



Voices of Resistance from Occupied London

Quarterly Anarchist Journal of Theory and Action
from the British Capital After the Empire

Autumn 2007: Issue Two

www.occupiedlondon.org

occupiedlondon@riseup.net

Freer than Freedom (Freedom Isn't Free!)

Stop ☐ Stop & Search ☒ Unattended Vehicle Search ☐

Self-defined ethnicity: N3 Officer-defined ethnicity: 2

Date: 18 / 3 / 07 Start time: 1.05pm Finish time: 1.35pm

Place first stopped (show nearest junction and beat): Leeds Bus Station
(National Express) Bus Stop

Reason/object: To search for evidence of terrorism/preparation

Place searched (if different): Millers Lane Police Station

Authority for stop & search: S.1 ☐ S.23 ☐ S.44(1) ☐ S.44(2) ☐ S.60 ☐

Other, specify: Section 43 Terrorism Act 2006

Grounds for search [if S.60/S.44, details of property found]:
Information received that person examining
pictures of airports on laptop computer on coach
to Leeds


Vehicle searched? Details: _____


VRM: _____ Driver?: ☐ Passenger?: ☐

Injury/damage caused? Details: _____

Outcome (plus offence if arrested): _____

Copy provided? Yes ☒ No ☐ If 'No', reason: _____

 **WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE**

 **YORKSHIRE & HUMBERSIDE CRIMESTOPPERS**
0800 555 111

166. (Revised 1-2-05)

This issue would not have come into being without the help of Klara Jaya Brekke (layout), Leandros, Edd Last Hours (illustrations), Dimitris, Bryan Finoki, Richard Pithouse, Georgy Katsiaficas, Maqui, Gav, Antonis*, Ane Havskov Kirk, our friends in Berlin (articles) and the lovely people at Footprint Workers Co-op. Thanks!

No Copyright: All articles in the journal are copyright-free. Reproduction is particularly encouraged for the purposes and benefit of the antagonist social movement, with the kind request that the source is mentioned.

Illustrations for this issue were kindly provided by **Leandros**. His work has appeared in Greece's legendary magazine *Vavel*, other publications in the country and many festivals around Europe.

*{Contribution dedicated to my uncle; he was a gentle soul.}

Autumn 2007; Issue Two*

contents

*Urban struggles and revolts accross the world



Disclaimer 4

Klara Jaya Brekke **Copenhagen** 6

Ane Havskov Kirk **Many Manifestoes** 7

Georgy Katsiaficas **Towards a Global Peoples Uprising** 10

Les Amis de Nemesis **From a Supper of Ashes to Embers of Satin** 14

Richard Pithouse **The University of Abahlali baseMjondolo** 17

Bryan Finoki **Urbanisation of Panic -a response to Franco 'Bifo' Berardi** 21

Luther Dimissett **Recent Urban Unrest & The Image** 24

G8 Special **Intro** 26

Edd (Last Hours) **Illustrations from the G8 in Rostock** 28

Balkan Anarchists of Northern Europe **Sooner or later you will all be in trouble** 34

United Colours Of Resistance **Black block** 38

International Brigades **Plan B has started already, join the Battle of Joy** 42

Comrades from Everywhere **For a summit against everything** 44

Outro 46

voices of resistance from occupied london

Legal Disclaimer

(and a little kiss to the COBRA committee)

We, the Undersigned, in full knowledge of the repercussions of our acts and sayings, wish to state the following:

On the 27th of March 2007 a member of the journal's editorial collective was stopped and searched by men of the Anti-terrorist Unit whilst on the 0830 coach from London to Leeds. He was subsequently held, searched and questioned further at Leeds' Milgarth Police station. The individual in question posed a serious threat to Britain's national security, given that they were reading an article containing both the words "airportising" and "images" in its title (1). This individual was therefore rightfully stopped, searched and interrogated - all thanks to a fellow passenger being "un-British" enough (2) to snitch on them. We cannot help but express our awe at this passenger's truly internationalist feelings and their valid interpretation of the article's title and content - let alone its writer's true intentions.

The editorial collective of the journal would hereby wish to issue a public apology to this concerned citizen. We deeply regret that such inappropriate material found its way in the journal, naturally distressing its over-the-shoulder readers. We have launched an internal investigation to find how this mistake might have happened and we will be taking all actions necessary to prevent anything similar happening in the future.

We can confirm that, with immediate effect, all material published in the journal will be of appropriate content and style, formatted in such way to prevent causing any further offence to just about anyone - let alone threaten the peace of concerned citizens.

As a sign of good will this issue of Occupied London does not contain an introduction. We can only hope this symbolic move will prevent distressing any of our fellow citizens any further. We also hope it will somewhat lift the burden of the Anti-terrorist Unit by sparing some of its valuable reading time.

London, September 2007

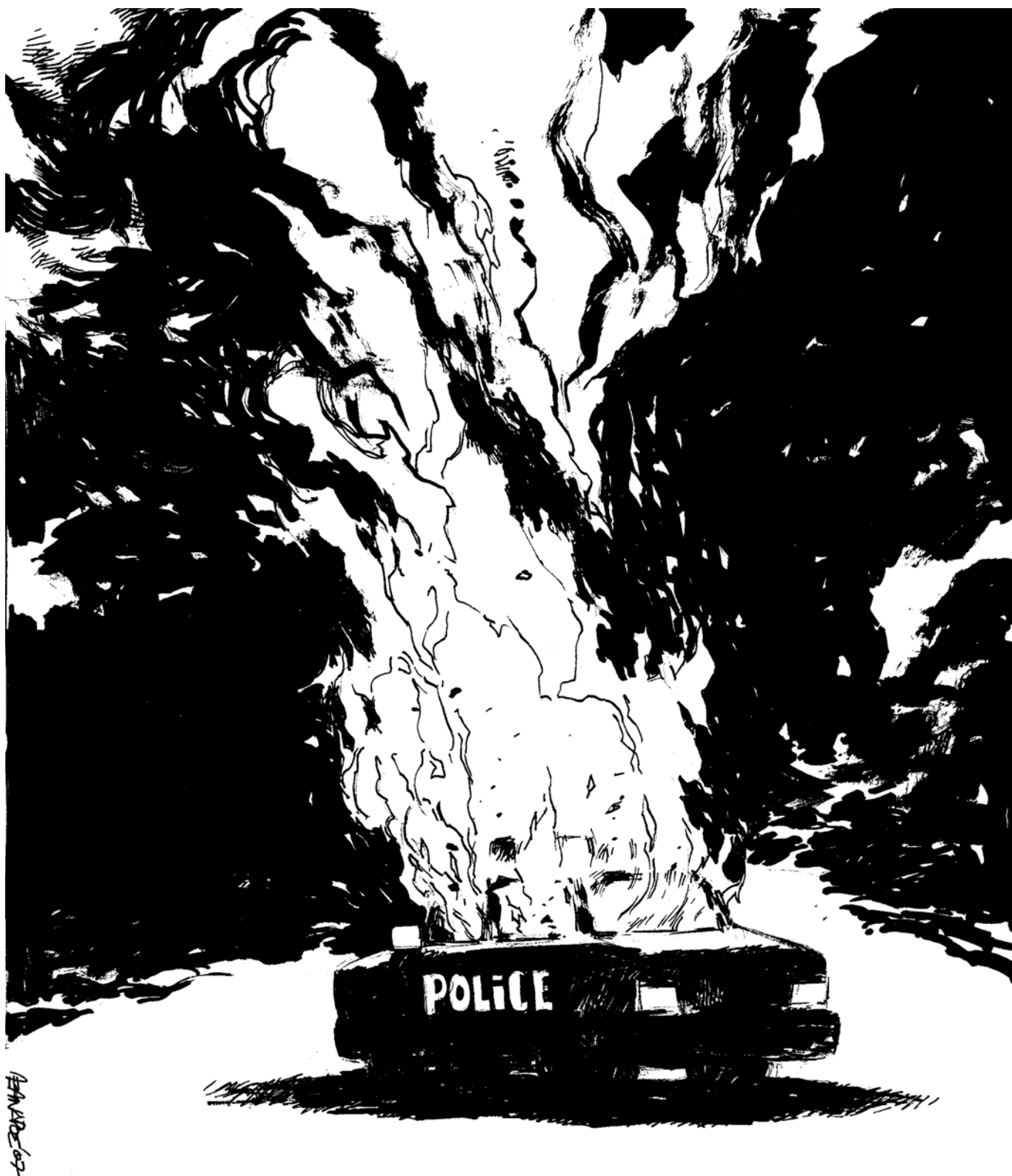
The Undersigned,

Occupied London

The Editorial Collective, Voices of Resistance from Occupied London

(1) "Airportising the city: Images of Flying Yuppies and Total Spatial Control", Voices of Resistance from Occupied London 111

(2) Former navy chief Admiral Sir Alan West, UK's new Security Minister, urged people to be un-British by snitching to the authorities (BBC News, 08.07.07)



In March 2007, Copenhagen Denmark witnessed riots that the Scandinavian consensus society had forgotten to be possible. Although resistance to the eviction and demolishing of the 25 year old occupied house, Ungdomshuset, was predicted, the mass mobilization, intensity and international response had been wildly underestimated. The house had for 25 years functioned as a place of learning and experimentation, home to K-town, a punk music and zine festival, as one of few self-organized alternative night clubs, as meeting place for activists, peoples kitchens, gigs, workshops, a stronghold of alternative culture in Copenhagen.

The struggle for Ungdomshuset should also be seen in the context of a rising discontent with the Danish state, as the welfare system is gradually being undermined, spurring large demonstrations against the welfare reforms as well as wildcat strikes arising from cut backs in the health system. On the other hand insecurity and suspicion, if not downright hate against anything falling outside the narrowing definitions of "Danishness" is intensifying, and altogether forming a part of what the neo-liberal government calls its 'Kultur kamp' –culture war. The goal is to eradicate any traces of Denmark's socialist, communal history, which lives strong in the cultural sphere. Everything that does not conform is attempted marginalized, undermined or crushed.

