



capitalism has delivered only severely restricted negative freedoms. And it does not even contemplate equal positive freedom. Humankind can do better.

Anarchism — The Way Forward for Africa

The relevance of anarchism to human society has nowhere been more obvious than it is in Africa. Given the multitude of problems that stare the peoples of Africa in the face, the debilitating socioeconomic conditions under which a great majority of them live, and the overall economically deprived status of Africa vis-a-vis the other continents, anarchism is really the only liberating concept capable of turning “the dark continent” in a truly forward-looking direction.

Things have gone haywire for too long; only a drastic cure can satisfy an increasingly angry, bitter and restive population stretching from Cape Town to Cairo. Conditions include the seemingly endemic problem of ethnic conflicts across the continent; the continued political and economic marginalization of Africa at the global level; the unspeakable misery of about 90% of Africa’s population; and, indeed, the ongoing collapse of the nation state in many parts of Africa.

Given these problems, a return to the “anarchic elements” in African communalism is virtually inevitable. The goal of a self-managed society born out of the free will of its people and devoid of authoritarian control and regimentation is as attractive as it is feasible in the long run.

At the global level, human civilization is passing through a period of transition occasioned by the collapse of marxist “socialism” and the evidently insuperable crisis of capitalism and the state system. So, where do we go from here? As we noted earlier, all advances in human history to this point have been made possible by humanity’s quest for both freedom and human solidarity. Since this craving seems a natural instinct and, as such, is not going to disappear anytime soon, it follows that the continued evolution of society will be in the direction of freedom, equality, and community.

The process of anarchist transformation in Africa might prove comparatively easy, given that Africa lacks a strong capitalist foundation, well-developed class formations and relations of production, and a stable, entrenched state system. What is required for now is a long-term program of class consciousness building, relevant education, and increased individual participation in social struggles. Meanwhile, the crises and mutations in capitalism, marxist socialism, and the state system, individually and collectively, cannot but accelerate. For Africa in particular, long-term development is possible only if there is a radical break with both capitalism and the state system — the principal instruments of our arrested development and stagnation. Anarchism is Africa’s way out.

