The struggle against gendered violence is a struggle for autonomy, for a minimum wage, for an income that allows for self-determination, for equal pay. By striking, we want to raise the issue of (unpaid or underpaid) care work, performed mainly by women, and we want to call attention to the need for a new welfare system that is inclusive, open, and guaranteed. We demand the freedom to lead our lives without encountering ideological or material obstacles. By striking, we call on a kind of knowledge that is not a neutral object, but that so far has been against women, about stereotypes and pre-established roles, about narratives and dangerous erasures.

The battle to take back the strike was fought in every workplace, every school, every company. The hundreds of emails addressed to Non Una di Meno, asking how to strike, prove the will to exercise—and the difficulty of exercising—a constitutional right that has for too long been in the hands of trade union secretariats more than in the hands of workers, women and men. Despite all this, workers seized the opportunity to link arms, all around the world, practicing a radical and concrete form of struggle.

We believe, therefore, that those unions, such as the CGIL and the Federazione Impiegati Operai Metallurgici (FIOM), or Federation of Metalworkers, were wrong to not seize this opportunity, and on the contrary to try to get rid of it, if not openly fight against it. They did not want to join the symbolic and political effort and recognize women's struggles as common and material ones.
It is remarkable that, from November 27, the day after the immense national demonstration opposing male violence against women, to today, we have heard a chorus of disapproval. Judging from the statements of well-known commentators or those of Education Minister Valeria Fedeli, we can say that the “inappropriate weapon” of a feminist strike has been hurting our cause a lot. According to the newspaper Corriere della Sera we should instead spend our time mending. Becoming thus good, new Penelopes, “keepers of the West,” the West that is supposedly threatened by the new “Proci” (or suitors of Penelope). Too bad that it is precisely this West, made of Grosse Koalitionen, neoliberalism, new patriarchal and racist governments, and neo-Nazis, that is sustaining our subordination, our exclusion, the conditions of violence, exploitation, and poverty that are increasingly difficult to bear.

The call, to which we responded on March 8 in more than fifty countries, tells us to recognize ourselves as something different: something that goes beyond borders, genders, races. Women became the main voices in a resounding demand for redemption: women’s lives matter, and they will not be put at your service.

To strike was not a mistake. Now we are stronger, and we can continue to write our “Feminist Plan against Violence against Women.” The next national assembly is scheduled for April 22 and 23 in Rome. Were we wrong to ask for bread, in addition to roses? Certainly not. And we will continue to do so.
The Brilliant Strike: March 8 and the Global Uprising Against Neoliberalism

fconessioni Precarie
March 14, 2017

Translated by fconessioni Precarie

The March 8 strike was the first global uprising against neoliberalism. In order to fully understand its meaning, the strike must be seen from the correct distance: anyone who looks at it only from the perspective of a single city or of one part of the march doesn’t see what really happened. Its measure—that is, actually, its political mismeasure—lies in its global character. The strike’s political mismeasure stems from the impossibility of reducing it to a ritual celebration. It lies in the several grounds that were addressed by a transnational social strike, which redefined the social practice of the strike well beyond the few attempts that had preceded it. The strike’s mismeasure resulted the choice of millions of women who, involving a great number of men, mobilized by claiming and practicing the strike. Only starting from this politically and not just geographically global dimension can we understand the range of claims and practices that were expressed in and through the strike.

Run, run, run Tayyip ... We’re coming! Tens of thousands of women and men chanted together on the streets of Istanbul, attacking Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s “government of just one man.” In Turkey, the March 8 women’s strike was the rightful heir of Gezi Park, because it became a mass demonstration against a government that seeks to confiscate any kind of liberty. In the Plaza de Mayo, in Buenos Aires, more than 200,000 women shouted: Sí se puede! If it’s possible to strike against Macri, we women will strike! In this way, they created a protest movement out of claims that had previously been fragmented and identity-based. These are two distant episodes, but at the same time they are very close to each other. They clearly show that the strike organized by women produced the first global uprising against neoliberalism. Opposition to this or that government wasn’t reduced to the request for electoral change or a protest against the political class. Women know that the male violence that oppresses them in many forms and that is everywhere brutally institutionalized is part of the neoliberal order and is a global fact. Women know that neoliberalism didn’t invent violence against them, but they also know that it is now time to connect that violence to the political conditions of its reproduction, with the aim of making it the object of collective denunciation. The strike is not just a temporary stepping away from work, but a political practice that expresses the radical, total, and massive refusal of the conditions in which life is produced and reproduced today. Given its mismeasure, the strike does not seek local or temporary mediations. Instead it expresses its power on the immediate plane of the mass uprising. “We won’t wait,” the Irish women of Strike 4 Repeal claimed, calling attention not just to the urgency of abrogating a patriarchal and
murderous anti-abortion law, but also to the fact that the time of the strike, the time of the rupture, is now. This is why all over the world March 8 was not just “the first day of a new life for women,” but also the first day of a global critique of existing conditions, a critique that has for some time and with great difficulty sought to express itself.