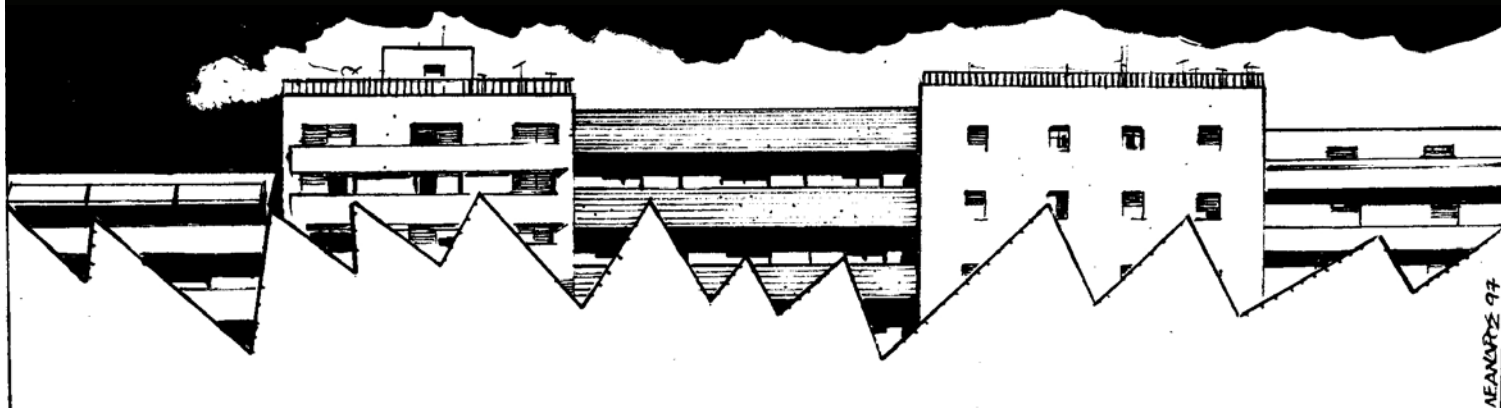
The response: Intensifying conflict and refusal of compromise.

After the relatively calm actions and ongoing demonstrations of 'Summer of 69' (see link after the article) September started with a riot and renewed waves of occupations and demonstrations, one of them being by the local residents of the neighbourhood of Ungdomshuset, angry about damage done to the local area and shops.

Inspired by the tactics of the G8 blockades this summer an initiative named G13 has publicly stated a date and place for a new Ungdomshus: 6th October, on Groendahls vaenge 13 in Copenhagen. Trainings and preparations have begun.

"When we take to the streets, we will be everything from baby carriages with moms and dads, grandmothers and grandfathers, kissing homos, grey-haired squatters, university punx, homeworking cyber pirates, hip hoppers, unemployed university dropouts, gender bending graffiti painters. We are going to get a new youth house, with or without help from the politicians." (<http://www.aktiong13.dk/>)

-Klara Jaya Brekke



Many Manifestoes – One Movement

“They are evicting, now!” and suddenly a movement emerged that took Denmark by surprise. The media disqualified the activists as ‘youngsters without a cause’ – but what they failed to see was that the movement had not one but many causes.

Ane Havskov Kirk,
a.h.kirk@gmail.com

The movement that occupied the streets of Copenhagen when Ungdomshuset (Ungeren) got evicted is many-sided and has neither epi-centre nor manuscript. The police did not find a central command station when they searched several addresses in Copenhagen during the riots in March – on the other hand the movement did not simply emerge over night: What we saw in its wild blossoming after the eviction, the desires, actions a reactions, are the same that was suddenly brought to the world’s attention in Seattle in 1998 – and now burst out in places all around the world in shorter and shorter intervals

Specific Situated Manifestations

When the movement shows itself it often happens around a specific situation like the large summit meetings, evictions of social centres and occupied houses, migration struggles and many other social struggles. It looks like a specific situated manifestation, a singular cause, but it is to be understood as a node that gathers the broad networks of the radical left. I, as an individual, am not just part of one specific situation but in a node that is interconnected with a long line of other nodes.

When the police evicted Ungeren thousands of people emerged in the streets and actions and happenings popped up around the city. Many of the actions and the people behind them had not been closely connected to the milieu around Ungdomshuset, but nevertheless most of them shed tears when the cranes tore down that building. Groups and networks that usually had no affiliation whatsoever cooperated, came up with new initiatives and showed how the movement really should be working. People from all the different fractions worked together opening spaces for the activists created peoples kitchens where actions were planned over a free cup of coffee. Information and call outs spread like wildfire via text messages, communicating

actions and info through across networks regardless of what group or fraction instigated it.

This showed that we were together, acting in one situated manifesto, connected in a huge network of nodes. As an activist I don’t participate in all those nodes or networks, in all the wide variety of causes, but I get inspired, support, inform and learn. And networks support each other. Also internationally where the protests against the eviction of Ungeren spread like rings in the water and manifested in actions in 53 countries. Activities one place inspires actions another place and together they make a unified strength.

Many a small riot makes a huge fire

The situations and the specific cases that involve several parts of what one can call the global movement against the Neo-liberal agenda are diverse. It is summit protests, feminism, the Zapatista movement, pirating, education politics, union work, and Ungeren.

They are all situations and struggles that stand alone in the media, but in reality are inevitably interconnected. To mention one recent example, the G8 is founded on a basic understanding of the world in which the market is indisputable. Through its economic powers the G8 dictates the conditions and value of countless number of lives, always strengthening the power and economy of wealthy western countries. The power to determine which and who freedom that is important is taken from the people themselves shows in everything from the slave like working situations around the globe, the debt traps and trade barriers to the city planning of the western cities. The protests against those specific situations are then part of a larger fight for everybody’s right to form ones own life. A resistance that also includes an attack on gender stereotypes, heterosexism, racism, (post)colonialism and the capitalist destruction of the environment.

Not one political project – but many

To place one self in a node, to choose ones primary struggle immediately connects to a vast number of others. In this way there is never one political project that is the most important. –Which is exactly why it is ones primary struggle that is the most important for ones self. The movement is interconnected through specific struggles. It is praxis. To act together creates then an undefined idea- and resistance community with a global horizon. The activists of the movement are very different, attempts at unified political manifestoes will inevitably exclude somebody – but if you meet a Spanish activist in India you know that she is ‘with you’. This is how the local struggle for Ungereren gathered activists in non-homogeneous constellations – yes, almost unthinkable alliances:

Musicians, artists, feminists, communists, anarchists, parents, lawyers, teachers, unions, journalists, writers, therapists, young teenagers and old mammas all participating in the actions/struggle/events/support around Ungereren. Everyone on the streets had the feeling of being part of something bigger and very important, each of us finding our own niche in the struggle. We were open, flexible and ready to give everything we had in us – because none of us had any alternative.

Communication and action

These alliances helped the post-Ungereren protests to explode, with the help of new communication medias. Mails, texts and web pages played an active part in spreading the word. Demonstrations and actions were announced few hours before and succeeded because they via these medias reached out in all the corners of the networks. Pictures, sound and eye-witness accounts reached, especially via the internet, across the borders of the local networks and included people that were not directly involved, inspiring actions in other places. The frame of the movement is expanding via these medias. They make sure that resistance is constantly present in people’s consciousness – via texts informing of new protests and constant uploads of pictures and words. There are always senders and receivers, and when the message has been sent it spreads uncontrollably for better or for worse.

The greenhouses of the movement

The manifestations of the movement often exist for short periods – both in census and audience. When the smoke has vanished we need a physical space that creates togetherness, networks, nurtures,

gather and creates the frames for existing and coming nodes. Ungereren was one of those greenhouses. Now it has become a symbol for the struggle for more free spaces. If the movement is to continue its crazy growth it needs its greenhouses so that the stirsin the networks grow even stronger and information, inspiration, support and cooperation can be developed. If this does not happen there will be a lot of seeds lying dormant, waiting for the next time an explosion happens._

Notes

One of the police’s searches has now been judged illegal by the High Court.

The Police used tear gas in the houses searched that is only allowed in two other countries in the world because it causes a serious health risk. They later call it “a mistake”.

Later in March the Police created a zone on Nørrebro were they were allowed to check all persons ID, bags ect., as a safety measure.

All foreigners the police could connect to Ungereren are thrown out of the country immediately, also as a safety measure.

More info on the ongoing struggle

http://ungdomshuset.dk/en.php3?id_rubrique=4

http://www.indymedia.dk/newswire?author_name=Modkraft

<http://www.myspace.com/copenhagensummerof69>

<http://www.aktion13.dk/>



Toward a Global People's Uprising

Georgy Katsiaficas,
<http://www.eroseffect.com>

Popular intuition often anticipates forthcoming political upheavals with greater efficacy than predictive science. This may be the case with two recent movies, *V for Vendetta* and *Children of Men*. While vastly different in their plots, both films close with popular uprisings against monolithic imperial behemoths. Having destroyed much of humanity's gentle side through systems of total control, the anticipated future governments leave people no alternative but to rise up and overthrow the whole wretched system.

Long ago, postmodernists passed on the possibility of system transformation (many even refused to acknowledge the system's existence). Most radicals today reject the possibility of uprisings in the countries that most need them—the UK and the US. Yet these two films inject precisely such a contingency into the matrix of moviegoers' imaginations, thereby offering us more to chew on than many tomes churned out by the social movement industry or even by many "left" presses.

Despite television's everyday portrayals of quiescent accommodation, struggles of epic proportions today animate millions of peoples' lives. Latin America is embroiled in arguably the most significant transformation of its political and cultural landscape since Columbus. From the Zapatistas to the comunards of Arequipa (Peru) and Chavez's Venezuela, peoples' daily lives are being bettered through ballots, protests and all manners of political activism—including popular insurrections. Less well known is a series of uprisings in East Asia in the last two decades of the 20th century. Their legacy includes the possibility of a global popular insurrection against the inhumane system of neoliberalism and war-regimes, that today rules over the bulk of humanity's accumulated wealth.

