

Factories Without Bosses: an Argentinian experience

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Social, Economic and Polityc context

- Worst economic crisis ever, Argentina 2001
- Social Revolt – december 19th and 20th
- Neoliberal policies – '90

Factories taken over under worker's control.

- Unpaid salaries or severance compensations.
- Closed down and asset stripped factories
- Bosses stopped showing at the factories.
- Factory's machineries able to produce.

Factory	Trading	Workers	Culture
Arrufat	Candy	50	
Maderera Córdoba	Woodshop	22	High School
Chilavert	Printer	10	HS Library CC
Gráfica Patricios	Printer	60	
IMPA	Metalwork	63	H.S-CC
BAUEN	Hotel	150	Theatres
Zanón	Ceramist	470	Library CC
Grissinópolis	Food	30	CC
Fénix Salud	Health	19+ pro	
Ghelco	Ice cream	60	
Hospital Israelita	Health	150	
Renacer	Electrical household	90	Artistic events and issuing

Workers taking back their jobs

- Seniors workers

- ✓ Skilled for their jobs and machines operation

- ✓ “Last chance” to avoid unemployment.

Three stages for Recuperated Factories

- Asset stripping by the bosses, take over and occupation by the workers
- Starting production. Struggle against Police. Evictions. Re-occupation. Permanent assembly
- Full Production. Marketing strategies. Specialization and training.

Collective Survival Strategy

- 20 % unemployment
- 50 % under poverty line
- Social exclusion risk
- Trade unions on bosses' side



Four dimensions

- Productive
- Political
- Legal
- Subjective

Productive dimension

- No directors or technicians. No buyers, no sellers. No banks credit.
- Senior workers get the work organized. (Their authority is not like that exercised by foreman or head of department)
- They start taking on those roles and keep rolling over different positions (everyone does everything)

They “*discovered*”

- They could produce
- They could decide collectively
- It is possible to produce without hierarchy
- Two or three labor days pay all salaries
- They were “owners” of a huge collective capital



Production dimension

Without Bosses

Without an strict division of labor

Based on

Collective running

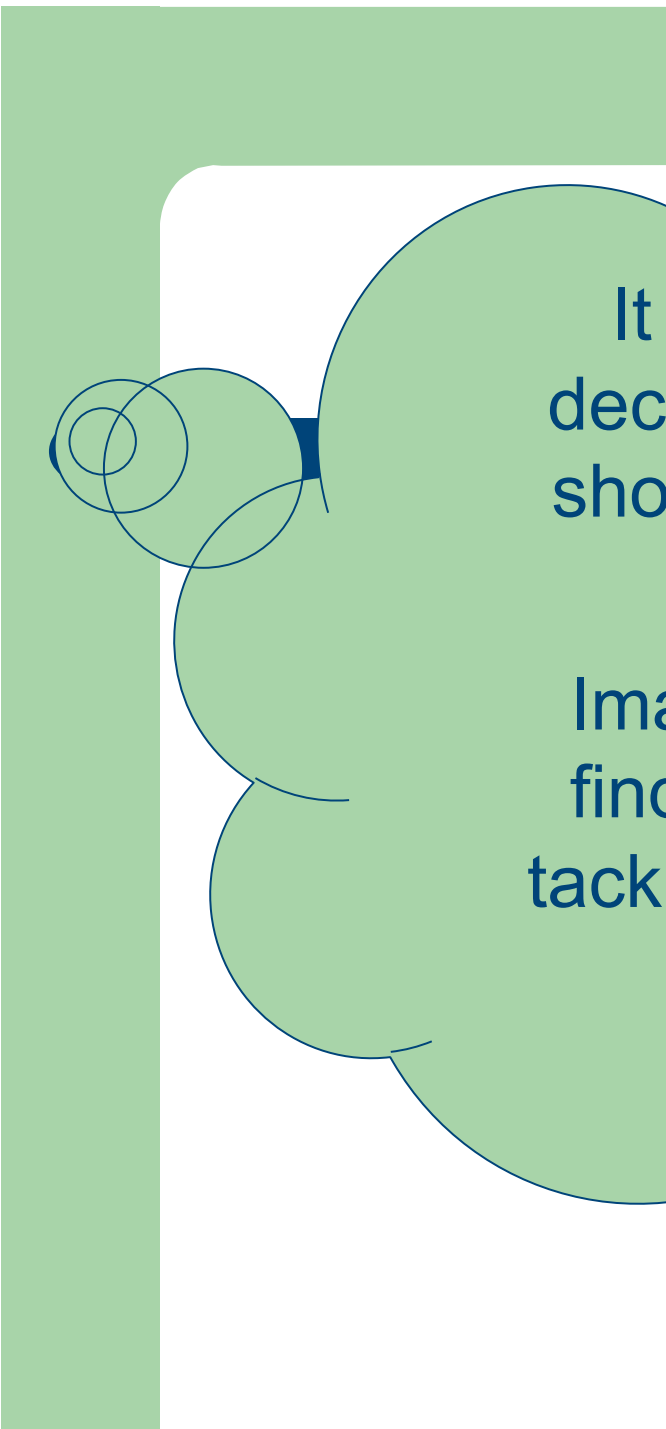
Innovating ways of thinking
production and marketing