The strike opened an unprecedented political space: in every part of the world, women and men, precarious, industrial workers and migrants, mobilized to make the strike a reality, and go beyond its evocation, thus breaking with the isolation of their daily insubordination. The immense demonstrations that we saw were strikes. The withholding of labor was a demonstration of strength and courage. The feminism of thousands of women led them to recognize the strike as a chance to express the refusal of their own peculiar condition of subordination, oppression, and exploitation, allowing everyone to become the protagonist of a global movement. This feminist choice accounts for the tremendous participation seen in all kinds of public squares on March 8: not just in the tide that flooded the big cities, but also in the political presence of women and many men in so many different places where initiatives were unexpected.

Some claimed that this uprising was only able to show the indignation of privileged women, sympathetic with the cause of those who could not strike or freely shout in the streets. There were those who repeated that the struggle against capitalism is something else. Perhaps something just for men. Instead women—precarious workers, industrial workers, and migrants—were in all the public squares, taking a stand. They overturned the discourse of victimization, proudly transforming their own position of exploitation into the privilege of becoming subjects of insubordination. The strike challenged many borders—those separating public and private, productive and reproductive work, workplaces and society—and effectively showed that the West and East, and the North and South of the world share a common battleground to be occupied with urgency. The strike spread into every corner of the planet and made clear the relations between the many different ways in which neoliberal violence manifests itself. It also made possible—and politically connected—a multitude of events, upending all the rituals of the movement: it was not a staging of conflict, but a real demonstration of power and of our desire to take it.

This strike showed the possibility of effectively opposing the strategy of segmentation fostered by patriarchal neoliberalism, because it enabled a political synchronization of diverse issues. The conditions experienced by the women sustaining the popular economy in Argentina are certainly different from those of migrant women vexed by residence permits in Europe; those of female combatants in Rojava; those of Spanish precarious women; those of women suffering the institutional violence of an authoritarian and patriarchal government in Turkey; those of Black women fighting against police brutality, sexism, and institutional racism in the US; or those of French women affected by the loi travail and its world. The women who went on strike were not united by a common and homogenous platform. In Brazil, they targeted a social security reform that raises women’s retirement age, extending and intensifying exploitation without taking into account their double workload. In the Philippines, women spoke up against the neoliberal agricultural policies and the racist measures of Rodrigo Duterte’s government. In Australia, thousands of women educators went on strike in order to oppose a welfare state that rests on the systematic reduction of their wages. In Poland, women and men took to the streets against the alliance of Catholic
fundamentalism and progressive neoliberalism, which constitute a common front promoting daily institutional violence against women. After the massive mobilizations against _loi travail_, France was again filled with more than three hundred actions that overtook the streets of major cities. In these actions, migrants played an unprecedentedly prominent role. Kurdish, Turkish, Chinese, African, and French women went on strike against the violence, precarization, and structural wage disparity affecting them. In Sweden, the strike on March 8 repoliticized care work, bringing to the streets hundreds of health care workers from hospitals and houses, and inaugurating political initiatives for reproductive health rights and against the precarization of social services. But the March 8 strike cannot be reduced to the sum of local disputes, or even to a massive coalition of trade unions, political organizations, and social movements, of contingent alliances built for a passing deadline. Today it is clear that the process of connecting crucial political claims globally was central to the organization of the strike, that it gave strength and meaning to each local initiative. _This transnational strike thus pointed to the possibility of acting on the very scale at which neoliberal and patriarchal violence is deployed daily._

