

The Future - Socialism - Is Possible and Necessary: The Twentieth Newsletter (2026)



Alfonso Soteno Fernández (Metepéc, State of Mexico, Mexico), *Árbol de la vida* (Tree of Life), 1975. Open-fired clay painted with varnished vinyl paint, 6 m. Courtesy of Casa de las Américas (Cuba).

Dear friends,

Greetings from the desk of **Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research**.

In 2022, the roughly 10,500 citizens of the Pacific Island state of Tuvalu began to migrate not from one country to another but from their physical islands to the digital world. Faced with the prospect that climate change could make its low-lying territory uninhabitable in just a few decades, Tuvalu set out to **become** the ‘first digital nation’, building a three-dimensional record of its land, archiving its culture, and preparing digital systems of identity and governance so that it could continue to function even if its people are scattered across the world. The climate crisis is forcing international law to confront a terrible question: what happens to a state when rising seas swallow its territory? In 2025, the International Court of Justice, in the case *Obligations of States in Respect of Climate Change*, issued a **ruling** that said, ‘once a State is established, the disappearance of one of its constituent elements would not necessarily entail the loss of its statehood’.

If Tuvalu loses its 26 square kilometres to the rising seas, it will not disappear from the memory of its people, nor will it stop being a state. But a people cannot live only in a digital archive. In 2024, Tuvalu and Australia agreed to the **Falepili Mobility Pathway**, which – among other things – allows 280 citizens of Tuvalu per year to apply for Australian permanent residency. The United Nations **does not** accept the term ‘climate refugees’ under the 1951 Refugee Convention, but the dire situation of these citizens has produced its own outcome. Their island might not have a future on our planet, but the people will continue to seek dry land in other territories and to preserve their nation in the digital landscape.

Who has a right to a future? The billionaires, certainly. There are **now** more than three thousand billionaires on the planet, with twelve of the richest holding more wealth than the poorest half of humanity – more than four billion people. Take Elon Musk as an example. His net worth of roughly \$840 billion means that his wealth is greater than the GDP of roughly 83% of the world’s nations when taken individually, including Argentina. The median monthly income in Argentina is about \$420, while Musk’s monthly income is roughly \$3 billion – seven million times greater than the income of an average Argentinian. If money is taken as the index of possibility, then Musk’s future appears almost limitless. The average Argentinian, by contrast, might feel that the future is slipping away.



Antonio Seguí (Argentina). *Untitled*, 1965. Oil on canvas, 200 x 249 cm. Courtesy of Casa de las Américas (Cuba).

In 1969, Roberto Goyeneche sang Astor Piazzolla and Horacio Ferrer's tango 'Chiquilín de Bachín' (Little Boy from Bachín), reflecting the reality of so many Argentinian children then and now:

<p>Por las noches, cara sucia de angelito con bluyín vende rosas en las mesas del boliche de Bachín. Si la luna brilla sobre la parrilla come luna y pan de hollín.</p>	<p>At night, a dirty-faced little angel in blue jeans sells roses from table to table at Bachín's. When the moon shines on the grill, he eats moon and bread of soot.</p>
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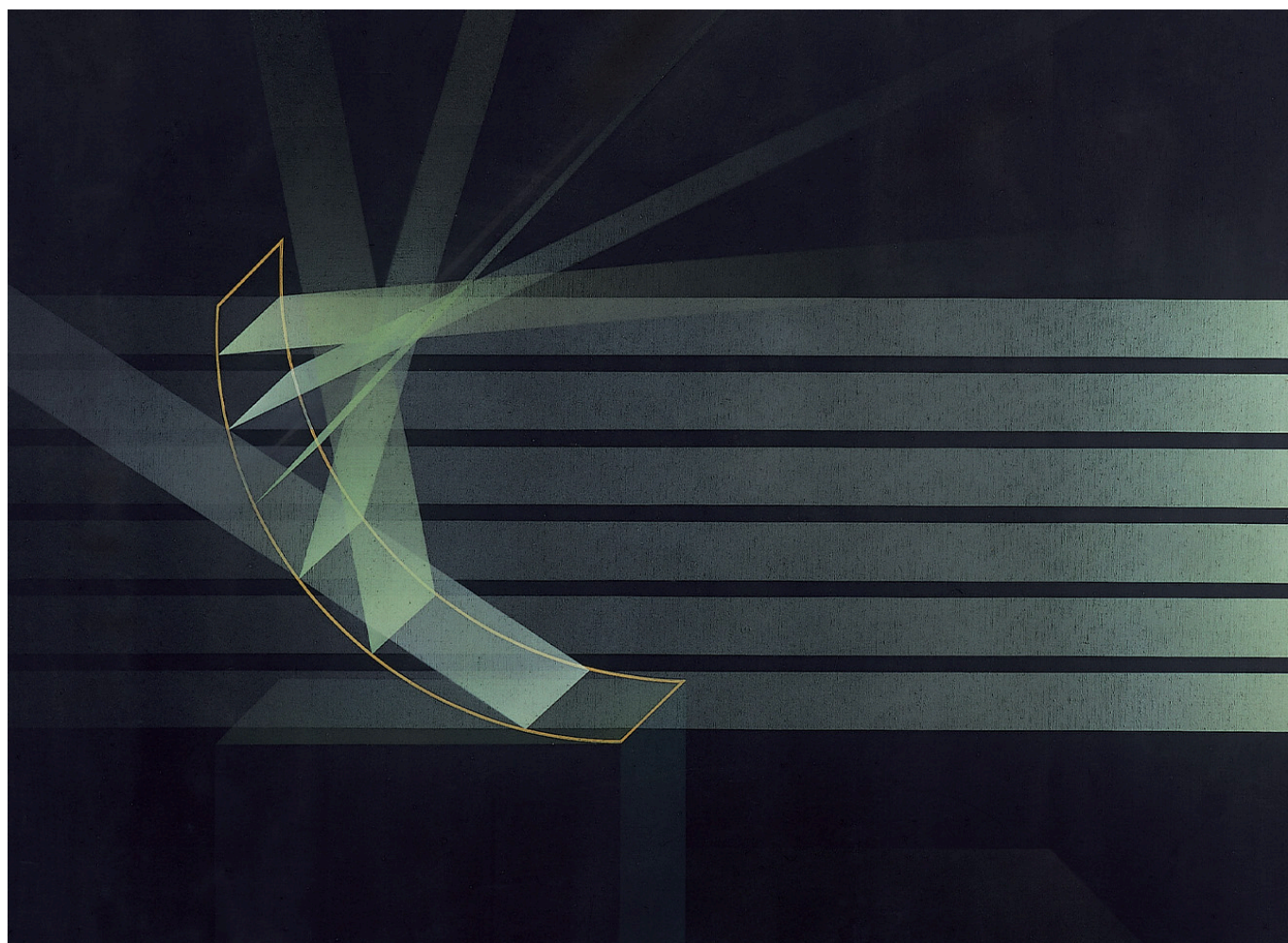
Antonio Berni (Argentina). *Juanito Laguna* (triptych), n.d. Painted wood and metal collage. 220 × 300 cm. Courtesy of Casa de las Américas (Cuba).

The little boy in the song must work for his living. The tango drags us into the past but is very much alive to our present reality. Today, over **half** of Argentina’s children live in poverty. They have been banished from the future by the assault of President Javier Milei’s government. They are trapped in the present, scrambling for survival as if condemned to a thousand years of suffering, unable to escape:

<p>Cada aurora, en la basura con un pan y un tallarín se fabrica un barrilete para irse, y sigue aquí! Es un hombre extraño niño de mil años que por dentro le enreda el piolín.</p>	<p>Every morning, amid the trash, with crusts of bread and pasta, he fashions himself a kite to escape – but he’s still here! He is a strange child-man of a thousand years, the kite string tangled deep inside him.</p>
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It is this imposed present that our 100th dossier, *The Future* (May 2026), insists is impermanent. It is an unusual text from us for several reasons, but mainly because it is deeply philosophical, offering a historical-materialist account of the future as something more than the next page on the calendar. The future, the

dossier argues, is not a neutral extension of the present but a rupture with it toward a socialist horizon. Calendrical time, which treats tomorrow as if it could only be a repetition of today and makes disaster appear inevitable, is not enough; what we need is a conception of time that opens the future to transformation and human development. The little boy must eat, must study, must thrive, and the people of Tuvalu must have dry land beneath their feet to continue their journey through time. These are not merely rights but human necessities. To stand by while billions of people starve and remain illiterate – to accept that they have been denied a future – is not acceptable for any of us.



Julio Le Parc (Argentina), *Modulación 455* (Modulation 455), 1981. Acrylic on canvas, 200 x 200 cm. Courtesy of Casa de las Américas (Cuba).

In a world saturated by war, debt, climate catastrophe, and social despair, even the ability to imagine a future beyond capitalism has been systematically **eroded**. Capitalist realism has trained us to believe that the present order is eternal, that exploitation and hierarchy are permanent facts of human life rather than historical structures produced by class power. Yet history teaches us something different. Every social order appears permanent until a moment of rupture. Feudalism once imagined itself eternal; colonial empires believed their rule would last forever. Capitalism too will pass. The future, therefore, is not a gift handed down by the calendar. It is a terrain of struggle. Our dossier asks: is there a future? It answers: Of course there is. We are fighting to build it, and we are building it now.

The Future insists that rupture is necessary because capitalism has reached a stage where its productive capacities are immense while its social outcomes are catastrophic. The world today possesses the resources, technology, labour power, and scientific knowledge to eradicate hunger, illiteracy, and preventable disease. Yet billions remain trapped in poverty while finance capital accumulates unprecedented wealth. The contradiction is not technical but political. Capitalism develops the productive forces while simultaneously sabotaging their emancipatory potential.



José Venturelli (Chile), *Serigrafía* (Serigraph), 1970, edition 15/90. 260 x 430 mm. Courtesy of Casa de las Américas (Cuba).

Our dossier identifies the ‘enemies of the future’ that conduct this sabotage: finance capital, which disciplines societies through debt and structural adjustment; platform capital, which atomises social life and reorganises labour into existential precarity; extractivism, which destroys the ecological foundations of life for profit; and militarism, which converts every crisis into a justification for war, surveillance, and repression. These forces seek to colonise the future before it arrives, ensuring that tomorrow remains subordinate to the needs of accumulation rather than human dignity.

Yet the future persists because human beings continue to resist. Across the Global South, peasants, workers, **women and gender dissidents**, migrants, and the unemployed struggle daily against a system that denies them dignity. These struggles are often fragmented, uneven, and vulnerable to co-optation, but they reveal an enduring truth: the oppressed do not accept misery as destiny.



Alfredo Plank, Ignacio Colombres, Carlos Sessano, Juan Manuel Sánchez, and Nani Capurro (Argentina), *Che* (collective series), 1968. Oil on canvas, 195 x 150 cm each. Courtesy of Casa de las Américas (Cuba).

In our tradition hope does not emerge from abstract optimism but from organised struggle. To become a historical force, however, it requires organisation, discipline, and internationalism. Spontaneous uprisings may topple governments, but only organised forces can construct enduring alternatives. The great revolutions of the twentieth century were not accidents of history; they were the product of patient political work carried out over decades. To speak of the future today is therefore not an exercise in utopian fantasy. It is an affirmation that the present order is intolerable and impermanent. The future will not arrive automatically. It must be built collectively, consciously, and internationally. In that struggle lies the true meaning of hope.

Warmly,

Vijay

PS: The art in *The Future*, a selection of which appear in this newsletter, are drawn from Casa de las Américas' immense Arte de Nuestra América Haydée Santamaría collection in Havana, Cuba. The collection is an exceptional archive of mainly Latin American and Caribbean art built through Casa's decades of anti-imperialist cultural internationalism.