Political dimension



- Horizontal assembly
- Resist delegation. Most decisions by consensus (whenever it is possible)
- Direct democracy
- Permanent assembly state



It implies consensual
decision-making on what
should be done but also:

Imagining, creating and
finding new solutions to
tackle their daily problems

Legal dimension

Imaginative use of existing law, applying them on recuperated factories.

Workers and State as main debtee groups.

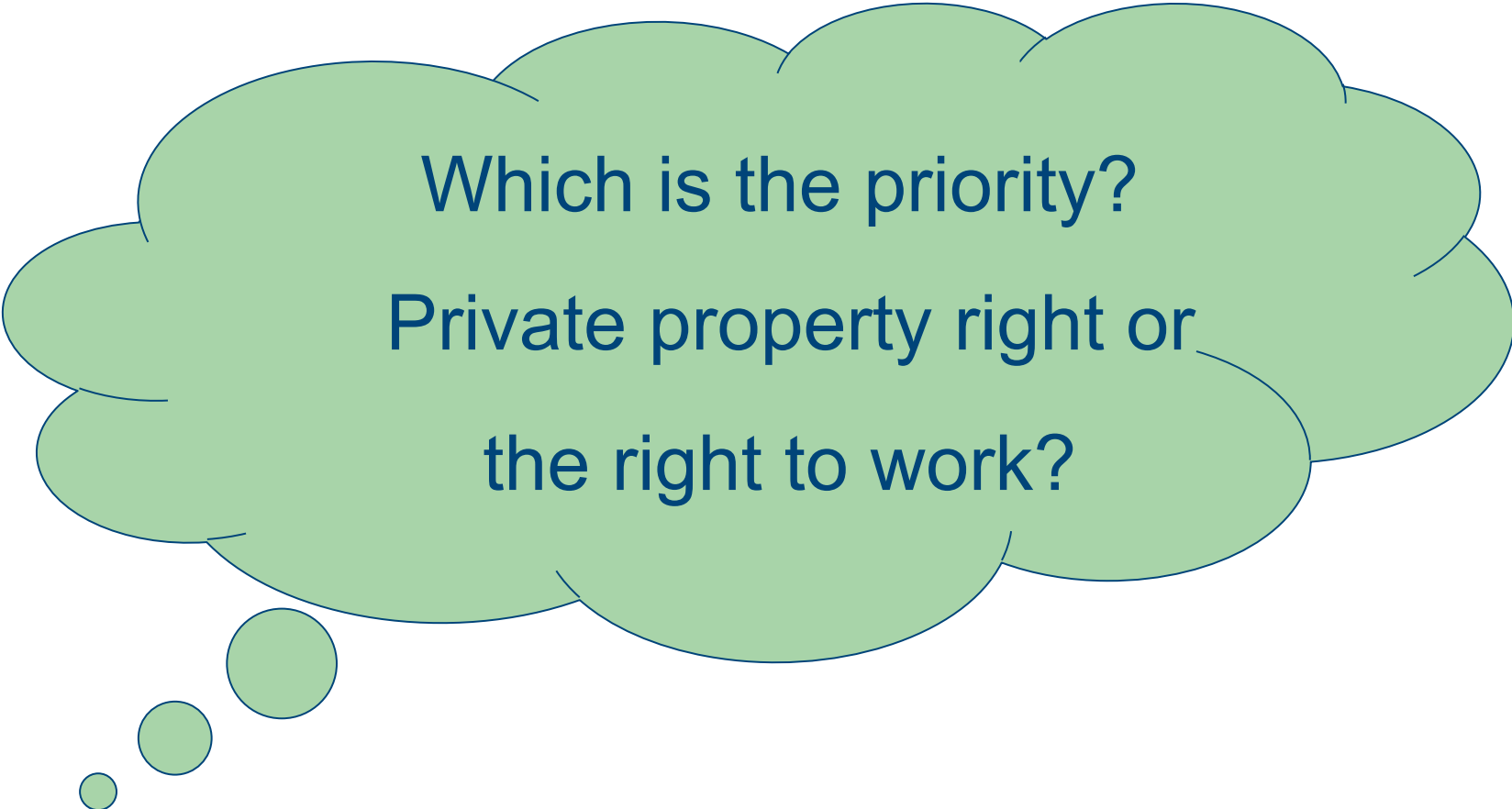
Two constitutional rights in conflict.