In all public squares where demands for health care, welfare, education, freedom of movement, and freedom of residence were made, people did not look nostalgically back to the past, to the lost universalism of nineteenth-century citizenship and the welfare state—something many countries involved in the movement leading to the women's strike had never, in fact, seen. Instead, these _people demanded something that has never existed_. Given that neoliberalism does not allow for any emancipation but the one guaranteed by money, such claims directly attack the political mechanisms of neoliberalism's reproduction. Demanding the right to free abortion means working to overturn the material and symbolic order that wants to make women mere reproductive tools; it means opposing the normative regulation of sexuality. Demanding care services for children and the elderly means refusing the sexual division of labor that aims to force women into being the domestic servants of the neoliberal order. Demanding freedom of movement and asylum, to allow for an escape from violence against women and men and from the expropriation of their existence, means countering the daily violence of borders and institutional racism. Demanding higher wages means demanding power over our own lives. The irreducible particularity of women does not lead to the dream of an undifferentiated composition, but, through the social practice of the strike, asserts a collective and global force. March 8 delivers a valuable indication of political method: _it is not a matter of demanding generic universal rights or individual emancipation, but of targeting the pillars that support an entire order of domination and exploitation, starting from one's own particular position_, treating particularity as a strength rather than a weakness. This is the lesson of the March 8 women's strike.

Unsurprisingly, this strike has worried the wardens of order. Well-known columnists, men and women, chose not to remain silent and instead rushed to declare the strike damaging to women first and foremost, while the champions of institutional feminism stated severely that work should never be refused because provides opportunities for social promotion. Nevertheless, after years of oscillation between sensationalist catastrophism and lukewarm prescriptions for the recovery of the world economy, _the front pages of all the world’s newspapers had to register the existence of a new demand for “justice.”_ This _feminism of the 99%_, as the women of March 8 called it in the United
States, does not correspond to a generic ideal of participation from below or of radical citizenship: it allows women who are suffering and have suffered violence and exploitation to rise up and fight, while it requires everyone to take a stand and to line up. This feminism makes the strike the political border of this front; it further destabilizes the remains of a social mediation already in fragments; and it alters the ways in which it is possible to create paths of organization and struggle. It explodes the alibi of a worthless, routine, and ritual strike, as well as the notion of a bargaining strike measurable only in terms of participation. This feminism instead offers women and men the freedom to remove themselves from an order built against them. The slogan Yo decido, wielded by Spanish women, does not assume the political system as a reference, but it asserts itself on the ruins of institutional mediation, which neoliberalism has long since destroyed with the brutal force of its domination. It is not by chance, then, that trade unions have been so frightened by the women’s strike and, in Argentina as well as in Italy, have tried to limit or even to counter women’s autonomous initiative, to return to the peaceful negotiations on which they still base their identity and to which they appeal as their raison d’être. Meanwhile, women have made the weapon of the strike available for those who—from different positions and all over the world—aim to really oppose precarity, institutional racism, and the silence imposed by the neoliberal order.

It is impossible to say to what extent we have actually been able to interrupt every productive and reproductive activity. Yet, in spite of its still experimental dimensions, the March 8 strike points to a fracture, it establishes a “before” and an “after.” It shows the possibility of a process of organization that cannot be reduced to a sum of militant instances, and it refutes all at once with every micro-political hypothesis that is not able to consider the local and global levels of the struggle simultaneously. First of all, the strike was transnational, and for that reason, in dozens of countries, it has resulted in a process of capillary organization, in which women have been protagonists: beyond every political label and militant certification, they have triggered the actions of a multitude of subjects. The political project of the strike has lent and can keep lending unity to this process of organization, pointing to the possibility of an exit from the daily impotence of merely local movements, and an assertion of collective force. This force cannot be reduced to a mere instrument for negotiating with this or that government. The feminist platform against violence that Non Una di Meno is writing in Italy will prevail only if it remains anchored to the process of global struggle that took place under the sign of the strike. After the global March 8, it is no longer possible to contain the force of the women’s strike in the cage of old languages or in organizational forms that are out of date and have been shown to be insufficient. Only a transnational political infrastructure will be able to sustain the movement of the strike. As the watchword of “a day without us” continues to circulate around the world, significantly redeployed by migrants in the United States as well as in Argentina, after March 8, the collective challenge involves consolidating and accelerating the movement of the strike that is haunting the world and that women made into a global possibility.
Domani è già qui: l’8 marzo e lo sciopero delle donne

7 marzo 2017

Domani è l’8 marzo. Lo sciopero globale delle donne sta irrompendo con una forza senza precedenti in oltre 40 paesi, ma non si tratta semplicemente di un evento. Ormai da mesi l’8 marzo scandisce il tempo di milioni di donne nel mondo, accende la loro immaginazione, suscita il loro desiderio, alimenta la loro ambizione di protagonismo, accresce la loro pretesa di potere. L’8 marzo arriva domani, ma i suoi effetti sono già cominciati.