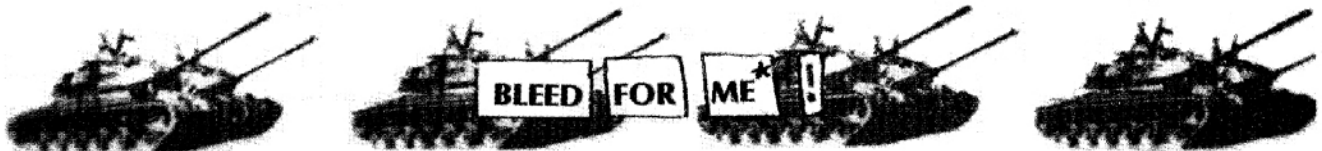
Beginning with the Gwangju Uprising in 1980, a chain reaction of revolts and uprisings swept through

East Asia. Gwangju's "beautiful community," her people's spontaneous creation of a Citizens' Army and self-governing Commune, continues to inspire and instruct. Although overwhelmed in 1980, Gwangju people refused to submit and ultimately motivated the successful June 1987 uprising and won contemporary South Korea's democracy. The 1989 revolutions in Europe are well known, but Eurocentrism often prevents comprehension of their Asian counterparts: the wave of East Asian from the Philippines (1986), Burma (1988), Tibet (1989), China (1989), Nepal (1990), Thailand (1992), to Indonesia (1998)—profound upheavals which serve today to help us better understand potential popular forms of action in the 21st century.

Gwangju Commune

The Gwangju people's uprising of 1980 provides both a glimpse of free societies of the future and a realistic example for those whose dreams of freedom remain unfulfilled either by parliamentary democracy or dictatorial domination. The most important dimensions of the Gwangju uprising are its affirmation of human dignity and prefiguration of substantive democracy. Gwangju has a meaning in Korean history that can only be compared to that of the Paris Commune in French history and of the battleship *Potemkin* in Russian history. Like the Paris Commune, the people of Gwangju spontaneously rose up and governed themselves until they were brutally suppressed by indigenous military forces abetted by an outside power. And like the battleship *Potemkin*, the people of Gwangju have repeatedly signalled the advent of revolution in Korea—in recent times from the 1894 Tonghak rebellion and the 1929 student revolt to the 1980 uprising.

Forged in the sacrifices of thousands, the mythical power of the Gwangju people's uprising was tempered in the harsh years after 1980, when



the dictatorship tried to cover up its massacre of as many as 2000 people. Even before the Gwangju Commune had been ruthlessly crushed, the news of the uprising was so subversive that the military burned an unknown number of corpses, dumped others into unmarked graves, and destroyed its own records. To prevent word of the uprising from being spoken publicly, thousands were arrested and hundreds tortured. In 1985, the first book about the Gwangju uprising appeared. Synergized with the message contained within poems, paintings, short stories, woodblock prints, plays, novels, songs and other forms of artistic expression, the truth about the military's brutal killing of so many of its own citizens could not be hidden.

As monumental as the courage and bravery of the people in Gwangju were, their capacity for self-government is the defining hallmark of their revolt. In my view, it is the single most remarkable aspect of the uprising. The capacity for self-organization that emerged spontaneously, first in the heat of the battle and later in the governing of the city and the final resistance to the military's counterattack, is mind expanding. In the latter part of the 20th century, high rates of literacy, the mass media, and universal education (which in Korea includes military training for every man) forged a capacity in millions of people to govern themselves far more wisely than the tiny elites all too often ensconced in powerful positions. As Choi Jungwoon put it: *"In this community, there was no private ownership, other people's lives were as important as one's own, and time stood still. In this community, discriminations disappeared, individuals were merged into one, and fear and joy were intermingled... The key to this absolute community was 'love'—in other words, a human response to noble beings... the struggle at the moment was an exciting self-creation... the intuitive nature of human dignity does not lie in the act and the result of pursuing individual interests and social status, but can be found in the act of recognizing a value larger than individual life and dedicating oneself to attaining it."* After the military had been driven out of the city on May 21, hundreds of fighters in the citizens' army patrolled the city. Everyone shared joy and relief. The city was free. Markets and stores were open for business, and food, water and electricity were available as normally. No banks were looted, and "normal crimes" like robbery, rape or theft hardly occurred—if at all. From below, people created mobile strike forces and consolidated the Citizens Army, a Settlement Committee, and a Struggle Committee; they cared for corpses and grieving family members, healed the wounded, and cleaned up the liberated city. Blood

had been in short supply at the hospital, but as soon as the need became known, people flooded in to give theirs, including barmaids and prostitutes, who at one point publicly insisted that they, too, be permitted to donate. At many of the rallies, thousands of dollars for the settlement committees were quickly raised through donations.

Spontaneously a new division of labour emerged. For days, citizens voluntarily served free meals in the marketplace and kept constant guard against the expected counterattack. Everyone contributed to and found their place in liberated Gwangju. Preexisting organizations like Dulbul Night School, Clown Theatre Troupe and Nok Du Bookstore helped organize daily rallies of tens of thousands of people where direct democracy held sway. Decisions made at these general assemblies were implemented by smaller groups (including the Citizens' Army). Even though the rallies were huge, many different kinds of people gathered—farmers, workers, housewives, students, priests, monks, seniors, shoeshine boys and waitresses—and were able to express heartfelt needs.

With US encouragement and support, the new military dictatorship of Chun Doo Hwan finally took back the city on the morning of May 27, 1980 (coincidentally the same day as the Paris Commune had been crushed in 1871). Although brutally repressed, the Korean movement never ceased to struggle to overthrow the dictatorship. In the rest of Korea, Gwangju became the watchword for democracy. As protests continued to intensify, the glorious victory of the Minjung movement in 1987 was won through a massive outpouring of popular protest that began on June 10, 1987. For nineteen consecutive days, hundreds of thousands of people illegally gathered in the streets demanding direct presidential elections. When Gwangju native Lee Han-yol was killed in a student protest near Yonsei University, more than one million people solemnly assembled to bury him.

As in the Philippines a year earlier, massive occupation of public space compelled the military to relent—in this case by agreeing to hold direct elections for president. In July and August, thousands of strikes involving millions of workers broke out—and led to a decade of protracted struggle that won free trade unions. In a remarkable turn of events, former presidents Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo were actually sent to prison in 1994 for their role in the Gwangju massacre.

Asian Democracy Uprisings

East Asian dictatorships, many in power for decades, seemed unshakable in the early 1980s until a wave of revolts and uprisings transformed the region. Both Kim Dae Jung and Benigno Aquino, popular leaders of vast democratic strata, were in exile in Newton, Massachusetts, USA, in the early 1980s, when they got acquainted and exchanged views on how best to win democracy. Six years after the Gwangju uprising, the Marcos dictatorship was overthrown in the Philippines. The experiences of the Gwangju uprising helped to inspire action in Manila. In February 1986 in the Philippines, the walkout of 30 computer operators counting the votes in an election sparked 4 days of massive protests in an uprising led by the Catholic hierarchy and key elements of the military. In a matter of days, the confrontation was won by the rebellious troops supported by hundreds of thousands of people who refused to leave the streets. The Philippine peoples-power revolution in turn inspired the slowly rebuilding movement in South Korea.

All through Asia, people's movements for democracy and human rights appeared: an end to 38 years of martial law was won in Taiwan in 1987, where anecdotal evidence tells of people singing Korean democracy movement songs in the streets; in Burma a popular movement exploded in March 1988, when students and ethnic minorities took to the streets of Rangoon (much as had happened in Gwangju). Despite horrific repression, the movement compelled President Ne Win to step down after 26 years of rule. In August, five days of new student-led protests forced his replacement to resign. A general strike committee representing workers, writers, monks and students coordinated a nationwide movement for multiparty democracy, but the military shot down thousands more people—bringing to over 10,000 the number of people it killed that year. Arresting thousands more, including over 100 newly elected parliamentarians, the Burmese military government continues to use an iron fist to remain in power.

The next year, student activists in China activated a broad public cry for democracy, only to be killed by the dozens at Tiananmen Square and hunted for years afterward. The revolt in China was from outside the ranks of the Party. Even within the halls of communism, however, as the chain reaction of revolts against military dictatorships continued, a member of the Politburo of Vietnam, General Tran Do, publicly asked for multi-party democracy in Vietnam in 1989, an unprecedented event. Nepal's turn was next. Seven

weeks of protests beginning in April 1990 compelled the king to democratize the government. (In 2006, after the monarchy had reconsolidated its hold on power, another wave of popular uprisings again won democracy.) The next country to experience an explosion was Thailand, when 20 days of hunger strike by a leading opposition politician brought hundreds of thousands of people into the streets in May 1992. Dozens were killed when the military suppressed street demonstrations, and because of this brutality, General Suchinda Krapayoon was forced to step down. In 1998 in Indonesia, students called for a “people-power revolution” and were able to overthrow Suharto. Interviews conducted by an American correspondent at the universities in Indonesia determined that the people-power slogan was adopted from the Philippines, as was the tactical innovation of the occupation of public space.