They have installed a basic debate



Which is the priority?

Private property right or
the right to work?



To low the social conflict
became a priority

**Some judges begun to allow the
workers to run the factories because of:**

- the right's conflict
- unemployment threatenned social order
- the recovery of labour positions is considered a public interest.

Community Support

- Stopped most evictions by massive rallies outside courthouses
- Revealed the cracks in a system that did not even protect worker's basic rights.

Subjective dimension

Factories Without Bosses are impossible to be imagined without the *transformations on the way of think, act, feel and relate on this workers*

- New daily routine: Without boss, timetables or classic factory discipline → New bonds
- To cook, to eat, to clean together. They met and became close, they talk about their projects, dreams...
- To be alltogether against police represion

**They built a communitty
where they share a lot more than proffits.**

New ways to live the factory

- While they produce they listen to music, have *mate*, and chat.
- Production wasn't affected. But their relationship grew
- It is not only a different factory but also *they are very different workers*.

They recover dignity
as find out they can make it work
altogether.

Self- regulation

- They invented a system of agreed by consensus rules replacing de classical discipline.
- For collective regulation to apply, first common grounds had to be established.

Beyond production:

Cultural centers, radios and schools
in the factory.

- ✓ Workers are very proud to offer community cultural spaces.
- ✓ Many of them are going to school again. Others started getting closer with artists and people from culture world

Cultural centers, radios and schools in the factory.

High schools for young people and adults specializing in cooperativism and microenterprises

- Prioritize collective needs and links with community
- Resistance to social exclusion strategies
- Avoid traditional education
- Assemblies with teachers, students and workers.
- Encourage student autonomy and self-affirmation
- Seek to produce critical students
- History of struggle for factory recovery in their curricula
- Apart from the official curriculum, students learn a trade

Cultural centers, radios and schools in the factory.

Cultural Centers as part of their strategies to disseminate and raise awareness of occupation, resistance and recovery.

- Zanón has a radio program, a documentation center and a library. Mass rock concerts are staged there.
- IMPA: 15 workshops, 200 people. Books presentations, talks, movie projections, festivals.
- Chilavert: library and documentation center. Weakly musical event.
- Gráfica Patricios: Radio broadcasting, 40 programs.