Domani è l’8 marzo e ci sarà uno sciopero politico. Le donne scioperano perché non sono più disposte ad accettare di essere sfruttate, violentate e oppresse. L’obiettivo non è l’accordo con un padrone, ma la trasformazione radicale della società. Lo sciopero delle donne non è il supporto di un tavolo di contrattazione o di una piattaforma vertenziale. Per questo la CGIL ha rifiutato di proclamarlo e continua a definirlo «simbolico», più preoccupata di salvaguardare se stessa dall’uso «indebito» dello sciopero che non a sostenere le donne che lo stanno praticando. Eppure tantissime donne, anche iscritte alla CGIL e alla FIOM, in questi mesi si sono quotidianamente impegnate a farlo diventare reale nelle scuole e nelle fabbriche, negli uffici e nei magazzini, negli ospedali e nelle università. Con lo sciopero di domani, queste donne negano materialmente che qualcuno possa vantare il monopolio ufficiale dello sciopero e indicano a tutti la strada per farne una pratica globale contro l’oppressione e lo sfruttamento.

Domani è l’8 marzo e ci sarà uno sciopero sociale. Le donne scioperano contro un ordine che oscilla ovunque e continuamente tra la negazione violenta della loro capacità di agire e la loro democratica inclusione in una posizione subalterna. Con lo sciopero le donne rifiutano di essere costrette nei ruoli sociali e sessuali che ostinatamente vengono attribuiti loro anche quando non lavorano, rifiutano di essere ridotte a oggetti domestici, estetici e sessuali. Per questo lo sciopero delle donne è globale: esso non riguarda solo i luoghi di lavoro, ma infrange un rapporto di potere che si riproduce attraverso una gerarchia sessuale che serve a intensificare lo sfruttamento di tutti. Con lo sciopero di domani, le donne pretendono di far valere il proprio potere contro un ordine che si sta imponendo su milioni di vite umiliate, precarizzate e impoverite.

Domani è l’8 marzo e ci sarà uno sciopero transnazionale. Le donne scioperano contro un ordine neoliberale e patriarcale che in modi diversi usa i confini, costruisce muri e produce razzismo istituzionale per schiacciare la pretesa di libertà di milioni di uomini e di donne. La forza dello sciopero ha trasformato un grido partito dall’Argentina in marea che vuole abbattere il ricatto politico del confine. Con lo sciopero le donne danno forza di massa al rifiuto di ogni forma di confinamento. Con i loro movimenti e le loro lotte le donne migranti sono le prime a praticare...
questo rifiuto e a indicare la possibilità di liberazione che è insieme individuale e collettiva. Dagli Stati uniti—dove le donne sono in prima fila contro il razzismo istituzionale e patriarcale di Trump—all’Europa—travolta in questi anni dalla “tempesta dei migranti”—lo sciopero di domani trae la propria forza dalla pretesa di libertà delle donne migranti e in ogni parte del mondo sta creando le condizioni per il loro protagonismo.

Domani è l’8 marzo e ci sarà uno sciopero femminista. Le donne scioperano perché lo sciopero permette a ciascuna di dare voce alla propria condizione singolare facendo valere una forza collettiva e di massa contro una posizione insopportabile. Ciò che unisce le donne in ogni parte del mondo non è un’identità sessuale o di genere, ma la pretesa di sovvertire un ordine globale che vuole tutte le donne, come donne, subordinate, sfruttate e oppresse. Per questo lo sciopero delle donne non è soltanto l’evento dell’8 marzo: è un desiderio senza fine di essere libere, è l’affermazione di una libertà che è anche il potere di trasformare ogni momento del presente.

L’8 marzo arriva domani, ma gli effetti di questo sciopero politico, sociale, transnazionale e femminista sono già cominciati. A partire dalle donne, non soltanto per le donne.
L’arma impropria dello sciopero femminista