The Meaning of East Asian Uprisings

The Gwangju Uprising stands as a shining example of the rapid spread of revolutionary aspirations and actions. The spontaneous chain reaction of uprisings and the massive occupation of public space signify the sudden entry into history of millions of ordinary people who act in a unified fashion because they intuitively believe that they can change the direction of their society. In such moments, universal interests become generalized at the same time as the dominant values of society (national chauvinism, hierarchy, domination, regionalism, possessiveness, etc.) are negated. This has been referred to as the “absolute community” and “organic solidarity” of participants in the Gwangju Commune. Humans have an instinctual need for freedom—something grasped intuitively—and it was this unconscious need that was sublimated into a collective phenomenon during the Gwangju uprising. The sudden emergence of hundreds of thousands of people occupying public space, the spread of the revolt from one city to another and throughout the countryside, the intuitive identification with each other of hundreds of thousands of people and their simultaneous belief in the power of their actions, the suspension of normal values like regionalism, competitive business practices, criminal behavior, and acquisitiveness are dimensions of what I call the “eros effect.”

After World War 2, the sudden and unexpected contestation of power has become a significant tactic in the arsenal of popular movements. While the mainstream version of history that dominates the

airwaves emphasizes social conformity, beneath the radar, people's understanding constitutes a powerful undercurrent. Our unified actions in the streets were dubbed a "second superpower" on February 15, 2003. With no central organization, 30 million people took to the streets to protest the second US war on Iraq, even though it had not yet started.

Will the cacophony of revolts in East Asia after Gwangju, coupled with new insurgencies in Latin America and elsewhere, lead to a more harmonized uprising against neoliberalism and war? Never envisioned prior to Gwangju, the possibility of a Gwangju-style revolt on a global scale could prove to be the most enduring legacy of the events of May 1980._

Georgy Katsiaficas is professor of humanities and social sciences at Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston, Massachusetts. He is the author of, amongst others, *"The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968"* and *"The Subversion of Politics: European Autonomous Social Movements and the Decolonization of Everyday Life"*. He recently co-edited *"South Korean Democracy: Legacy of the Gwangju Uprising"*.



From a Supper of Ashes to Embers of Satin

On the Riots of November 2005 in France

Les Amis de Nemesis (the Friends of Nemesis)

Many of the remarks made by the inhabitants of the banlieus, rioters or not, and related by the press, hit the bull's eye with respect to the crisis that comes to manifest itself in their cities and forces one to perceive that in these remarks there is an unusually well-developed degree of lucidity. The "dump-city" phenomenon is so clear and massive that no one can be deceived on the subject -- without wanting to be so, for more or less shameful reasons. But here one touches upon a class of things that capitalist society, if it can prevent one from understanding them, can in no way modify them. Any "improvement" would imply fundamental transformations that are incompatible with the very nature of this society; this is why it is absurd to speak of the "creation of new job markets" at the moment when the old ones are disappearing very rapidly in all of the industrialized countries; or of "raising the level of individual development," while more developed individuals would have more needs and desires, which would be even more difficult to satisfy, and such people would be capable of expressing their anger in a more diversified and contagious fashion; or of "raising professional education higher," while education does not provide employment and thus one would simply have unemployed workers who are more specialized than before; etc. etc. One cannot "improve the lot" of a population condemned by the movement of value (that is to say, by the rarefaction of economically necessary human labor and by the necessity of only exploiting faraway and cheaper laborers) and [condemned] by the "political ideas" that see to the perpetuation of these necessities (the "ideas" that

are no longer ideas and the "political men" who no longer have the right to have ideas, since real ideas would necessarily set aside the business plan[3] of "society," that is to say, of capital). If these durable and intangible impasses demonstrate anything, it is the fact that the question is no longer changing things within society but changing society itself.

The imbecilic Segolene Royal,[4] who has never left the bourgeois-bohemian horizon of the 6th arrondissement, recently proposed the re-establishment of the national [military] service "to limit and structure the young people," and it is Chirac who would straddle such a nag[5]: that is to say, these are the summits of strategic and social thought that the political cadres [personnel] seek to climb. If one adds to this the generalized expulsion of all those who aren't as fair, tall and dolichcephalic[6] as Nicolas Sarkozy,[7] one has seen all of the "*solutions of tomorrow*", which are precisely those that, after decades of false humanism, were well-known to be the solutions of the day before yesterday.

The forced lucidity of the population and the necessary lies of the "political" cadres thus become the antipodes of a line that becomes longer and longer, more and more taut, and more and more fragile: a contradiction of the system that becomes accentuated. Two circumstances attenuate this promising effect, which resides in the particular character of the insurgent sphere (the blacks and Arabs), on the one hand, and in the objective limits or boundaries that this sphere intends (is it a question of a will to break with the market system or only a will to break with its inequalities, of which one has not

yet understood that they are intrinsic to it?) [on the other hand]. These are the two factors that, for years, have hindered the revolt movement from starting a revolution, the factors that in fact aim at deflecting this evolution towards its contrary: towards the impossible quest for integration or, even worse, towards a civil conflict between fragments of the population. The tactics defended by the various “political men” always aim at realizing one or the other of these perspectives of survival for the dominant system.

If theoretical critique has a role to play in such a context, it would thus -- as its top priority - - attack these two obstacles to the greatest possible extent: reduce the opposition between “ethnic” groups (but in a different fashion than that of superficial and laughable anti-racism) and show the impossibility of a generalized “integration” (the production of human waste products[8] is inseparable from the market system and especially its current backwards phase). Thus, theoretical critique can contribute by blurring the limited character[9] of the conflicts that will succeed one another.

The media and the other holders of public speech have obviously set into relief, to the point of nausea, the undesirable repercussions of “blind” violence on the totality of the population, deprived of its buses and places of work, finding its cars in ashes or awoken in the middle of the night by the CRS or firefighters. What could one say without falling into a sterile moralism that would be a kind of curfew of the spirit for it alone?[10]

[One could say] that, on the one hand, the dominant system is no longer -- as in the Ancien Regime or the strong, national State -- a centralized system that possesses a “seat of power” against which the jacqueries[11] must march, with pitchforks and scythes in hand; that there is no longer even a network of factories that the workers can blockade or appropriate, but a diffuse order of which the manifestations are everywhere, like the market values that constitute themselves through all of the moments of the economical cycle (through production, circulation and consumption of commodities), and in which human beings vegetate without jobs and especially without income; that the offensive against the system consequently recognizes that system’s existence everywhere, in the supermarket as in the school, in a Public Treasury building as in the auditoriums, in automobiles and the means of transportation; and that it seems easy to understand, at least after the fact, that to undertake one or the other of these objectives inevitably involves annoyances for third parties: there hardly exists an accessible place

where only Power can be hindered or attacked.[12]

[One could say] that, in the cities where the market system relegated the unemployed Arab and black descendents of those whom it brought in several decades ago, during the epoch of its industrial expansion and its need for a badly paid workforce, the youth do not have the least hope of one day emerging into the normalcy pushed so much as marketable survival. And that, in these conditions, which the punks[13] summarized exactly so long ago (“no future”[14]), it is illusory to expect from this mass of desperate people a “constructive” strategy.

[One could say] that the system, which rests upon violence at all levels of its national and international functioning, has propagated -- as never before in the decades of the orgy of the market -- the image of violence as the unique means of expression for everyone and that this system is very ill-advised to be astonished that the public has learned its lesson [from it]; that, having deliberately programmed the degradation of individuals, which is profitable for it alone, the market economy has known, like every other system of domination before it, to add subjective, mental conditions to the objective, material conditions of poverty, to the point of massively fabricating individuals who are completely deprived of the possibility of humanizing themselves, even in the widest sense of the term; and that it appears obvious that the system that has produced these neo-human beings will, one day or another, encounter them again along its road; therefore, if the system does not want them, it is itself that it must abolish.

Paradoxically, what one must retain are, rather, the ideas that the objective degradations accompany a subjective amelioration, as in all instances of open conflict, and that -- things being what they are -- it is only in questioning the dominant order that those to whom one has refused all power, and thus all power to constitute themselves as subjects, can accede to the condition of being human. By being insurgents against the absence of their lives, the young banlieu residents will not show that they are human wreckage, but, on the contrary, that they no longer want to be reduced to such. And, faced with such a project and such a necessity, only fools will deplore the fact that they make several mistakes in their syntax.

Contrary to that the media advances, those who have stayed close to these famous “savages of the banlieu” can ascertain that nowhere in other spheres of society is one capable of encountering - - among the youngest people -- such lucid and well-argued comprehension of society, the origins of the troubles, the political exploitation that power

can make of them, the function of racism as an indispensable factor in social peace (ethnic warfare as a distraction from the class struggle). What is thus verified, and in the most pronounced fashion, is the fact that such encounters permit one to understand that the spectacle, as one might expect of it, gives an inverted image of these populations, dressing them up as scarecrows for the “respectable citizens,” and seeks to avoid at any cost what such dialogues allow on both sides (the ghetto side and the town side), that is to say, a better comprehension of the by-no-means particular misery from which some people suffer (poverty, survival deprived of everything, non-participation in the economic cycle), but the universal misery from which all suffer (the necessity of working, submission to economic dictatorship), which would be the most serious threat to the system today. Nowhere or almost nowhere among the young rioters does one find the fascination with violence, the taste for brutality, [and] the nihilism deprived of thought that, in the dominant imagery, constitutes the panoply of the rioter and that the commodity persists in promoting in times of “social peace”; and these people are precisely the supposed “barbarians” who are obsessed by respect, by that civilized quality that they do not encounter anywhere and that they experience as fundamentally absent from a “society” constituted by factories, supermarkets and police stations. Faced with them, it is, in sum, only the old hatred of the firmly established for the dangerous classes that expresses itself everywhere and that is mediatically[15] maintained to explain to the more and more proletarianized part of the population (that still do not live in ghettos) that, faced with these barbarians, the “simple people” -- along with the “privileged” ones -- have a common enemy, against which the State, quite fortunately, will protect them (and in this, the banlieus play the same spectacular role on the national level that terrorism plays on the international level). Moreover, as one expected, the radicality of this anger was identified by [George] Bush with the schemes of [Osama] Bin Laden, and by [Vladimir] Putin with the Chechnian “Fifth Column,” thus providing irrefutable proof of the absolute lack of seriousness in the language used by the different Powers. La Place Beauvau[16] would also love to implant the illusion that the November 2005 riots were troubles caused by drug dealers or Islamist extremists: whereas, from all evidence, these two associations detest above all else drawing the attention of the police and having their networks exposed. No one among the owners of the official lie can accept seeing the truth: a negation precisely determined by

the existing order, the obvious expression of the social exclusion that is inherent in the movement of capital. The repressive measures, which apparently will be ultra-severe, will only reaffirm the politics of scorn that were already at the center of the origin of the conflict, and thus will assure the recurrent character of the phenomenon. The pure ferocity of the police has the musty smell of 1905[17]: it proved that the dominant class no longer wants to envision anything else, and that it can no longer make any compromises with the truth. Wedged between the threat of increasing international competition, the greedy desire to grow despite all of the profit made so far, and the obligatory management of reserves of unemployable proletarians, the dominant class seeks for any occasion that allows it to unburden itself of the latter. The expulsion of all of them being hardly feasible, it must find other but no less inhuman procedures. One can be reassured of it: there will never again be a lull. *13 November 2005.*_

[1] A reference to Giordano Bruno's Ash Wednesday Supper (“La Cena de le Ceneri”), published in 1582. In 1600, Bruno was accused of “Atheism” and burnt at the stake; his ashes were scattered to eradicate all traces of him. Note the inscription on the statue of Bruno in the Piazza dei Fiori in Rome: “Farewell ye ashes. Yet in these ashes is the seed that reneweth the whole world.”