Non Una di Meno Roma
10 marzo 2017

Le immagini delle piazze italiane e di tutto il mondo non dovrebbero lasciare dubbi sul successo dello sciopero globale delle donne. Ma le enormi manifestazioni di piazza non bastano a rappresentarlo: i dati, ancora parzialissimi (faciamo riferimento ai dati forniti nell’articolo di Dario Di Vico sul Corriere della Sera, anche se non è chiaro quali siano le sue fonti), parlano di un’adesione delle lavoratrici Inps del 24%, ad esempio, questo mentre contemporaneamente la Cgil indiceva assemblee sui luoghi di lavoro, in aperto antagonismo con lo sciopero. A ciò andrebbe aggiunto il dato, non rilevato né rilevabile, dell’adesione nel mondo del lavoro autonomo, precario, gratuito e nero. Uno strumento di lotta svuotato di senso e efficacia dal venire meno di un diritto per una fascia sempre più estesa di lavoratrici e lavoratori è stato, infatti, risignificato e riconsegnato alla sua originaria forza. Lo sciopero generale, negato dai sindacati confederali, è stato praticato in ogni angolo del paese per mettere al centro temi tanto politici quanto concreti, nient’affatto simbolici, se per simbolico si intende testimoniale e astratto. La lotta alla violenza di genere è lotta per l’autonomia, per il salario minimo e per il reddito di autodeterminazione, per la parità salariale. Scioperando vogliamo porre il problema del lavoro di cura (gratuito o sottopagato) che ricade sulle donne; della necessità di un nuovo welfare includente, aperto e garantito. Della libertà di scegliere delle nostre vite senza incontrare ostacoli ideologici o materiali. Scioperando parliamo di un sapere che non è un oggetto neutro ma finora è stato contro le donne; di stereotipi e ruoli prestabiliti; di narrazioni e rimozioni pericolose.

La battaglia per riprenderci lo sciopero si è combattuta su ogni posto di lavoro, in ogni scuola, dentro ogni azienda. Centinaia le email giunte a NON UNA DI MENO per sapere come scioperare testimoniano la volontà e insieme la difficoltà di esercitare un diritto costituzionale da troppo tempo appannaggio delle segreterie sindacali più che delle lavoratrici e dei lavoratori. Malgrado ciò, l’occasione di incrocire le braccia tutte insieme in tutto il mondo, di esercitare quindi una forma radicale e concreta di lotta, è stata pienamente raccolta.

Crediamo dunque che l’errore sia stato di quei sindacati, come la Cgil e la Fiom, che non hanno colto questa occasione, anzi l’hanno liquidata, se non combattuta, come possibilità; non hanno voluto cogliere la spinta ideale e politica, constatare il riconoscimento delle donne in una battaglia comune e materialissima.

È significativo che al silenzio registrato il 27 novembre, all’indomani della enorme manifestazione nazionale contro la violenza maschile sulle donne, oggi si sostituisca un coro di disapprovazione. Da autorevoli editorialisti fino alla ministra Fedeli, l’”arma impropria” dello sciopero femminista ha fatto molto male, evidentemente. Dovremmo dedicarci al rammendo, secondo
il Corriere della sera. Farci dunque, da brave Penelopi, “custodi dell’Occidente” minacciato da nuovi Proci. Peccato che sia proprio l’”Occidente” delle Grosse Koalitionen, del neoliberismo che si fa governo patriarcale e razzista, dei neo-nazismi, quello che produce la nostra subalternità, la nostra esclusione, le condizioni di una violenza, di uno sfruttamento, di una povertà sempre più duri.

L’appello a cui abbiamo risposto l’8 marzo in più di cinquanta paesi del mondo è a riconoscersi in altro, in qualcosa che va aldilà dei confini, dei generi, delle razze. Le donne si sono fatte le interpreti principali di un grido di riscatto: le nostre vite valgono e non le mettiamo al vostro servizio.

Scioperare non è stato dunque, un errore. Ora torniamo più forti di prima a lavorare al Piano femminista contro la violenza sulle donne. L’appuntamento è per l’assemblea nazionale dei tavoli di lavoro in programma per il 22-23 aprile a Roma. Abbiamo sbagliato a chiedere il pane, oltre le rose? Siamo certe di no. E continueremo a farlo.
Lo sciopero geniale. L’8 marzo delle donne e la sollevazione globale contro il neoliberalismo

[concessioni Precarie
14 marzo 2017

Lo sciopero dell’8 marzo è stato la prima sollevazione globale contro il neoliberalismo. Per comprenderne appieno il significato esso deve essere guardato dalla giusta distanza: chi lo guarda solo dalla sua città o dal suo spezzone di corteo non vede quello che è veramente accaduto. La sua misura, che in realtà è la sua dismisura politica, sta tutta nel suo carattere globale. La dismisura politica si coglie nell’impossibilità di ridurlo a una festa rituale. Sta nella molteplicità di terreni investiti da uno sciopero sociale transnazionale che ha ridefinito la pratica sociale dello sciopero ben oltre le minime esperienze che lo hanno preceduto. Dismisura è la scelta di milioni di donne che, coinvolgendo moltissimi uomini, si sono mobilitate invocando e praticando lo sciopero. Solo partendo da questa dimensione politicamente e non solo geograficamente globale si può comprendere la molteplicità di rivendicazioni e di pratiche che si sono espresse al suo interno.

Corri, corri, corri Tayyip... Stiamo arrivando! Hanno cantato in coro decine di migliaia di donne e di uomini per le strade di Istanbul, attaccando il «governo di un sol uomo» di Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. In Turchia l’8 marzo delle donne è stato il legittimo erede di Gezi Park, perché è diventato una manifestazione di massa contro un governo che sta sequestrando ogni libertà. A Plaza de Mayo più di duecentomila mujeres hanno gridato: sí se puede, se si può fare uno sciopero contro Macri, lo facciamo noi donne!, catalizzando in questo modo una contestazione fino a questo momento frammentata e identitaria. Sono due episodi lontani ma al tempo stesso molto prossimi dell’8 marzo globale. Essi indicano chiaramente che lo sciopero voluto dalle donne ha prodotto la prima sollevazione globale contro il neoliberalismo. L’opposizione a questo o quel governo non si è ridotta alla richiesta di un cambio elettorale o a una protesta contro la classe politica. Le donne sanno che la violenza maschile che le opprime in molte forme e che ovunque è brutalmente istituzionalizzata è parte integrante dell’ordine neoliberale ed è un fatto globale. Le donne sanno che il neoliberalismo non ha inventato la violenza contro di loro, ma sanno anche che è arrivato il momento di restituire quella violenza alle condizioni politiche della sua continua riproduzione, smettendo di farne un oggetto di generica condanna. Lo sciopero non è solo una sottrazione temporanea al lavoro, ma una pratica politica che segnala il rifiuto radicale, pieno e di massa, delle condizioni in cui oggi viene prodotta e riprodotta la vita. Proprio per la sua dismisura esso non mira a mediazioni locali o temporanee, ma esprime la sua potenza sul piano immediato della sollevazione di massa. “Non aspetteremo”, hanno dichiarato le donne irlandesi di strike4repeal, riferendosi non solo all’urgenza di abrogare una legge antiabortista, patriarcale e assassina, ma al fatto che il tempo dello sciopero, il
tempo della rottura è adesso. Per questo, l’8 marzo in tutto il mondo non è stato solo «il primo giorno della nuova vita delle donne», ma anche il primo giorno di una critica globale dell’esistente che da tempo sta faticosamente cercando le strade per esprimersi.

Lo sciopero ha aperto uno spazio politico senza precedenti in cui tantissime donne in tutto il mondo e moltissimi uomini precari, operai, migranti si sono mobilitati per rendere lo sciopero reale e andare oltre la sua evocazione, rompendo in questo modo l’isolamento della loro quotidiana insubordinazione. **Le enormi manifestazioni che abbiamo visto sono stati scioperi. Le astensioni dal lavoro sono state dimostrazioni di forza e di coraggio.** Il femminismo di migliaia di donne ha colto nello sciopero l’occasione per esprimere il rifiuto della propria condizione particolare di subordinazione, oppressione e sfruttamento, consentendo a ciascuna di diventare protagonista di un movimento globale. Questa scelta femminista spiega e qualifica l’impressionante partecipazione in tutte le piazze dell’8 marzo: non solo la marea che ha inondato le metropoli e le grandi città, ma anche la presenza politica delle donne e di moltissimi uomini nei luoghi più disparati, dove le iniziative erano inattese. C’è chi ha paventato che questa sollevazione si limitasse, alla fine, a manifestare l’indignazione delle privilegiate, solidali con la causa di chi non può sciopereare o gridare in piazza liberamente. C’è chi ancora una volta ha ripetuto che la lotta contro il capitalismo è un’altra cosa. Una cosa per soli uomini, forse. Invece precarie, operaie e migranti sono state presenti in tutte le piazze e hanno preso direttamente parola. Hanno rovesciato ogni discorso vittimizzante, hanno orgogliosamente trasformato la propria posizione di sfruttamento nel privilegio di chi diviene il soggetto della propria insubordinazione. Lo sciopero ha sfidato molti confini—quelli tra pubblico e privato, tra lavoro produttivo e riproduttivo, tra i posti di lavoro e la società—e molto praticamente ha mostrato che Occidente e Oriente, Nord e Sud del mondo hanno un comune campo di azione da occupare con la massima urgenza. Diffuso su tutto il pianeta e capace di rendere evidente il legame tra i diversi modi e i diversi piani in cui prende forma la violenza neoliberale, **lo sciopero ha reso possibile una moltitudine di eventi e li ha connessi politicamente stravolgendo tutti i rituali di movimento: nessuna messa in scena del conflitto, ma una reale manifestazione di potere e del desiderio della sua conquista.**