[2] “Plus de lendemain, / Braises de satin, / Votre ardeur / Est le devoir.”

[3] English in original.

[4] A “socialist” politician.

[5] Jacques Chirac would assume the leadership (ride the horse) of this service. The French word employed here (bidet) also suggests that Chirac would squat over this toilet.

[6] Possessing a lengthened cranium, that is to say, a long head.

[7] Who is dark and short, and has an oddly shaped head.

[8] dechets humains: not feces, but wasted humans.

[9] Author's note: Beyond the limits indicated, it is necessary, on the other hand, to emphasize the remarkable capacity for ultra-rapid extension that this revolt showed, in France, of course, but also in its contagion to other countries.

[10] For example, note the sterile moralism of these comments by Guy Debord, concerning one such riot: “I think that you have noted a fact that was quickly mentioned, a few days after the confrontation at the Pont de l'Alma. The firemen summoned to Montfermeil, under the pretext of a false fire, were caught in an ambush, in which one awaited them with paving stones and iron bars. Our sold songs testify that it is, after all, normal -- when one is very needy -- to “burst the belly and the satchel” of an omnibus conductor. But to attack firemen, this was never done when Paris existed; and I do not even know if this had been done in Washington or Moscow. It is the perfected expression and the practice of the dissolution of all social ties.” (Letter to Jean-Francois Martos, dated 26 December 1990).

[11] peasant revolts.

[12] Like a supposedly “terrorist” organization, like Hezbollah in Lebanon, power has “embedded” itself everywhere, in and among the “civilian” population, as a form of protection.

[13] English in original. [14] English in original. (“There is no future in England's dreaming”: the Sex Pistols, “God Save the Queen,” 1977.)

[15] There is no equivalent in English for the French word used here, *mediatiquement*, which not only suggests “thanks to the media” or “in the media,” but also “spectacularly.”

[16] The location of the French Ministry of the Interior, which is in charge of domestic security.

[17] The year that revolution overthrew Czarist Russia fell.

Written by Les Amis de Nemesis (the Friends of Nemesis). Translated from the French by NOT BORED! July 2007. Footnotes by the translator, except where noted. Sincerest thanks to the author for correcting several mistakes in the early version of this translation.)

The University of Abahlali baseMjondolo

Richard Pithouse,
indianocean77@gmail.com

Since 2004 South African cities have been convulsed by a series of municipal revolts organised from shack settlements. They have most often taken the form of blockading roads with burning barricades and have generally targeted local party councillors. Across the country many settlements have refused electoral politics and declared 'No Land, No House, No Vote'. Despite rapidly increasing repression these protests continue to gather intensity.

Shack settlements began to be built in South African cities after colonial conquest and the rapid enclosure of land and forcing of people into waged work via taxation. Material conditions in the settlements were often dire but the settlements did go some way towards creating a new urban commons in which all kinds of cultural and political innovation flourished. In the 1950s the apartheid state, at the height of its power, began to forcibly remove shack dwellers to townships on the peripheries of the cities. There was often militant resistance to this process, much of it led by women, but in the end the armed power of the state prevailed. But by the middle of the 1970s the apartheid state was beginning to lose its grip on society and people were again able to occupy land and found new settlements. This process gathered momentum through the 1980s as the popular revolt against apartheid turned into the biggest mass mobilisation of its time. Some of the settlements founded during this mass insurrection were built on an explicit commitment to popular democracy. Sometimes this was sustained through severe repression but there were also instances where settlement politics hardened into an authoritarianism and brutality to match that of apartheid.

One of the promises made by the ANC when they came to power in 1994 was for social housing and thirteen years later South Africa has one of the largest state housing programs in the world. More than a million houses have been built in the last decade. But the ANC also have a major urban revolt on their hands.

Official discourse, from the state and NGOs, including some left NGOs, uniformly describes these protests as 'service delivery protests' and often ar-

gues that the targeting of local councillors indicates an inability to 'understand democracy' because the councillors 'do not drive the housing roll-out'.

In some parts of the country the description of these revolts as 'service delivery protests' has been taken on by some of the spokespeople people from within the organisations that have organised the protests. But, from what one can understand watching it all from within just one city in ferment, it seems that this is merely the language of professionalized politics – a soundbite that the media know how to consume. The language driving the actual planning and implementation of these protests, present in meetings, slogans and songs, seems quite different and most often speaks to notions of dignity and the idea that the disrespect shown towards people by the state has now become intolerable. Certainly this disrespect has a lot to do with evictions, an absence of toilets, intolerable water queues, candles in cramped cardboard and plastic shacks and so on. But it also has a lot to do with the pervasive sense that the state disrespects people by lying to people during elections and by failing to listen to them at other times. Again and again people assert that the poor are excluded from citizenship. And it's clear that citizenship is understood to include the right to be taken seriously when thinking and speaking for oneself.

It seems that the state prefers to tell itself that it is being confronted by militant 'service delivery protests' because this implies that people are demanding a more effective technocracy. Their response, when not entirely paranoid, is to recommend 'stakeholder management' (co-option, teaching obedience) or, less often, to promise more efficiency from the state machinery. Some times this takes the form of recommending that consultation, environmental assessments and so on be cut back as they 'slow down delivery'. It seems likely that the middle class left is comfortable with this definition for a similar reason – they often see themselves as a more enlightened rival technocratic elite and can read and present the protests as a vote of popular support for their power point presentations over those of the state's consultants.



LEANARDZ '97

Labelling this wave of popular protest as a demand for more effective 'delivery' presents it as a demand for a more effective technocratic rule that can 'deliver' houses more rapidly. However across the country the people who have organized these protests are demanding something quite different to 'more effective delivery'. A key demand is the right to be able to live in the city. In many instances protestors have demanded to be able to stay in their centrally located shacks rather than to be moved to housing projects on the periphery of the cities showing that the question of housing is not reducible to being formally housed by the state. The right to the city is not only undone by forced removals to the periphery. It is also undone by the fact that in every relocation people not on the housing list simply have their homes demolished and are left homeless. And it is undone by the fact that there is a ban on developing existing new shacks and on building new shacks. This is closely monitored by a mix of local informers and aerial surveillance and is enforced by militarised land invasions units.

A second key demand has been the right to co-determine 'development' by subordinating the state, especially in its more local manifestations, to society. In other words there is, against the elite assumption that an electoral mandate is a mandate for 5 years of top down technocratic planning by the state/academic/NGO complex, a clear demand for what the Brazilian urbanist Marcelo Lopes de Souza calls 'grassroots urban planning' [1]. One reason why the local councillors have been targeted is because they are supposed to speak upwards to the state on behalf of their constituents. However they are unable to do so because they are accountable upwards to their parties which determine the electoral lists. And the parties are, without exception, unable to comprehend the demand for popular urban planning as anything other than illegality, social breakdown or political conspiracy. Another reason for the hostility to local councillors is that they tend to work with elites in the settlements to dispense patronage downwards in exchange for party political control of the settlements.

Although the planning and political elite is de-racializing it continues to respond with intense anxiety to the autonomous occupation of urban space by the poor. Elites continue to see the urban poor as a drain on cities rather than as active participants in the life of cities. They remain unwilling to confront the fact that the wealth of the cities is historically based on the enclosure of rural land and the exploitation of cheap labour. And they prefer ignore the fact that shack dwellers undertake most of the labour that en-

ables middle class families to achieve a bourgeois lifestyle. Shackdwellers iron their clothes, protect their property and grill their food in restaurants on wages on which survival is only possible when one lives outside the fully commodified sphere. One economy sustained by the exploitation of the poor by the rich is justified by the production of the illusion of two separate worlds inhabited by, as Fanon said 30 years ago, two separate species of humanity.

Municipal authorities routinely and systematically behave illegally towards shackdwellers on the implicit assumption that they are not full citizens. There is a considerable extent to which this is just about evicting the poor from valuable urban land in order to 'unlock' its value for elites. But it is not just about the market. Psychoanalysis is required as much as economics. Elites have stigmatized shackdwellers in accordance with racist stereotype to the point where their mere presence is seen as a direct threat to national aspirations for urban modernity even when there is no direct threat to profit. It is clear that in many instances the housing projects, while presented as 'delivery' to the poor are in fact aimed at delivering the poor out of the city and out of autonomous spaces into regulated and commodified contemporary versions of the apartheid township – a space separate in every way from the fantasy of world class cities. An autonomous urban proletariat which turned urban land into a commons is being recomposed into a surplus population on the urban periphery.

The official discourse also claims that shackdwellers are subject to shacklords and therefore require the liberatory intervention of the state via access to local democracy (i.e. the councillor system). This discourse comes from UN Habitat which is headquartered in Nairobi where shacklordism is rampant in the Kibera settlement. But in South Africa most shack dwellers are not exploited by landlords seeking rents (although when it does exist it is virulent). In fact most settlements have origins in the popular democratic struggles of the 1980s and have never been governed by slumlords. The relations of political oppression within settlements are most often structured around party political representation and in particular local elites seeking to deliver shack dwellers as vote banks or to secure their obedience in exchange for insertion into networks of patronage. In Durban the councillors all have to sign a commitment to reporting new land invasions or settlement expansion. If they fail to do so they can be disciplined by the Municipality. One consequence of this is that they often function as local spy masters using

party members in the settlements as their informers. If you are a shackdweller in Durban you can only vote for your own repression.

In Durban there has been a unique development. A road was blockaded in early 2005 as roads have been blockaded around the country since 2004. But this road blockade gave rise to a shack dwellers' movement, Abahlali baseMjondolo, that now has members in almost 40 settlements and which has been able to present a sustained challenge to the municipal authorities. The movement has suffered severe and systematically illegal state repression but has, nevertheless, continued to grow and to become an articulate and compelling voice for shackdwellers outside of party and electoral politics. Abahlali are rigorously committed to a radically democratic mode of organising and have rejected party politics, the councillor system and NGOisation in favour of what they have called a (non-party and non-electoral) 'politics of the poor'. Perhaps the most important idea in the understanding of the politics of the poor that has been developed in the movement is that shack dwellers should organise themselves and think and speak for themselves. They have, to use Emilio Quadrelli's phrase, asserted themselves as autonomous 'grass-roots politics militants'. [2] This has created a crisis for party politics and certain modes of NGOs politics that both depend on a politics of representation and Abahlali have experienced severe authoritarianism from both quarters.

But despite this they have succeeded in building the biggest political movement outside of the ANC since the end of apartheid. They have largely stopped evictions in all the settlements where they are strong, have built and defended new shacks and connected thousands of people to electricity, resisted police oppression and fought for land and housing in the city. But the declaration of Abahlali baseMjondolo as a university is a signally unique intervention into the South African political landscape where 'left' political education is usually something undertaken by NGOs in conferences venues in English and with an overwhelmingly economist orientation that tends to ignore the politics of politics. The power relations in these situations are often highly racialised and gendered and are always deeply classed. But here a mass movement of the poor has decided to educate itself where its militants live and struggle in the languages that they speak via ongoing careful collective reflection on its experiences of oppression and resistance. Like other movements in the country its conclusions are anti-capitalist but they are also profoundly demo-

cratic. This declaration of intellectual autonomy from the state/academic/NGO complex has the potential to mark a new moment in popular struggle. It has already created an intellectual commons to go with its defence of bits and pieces of land held in common and electricity appropriated into a commons. And the analysis that is developing in this University poses the exclusion of the poor from decision making as a fundamental problem. For the first time the political form as well as the economic content of neo-liberalism is facing an uncompromising popular challenge.

[1] Marcelo Lopes de Souza: *"Together with the state, despite the state, against the state"*, 2006 <http://abahlali.org/node/240>

[2] Emilio Quadrelli: *"Grassroots Political Militants: Banlieusards and Politics"* <http://abahlali.org/node/1437>

<http://abahlali.org/>

Urbanisation of Panic

A response to Fraco 'Bifo' Berardi in Occupied Issue [1]

Bryan Finoki,
<http://subtopia.blogspot.com/>

Berardi describes the state of urban territory as striated by new dimensions of panic where the mental and physical environment of the city overlap in an over-saturation of signs “that create a sort of continuous excitation,” he writes, “a permanent electrocution, which leads the individual mind as well as the collective mind to a state of collapse.”

In short, he talks about how human beings as social organisms are excessively agitated by the urban experience to the point of existing in a constant state of panic. This cultural agitation exacerbated by technology has enabled a new economy beyond the production of material goods to one of “semiotic goods” as he calls them, that function within a kind of hyper-sprawl of frenzied sociality and contagious information. Berardi writes:

The problem of panic is generally connected with the management of time. But we can also see a spatial side to panic. During the past centuries, the building of the modern urban environment used to be dependent on the rationalist plan of the political city. The economic dictatorship of the last few decades has accelerated the urban expansion. The interaction between cyber-spatial sprawl and urban physical environment has destroyed the rationalist organisation of the space.

In the intersection of information and urban space we see the proliferation of a chaotic sprawl following no rule, no plan, dictated by the sole logic of economic interest. Urban panic is caused by the perception of this sprawl and this proliferation of metropolitan experience. Proliferation of spatial lines of flight.

The metropolis is a surface of complexity in the territorial domain. The social organism is unable to process the overwhelmingly complex experience of metropolitan chaos. The proliferation of lines of communication has created a new kind of chaotic perception.

He then portends the urban terrain is no longer understood as a mere economic pattern but as a psychopathological one as well. While this “digitalization and info-sphere” largely

defines the complexion of today’s metropolis the result, he says, is a political and economic crisis of bursting attention span, pressurized time management, and never-ending cognitive anxiety, all of which translates to a City of Panic.

I imagine it as panic en-globalized; or, panic as a new prototypical capitalist form, or something. The economic engines of the world spurred on by frenetic geographies of panic development; panic as more than just an urban dimension but as a 21st century planning principle. Is it a transnational institutionalization of panic through global urbanism that makes the world go round today?

Back to Berardi’s point, however, if I understand him correctly (and in my own words), human society as a system for social organization is compressing and fragmenting under the weight of its own urban psychosis self-constituted in the nature of these “semio-cities” (as I might choose to call them), and civilization is burying itself in the environmental traces of this collective panic, as if cities were mass psychospacial fossils, if you will, ready to leave the future imprints of our psychic breakdown in the skin of the earth forever, in the indelible space patterns of the city.

Taking the City of Panic a bit further in Subtopian terms I ask, has panic become the main ingredient that binds the urban experience today – spread through a larger geopolitical climate as well? If we think of so-called globalization and the ‘War on Terror’ purely in terms of the spaces it occupies, we could examine the implicit panic in structures like border fences and illegal immigration detention centers, leftover bunkers and future secret fallout space; or in the atmospheres of urban conflict zones like the Occupied Territories; or from behind the walls of the new American embassy compound in Baghdad – there are entire cartographies of paramilitarism and slumaphobia to be traced across the map. The urban morphology of panic has left behind entire Cold War landscapes once modeled on a panic preparedness. Berardi likens this ubiquitous panic to an electrical charge, but I also see it is a

critical vibration in some way - or, maybe more like a resident frequency that signifies the simultaneous (in)stability of the global city's core social and structural foundations. Panic as a volatile urban harmony. We have engineered a range of metropolises that vibrate on the edge of collapse at every level.

I get a little leery of some of the language in his article (but I get even more so of my own in relaying it!), so, in other words, while he riffs off some classic post-modern theory on media saturation, semiotic bombardment, information barrage, globalization, and ultimately a culture of fear that has already been written about extensively, he also provokes good reflection on the ways fear is transmitted in the very genetic make-up of our cities, in the spatial logic that organizes and rearranges the social infrastructures of global capital. Berardi provokes one to ask: has panic always existed this way and what is the urban evolution it? How has the change of different urban forms exerted an influence over the history of panic?

Berardi's article not only shares the title of Paul Virilio's recent book but leans towards similar observations, namely how the contemporary city is defined by a kind of de facto psychopathology that is embodied in the very spaces and architectural rationales that order urbanization today, from gated communities to urban surveillance landscapes, to the last dying refuges of public space that have been overwhelmed by privatization and a complete hyper securitization of the built environment at all scales. It is not entirely unobvious that panic appears almost as if it were a chief *modus operandi* for much of the world's planning strategy. We've moved past the kind of bombastic but functional fear that the nuclear threat brought towards a more dysfunctional domestic terror that keeps everything on edge – both within the zones of safety now as well as outside the gates – where at any moment something on a smaller local scale could

suddenly cause considerable mayhem. Either way the current urban response is less on how to unravel the causes of such a crisis and more so on how to armor ourselves from its penetration – a posture rooted in a perpetual state of anticipated panic, a great looming panic attack, ultimately a state of terror.

Perhaps more so than ever the culture of cities today is defined by a collective psychology whose roots flourish in the very physical forms that constitute the contemporary hyper-metropolis. This is a topic of great interest particularly in the ways the production of cityscapes are used either intentionally or as a de facto means of stoking a 'culture of fear,' or what could be also referred to as the hysteria of a fortress urbanism. I am extremely curious about the psychological effects of armoring our skyscrapers, fortifying every inch of our public spaces, walling ourselves off from every possible threat. How are these threats themselves even reproduced or perceived in the very process of trying to secure ourselves from them? How must we consider such trends in urban design from a psychological vantage? What do our obsessions with securing the environment mean in the cross-pollination of global culture? It is the direct correlation between landscapes, anxiety, and cognition that fascinates me in the context of a City of Panic.

Part of the goal of Subtopia (subtopia.blogspot.com) is to try to look at the pervasive discourse around a security culture through a psychospatial lens to better understand, for example, how gated communities, security fences, and ubiquitous surveillance are discussed, presented, consumed, rationalized, inscribed as expressions of a deeper cultural pathos. Through an architectural lens Subtopia tries to chronicle how the militarization of urban space not only as a planning tool for controlling cities (or, perhaps, designing them for the sole purpose of military occupation), but also



as a psychological apparatus for expanding the ideals of militarism, i.e., urbanization as a means to militarize the ego, religious antagonism, national identities, border conflicts, and so forth. Subtopia deconstructs the city as the ideal military recruiter.