Questo sciopero ha dimostrato la possibilità di contrastare efficacemente la strategia della segmentazione messa in campo dal neoliberalismo patriarcale, perché **ha reso possibile una sincronizzazione politica tra istanze anche molto diverse.** La condizione vissuta dalle donne che reggono l’economia popolare argentina è certamente diversa da quella delle migranti vessate dal permesso di soggiorno in Europa, delle combattenti della Rojava, delle precarie spagnole, delle donne che in Turchia subiscono la violenza istituzionale di un governo autoritario e patriarcale, delle nere che negli Stati Uniti combattono contro la brutalità poliziesca, il sessismo e il razzismo istituzionale, delle francesi colpite dalla *loi travail* e dal suo mondo. Le donne che hanno scioperato non sono state unite da un piano comune e omogeneo di rivendicazioni: in Brasile, si sono scagliate contro la riforma previdenziale, che aumenta l’età pensionabile delle donne estendendo e intensificando lo sfruttamento nell’indifferenza per il loro doppio carico di lavoro. Nelle Filippine le donne hanno preso parola contro le politiche agrarie neoliberali e le misure razziste del governo Duterte. In Australia, migliaia di educatrici hanno scioperato per contestare un welfare che si regge sulla sistematica riduzione dei loro salari. In Polonia donne e uomini sono scesi in piazza
contro l’alleanza tra il fondamentalismo cattolico e il neoliberalismo progressista che fanno fronte comune proprio a partire dalla violenza istituzionale e quotidiana sulle donne. La Francia, dopo le grandi mobilizzazioni contro la loi travail, è tornata a riempirsi con le oltre 300 azioni che hanno travolto le strade delle principali città e che hanno visto un inedito protagonismo migrante. Donne curde, turchi, cinesi, francesi, africane sono scese in piazza a hanno scioperato assieme contro la violenza, la precarizzazione e la strutturale discriminazione salariale che le colpisce. In Svezia lo sciopero dell’8 marzo ha ripoliticizzato il lavoro di cura, portando in piazza centinaia di lavoratrici e lavoratori della sanità, degli ospedali e a domicilio, e aprendo un percorso per il diritto alla salute riproduttiva e contro la precarizzazione dei servizi alla persona. Lo sciopero dell’8 marzo non è però in nessun modo il risultato della somma occasionale di vertenze locali, della grande coalizione tra organizzazioni sindacali, politiche e di movimento, di contingenti alleanze di scopo in vista di una scadenza passeggera. Oggi possiamo dire che centrale è stato il processo che ha connesso fondamentali rivendicazioni politiche globali, fornendo forza e significato a ogni singola iniziativa locale. Questo sciopero transnazionale ha indicato la possibilità di agire sulla stessa scala su cui si dispega quotidianamente la violenza neoliberale e patriarcale.

Nelle molte piazze in cui sono stati rivendicati salute, welfare, istruzione, libertà di muoversi e di restare non si è guardato nostalgicamente al passato, all’universalismo perduto della cittadinanza e dello Stato sociale novecenteschi—che molti paesi coinvolti nello sciopero delle donne non hanno mai neppure conosciuto—ma è stata avanzata la pretesa di ottenere qualcosa che non c’è mai stato. Mentre il neoliberalismo non ammette altra emancipazione che non sia quella garantita dal denaro, quelle rivendicazioni aggrediscono direttamente gli ingranaggi politici della sua riproduzione. Rivendicare il diritto di abortire liberamente significa pretendere di rovesciare l’ordine materiale e simbolico che vuole ridurre le donne a strumenti riproduttivi e contestare la regolazione normativa della sessualità. Rivendicare servizi di cura per bambini e anziani significa rifiutare la divisione sessuale del lavoro che vuole condannare le donne a essere le serve domestiche e addomesticate dell’ordine neoliberale. Rivendicare l’asilo politico per sfuggire alla violenza contro donne e uomini e all’esperienza dell’esistenza significa opporsi alla violenza quotidiana dei confini. Rivendicare salari più alti significa pretendere il potere sulla propria vita. L’irriducibile parzialità delle donne non si scioglie nel sogno di un’indistinta ricomposizione, ma attraverso la pratica sociale dello sciopero si fa valere con una forza collettiva e globale. L’8 marzo ci consegna una preziosa indicazione di metodo politico: non si tratta di reclamare generici diritti universali o un’emancipazione individuale, ma di colpire i pilastri su cui si regge un intero ordine di dominio e sfruttamento partendo dalla propria parziale posizione, facendone un punto di forza e non un limite. Questo ci hanno insegnato le donne dell’8 marzo.