One might ask, based on the panic-stricken nature of western culture what is the current diagnosis and mental health state of neo-liberal democracy? Or, how can the city be viewed as an architectural weapon to enforce a certain behavioral code, or to forcefully spatialize neo-liberalism in a way, to rear obedience (or addiction) to a rampant commerce? What are the inherent narratives of power that run through constructs like maximum-security prisons, megalithic casinos, shopping mall complexes, refugee camps, suburban sprawl, torture spaces and the hardened borderzones between nation-states? Is there a psychopathological connection between them all? Is there a new urban geopolitical archetype here to be deconstructed? I suppose to some degree Subtopia is an attempt to document these realms of spatial politics and the psychological underpinnings that govern these globalized architectures of control—these Cities of Panic._

Recent Urban Unrest & The Image

Luther Dimissett,
purityanddanger@gmail.com

Recent Urban Unrest?

The Old Good Urban Rest was Better!

WHAT is recent urban unrest? I mean, in Paris the suburbs would always explode in reaction to authorities and the police. Haven't you seen 'La Haine'? Or in 1968, when even the petite bourgeoisie revolted - looking for the beach under the pavement. That was Urban Unrest!

Moreover, London saw riots almost monthly since in the 1980s. Did you ever hear about the wild manifestations in Italy during the seventies? Athens sees hundreds of bomb explosions every year. Or did you forget of Amsterdam in the eighties? I will behave and I won't even start about Berlin and Barcelona, where riots were almost customary.

IN THE PAST...The TV almost had a monopoly on public images: it referred to a bunch of anarchists adding that "fortunately" *'everything was under control'* and that what we saw was urban rest. Well OK... 10,000 cops were in hospital and the city centres were occupied by 500,000 masked revolutionaries burning ministries and banks, but still *'the situation was under control.'*

TODAY...Well TV has not changed much: Most of the poor but honest reporters still claim that *'the situation is under control'...*

...But the image per se is much less controlled and less monopolised.

Today, everyone has a camera and records everything - not only behind the helmets of policemen, but also behind the heads of the rebels!

Police and reporters might tell you the police controls the situation...but when videos come showing nothing is under control, the authorities have two tricks:

(1) The old one is to belie what everyone can see and claim that what we see in TV is Urban Rest, not Urban Unrest...

...and (2) their new trick is to try to win the audiences' sympathy by throwing X or Y number of poor, small, unprotected officers injured.

Today TV and other professionals lose their monopoly in the administration of images...

-Images here - images there... where is the image? It must be here somewhere...-

BUT this camera thing is an anti-revolutionary conspiracy!

Everything contributes to that condition... The world is full of cameras: They put them on the streets; they put them in the working places; in the houses... They even put them on mobile phones, to make sure that everyone will have one!

THE demonstrators focus their attention to the camera and to the image, not to reality!

THE Counteractive elements want to cause a metamorphosis: From rebels to camera-men... ...camera-men who record the image, they do not participate in the rebellion!

IN order to force the rebels to use cameras they also advertise their use: They give policemen a camera. These cameras are fake policemen do not know how

Wit' Poetry, My Mind I Flex



to use machines, (apart from machine guns) they have them for promotion reasons, they advertise camera use to demonstrators. They also provoke them by claiming that there is 'urban rest' when this is not the case, getting demonstrators pissed off – then demonstrators get a camera and start video-taping.

AND when there is a camera not only the camera men do nothing, but they even influence the rest of the people around them who behave like they are on film.

THERE are two kinds of urban unrests: those one in front of a camera and those without cameras. The first type refers to what we are used to call 'recent urban unrest' Here, the situation is miserable, both police and rebels are caught doing everything merely for the spectacle.

UNDER these circumstances today we just see more and think that we learn more about the urban unrests, consequently we think that they are recent phenomenon...

...but social unrest in cities is as old as cities themselves. Greeks and Romans had riots and club holders to control the crowd unrest... Spartacus did it! What difference is there between the current wave of urban unrest and older ones?

Image!

...Quite simply: Social groups that are oppressed will always revolt against their exploiters. Then cameras and monitors came, together with the image.

THUS what I want to tell is that recent urban unrest is not recent, it is as old as the mud. We just SEE more about them nowadays.

'Recent unrests' will end as soon as cameras turn off!

There is life after (and before) the image!_

Let's talk about it...

This summer we ticked off yet another destination in the long, long list of places we have at times chosen to visit together with the sovereign: They used to be there to make plans and decisions (or so they claimed), now they are there to merely fulfill the needs of the spectacle. We used to be there to try and block them from making these decisions. We are still there, following them wherever they go. But what are we there for now?

As much as it might sound like a cliché, this year's anti-G8 mobilisation in Rostock, Germany was a crucial one for many of us. It offered much hope for the recovery of a movement that has admittedly seen a downfall in past years (did it go downhill post-9/11? Perhaps so).

Rostock brought plenty of hope: Unlike Scotland two years ago, the set mission (*to block off access to the meeting space of the sovereign*) was accomplished, if only temporarily. A victory?

It's time to talk... and there's a lot to say. It would be unreal not to acknowledge that, from its very beginning, this journey was based around the notion of the spectacle. The real terrain of struggle between us and the sovereign is far, far away from whatever red zone; the latter come as means to symbolise everyday struggles, to draw lines and distinguish sides. Perhaps more than anywhere else, the red zone is where "they" are separated from "us" so clearly while in such close proximity. Like some German comrades point out elsewhere in this G8-special, the Rostock riots (like most riots)

"...were one of the few signals against the meeting of the self-declared rulers of the world that could not be co-opted or re-interpreted".

We are thrilled to see that a lively discussion has opened around this summer's mobilisation and our future tactics. No article published here is fully endorsed by the editorial collective; how could it. There is no party line to follow here and our differences are thankfully many: Perhaps our German autonomist comrades (*page 38*) find it useful to focus on "*more participatory*" militancy and how this can be achieved. Others might see this as a contradiction in terms, if only in the sense that it surrenders to the logic of the spectacle, and blurs its own edges:

These are the few moments when we break out of legitimacy's borders - so how can such action ever be legitimate? Should it be? Some other visitors to Berlin, coming from the European South seem to feel that this summer's game was lost many summers ago, when the Autonomen succumbed to housing legality (*page 34*). Burn the movement's greenhouses today and you will be soon gasping for air.

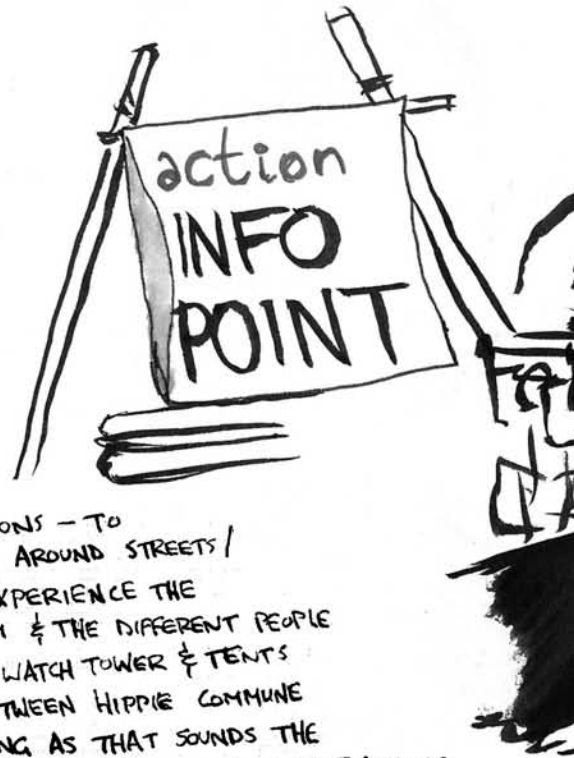
This small collection of illustrations and texts written on Rostock is hopefully nothing but the beginning. The dialogue needs to continue and many want it to: Perhaps it's finally time for a summit of our own (*page 44*). This was a good summer for our movement; let's make sure that what comes next is spring._