Non è allora sorprendente che questo sciopero abbia preoccupato i custodi dell’ordine. Opinionisti e opinioniste di fama hanno perso l’occasione per tacere e si sono affrettati a dichiarare che lo sciopero dell’8 marzo ha danneggiato in primo luogo le donne, mentre le paladine del femminismo istituzionale hanno affermato severe che il lavoro non va mai rifiutato perché offre un’occasione di promozione sociale. Nonostante tutto, dopo anni di oscillazione tra il catastrofismo scandalistico della crisi e le tiepide ricette di risanamento dell’economia mondiale, le prime pagine di tutti i quotidiani del mondo hanno dovuto registrare l’esistenza di una nuova pretesa
di “giustizia”. Questo femminismo del 99%, come lo hanno battezzato le donne dell’8 marzo statunitense, non corrisponde a un generico ideale di partecipazione dal basso o di cittadinanza radicale: permette alle donne che subiscono e hanno subito violenza e sfruttamento di alzare la testa e lottare, mentre chiede a tutti di prendere posizione e di schierarsi. Esso fa dello sciopero il confine politico di questo schieramento, mina i resti di una mediazione sociale in frantumi e rimescola i piani su cui è possibile costruire percorsi di organizzazione e di lotta. Fa saltare l’alibi del solito sciopero rituale che non serve a nulla, dando alle donne e agli uomini la libertà di sottrarsi a un ordine costruito contro di loro. La parola d’ordine Yo decido lanciata dalle donne spagnole non assume come referente il sistema politico, ma si afferma sulle macerie della mediazione istituzionale che il neoliberalismo ha già da tempo travolto con la forza brutale del suo dominio. Non è un caso che i più spaventati dallo sciopero delle donne siano stati i grandi sindacati che—in Argentina come in Italia—hanno cercato di arginare o addirittura contrastare l’iniziativa autonoma delle donne per tornare alle placide contrattazioni sulle quali continuano a costruire la loro identità e ragione di esistenza. Le donne, intanto, hanno reso l’arma dello sciopero disponibile per quanti—da posizioni diverse e in ogni parte del mondo—hanno la pretesa di opporsi realmente alla precarietà, al razzismo istituzionale, all’ingiunzione al silenzio dell’ordine neoliberale.

È impossibile dire in che misura siamo effettivamente riuscite a interrompere ogni attività produttiva e riproduttiva. Eppure, nonostante le sue dimensioni ancora sperimentali, l’8 marzo segna una frattura, stabilisce un “prima” e un “dopo”. Esso indica la possibilità di un processo di organizzazione che non si riduce alla sommatoria delle istanze militanti e liquida in un colpo ogni ipotesi micropolitica che non sia capace di pensare simultaneamente il piano locale e quello globale dell’iniziativa. Lo sciopero è stato prima di tutto transnazionale e proprio per questo ha attivato in decine di paesi un processo di organizzazione capillare, di cui le donne sono state protagoniste al di là di ogni etichetta politica e certificazione militante innescando l’azione di una moltitudine di soggetti. A questo processo di organizzazione il progetto dello sciopero ha conferito e può continuare a conferire unità, indicando la possibilità di uscire dalla quotidiana impotenza in cui si agitano i movimenti locali e di fare valere una forza collettiva. Questa forza non può essere ridotta a un semplice strumento per scendere a patti con questo o quel governo. Lo stesso piano femminista contro la violenza che “Non una di meno” sta scrivendo in Italia saprà imporsi solo se rimarrà ancorato al processo di lotta globale attivato sotto il segno dello sciopero. Dopo l’8 marzo globale non è più pensabile imbrigliare la forza sprigionata dallo sciopero delle donne nelle maglie strette di linguaggi usurati o in forme organizzative che hanno già fatto il loro tempo e mostrato la loro insufficienza. Solo un’infrastruttura politica transnazionale potrà far crescere il movimento dello sciopero. Mentre la parola d’ordine di “una giornata senza di noi” continua a viaggiare per il mondo, significativamente rilanciata dai migranti negli Stati Uniti come in Argentina, dopo l’8 marzo la sfida collettiva è quella di consolidare e accelerare il movimento dello sciopero che si aggira per il mondo e che le donne, per prime, hanno fatto valere come una possibilità globale.