An Occupied London G8 Special

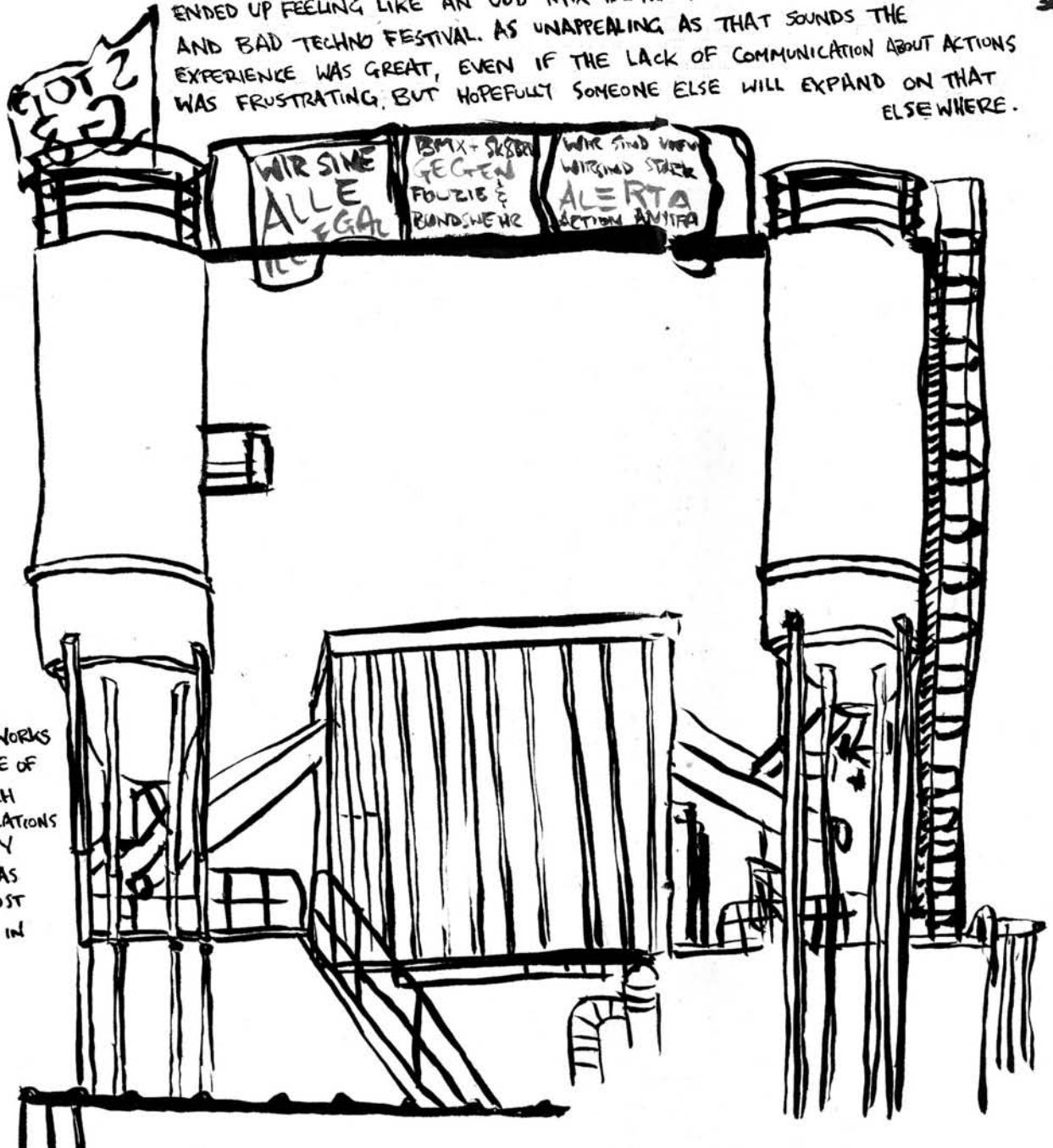
adventures in CAMPING@ the G8

(SKETCHES FROM CAMP
REDDERICH, GERMANY JUNE
3RD - JUNE 8TH)



I ENDED UP HEADING TO GERMANY, TO THE G8, ON A WHIM ONLY
A WEEK BEFORE THE SUMMIT. I WENT FOR THE OBVIOUS REASONS - TO
STAND AGAINST A DESPICABLE INSTITUTION AND BECAUSE RUNNING AROUND STREETS/
FIELDS WITH MY FRIENDS IS FUN. BUT I ALSO WENT TO EXPERIENCE THE
SUMMIT CAMP, THE INTERESTING THINGS THAT HAPPEN IN THEM & THE DIFFERENT PEOPLE
YOU MEET. CAMP REDDERICH, WITH IT'S MAD MAX-ESQUE BAR, WATCH TOWER & TENTS

ENDED UP FEELING LIKE AN ODD MIX BETWEEN HIPPIE COMMUNE
AND BAD TECHNO FESTIVAL. AS UNAPPEALING AS THAT SOUNDS THE
EXPERIENCE WAS GREAT, EVEN IF THE LACK OF COMMUNICATION ABOUT ACTIONS
WAS FRUSTRATING, BUT HOPEFULLY SOMEONE ELSE WILL EXPAND ON THAT
ELSEWHERE.



THE CEMENT WORKS
IN THE CENTRE OF
THE CAMP. EACH
NIGHT MODIFICATIONS
WERE MADE. BY
THE END IT WAS
COVERED ALMOST
HEAD TO FOOT IN
GRAFFITI.



← A DUTCH VAN
WITH A ST PAULI FLAG.
A LOCAL GERMAN THOUGHT
THIS WAS THE MOST HIL-
ARIOUS THING HE'D
EVER SEEN. I DIDN'T
REALLY GET THE
JOKE BUT LAUGHED
ANYWAY!

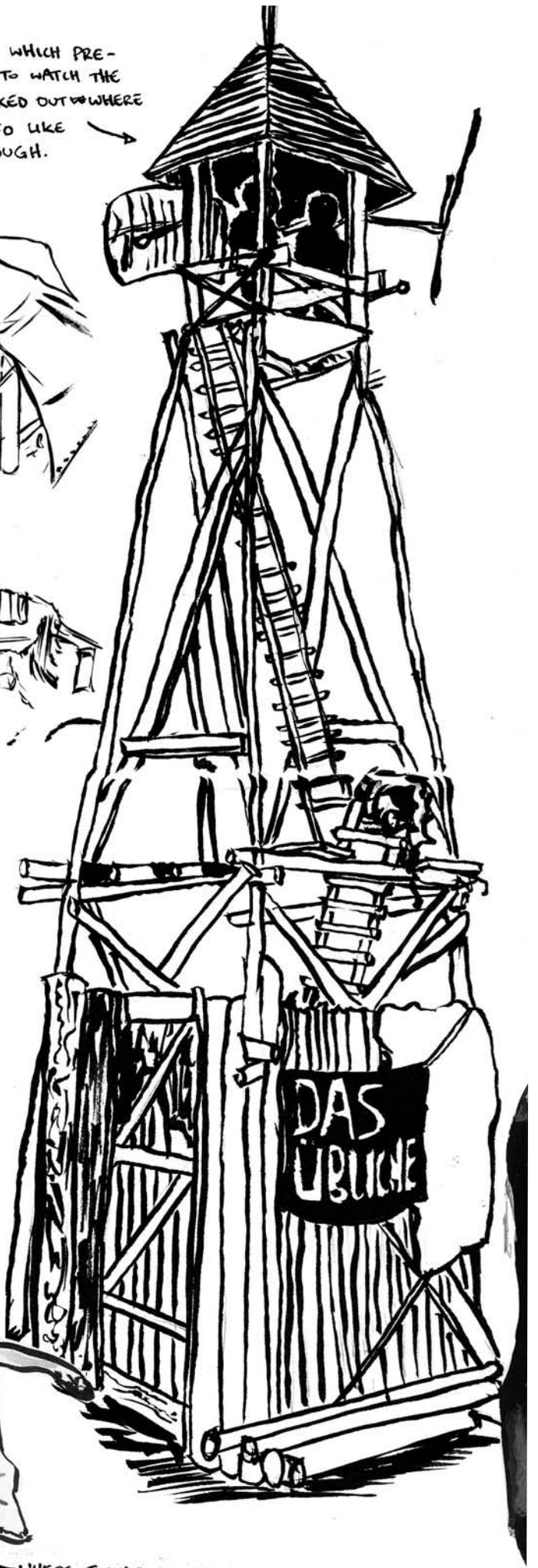
THE WATCH TOWER WHICH PRE-
SUMABLY WAS USED TO WATCH THE
LOPS. I NEVER WORKED OUT WHERE
TO GO TO GET INFO LIKE
THAT THOUGH.



THE 'MAD MAX' BAR
AND SEATING AREA BOTH V. BADLY DRAWN
(SORRY). THE HILL SEATING
AREA WAS INCREDIBLE.



← AND THIS IS?
(I THINK IT'S AN ANTI-
GM THING)



← WHERE I WAS STAYING



ANARCHY



A CIRCLE 'A' FOR A CIRCLE SHIRT - ANARCHISM!

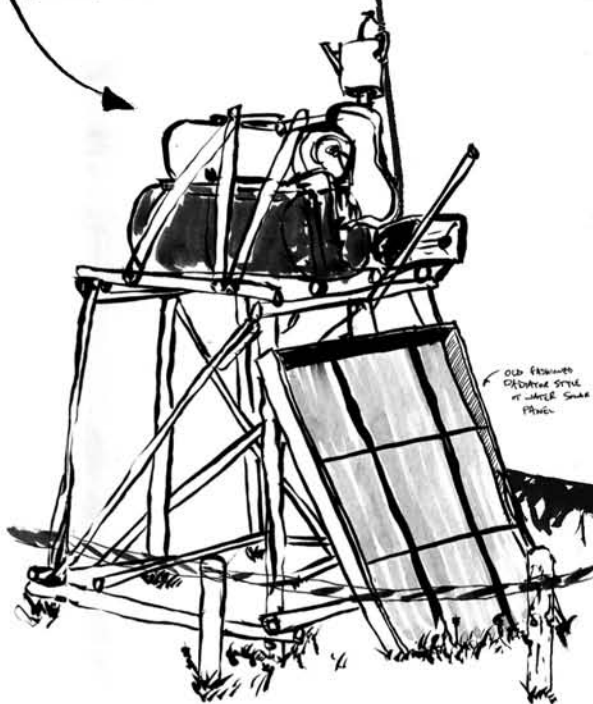


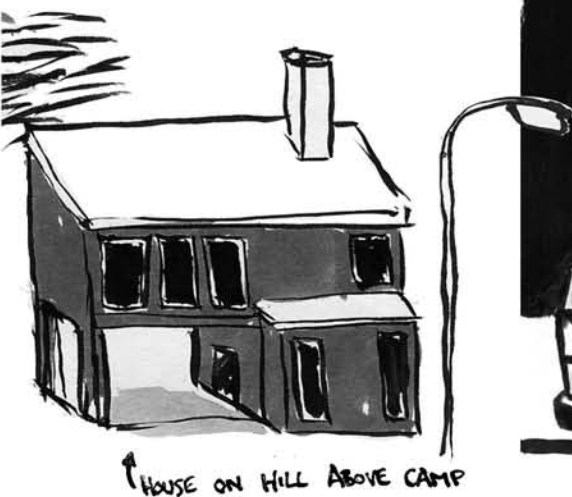
THERE WERE BIKES EVERYWHERE A WHOLE BUNCH COULD BE BORROWED TO TRAVEL TO BAD DOBERAN ETC. IT WAS AN AWESOME IDEA, THOUGH MORE BIKES WOULD HAVE BEEN EVEN BETTER!



← A HELICOPTER HOVERING OVER THE CAMP

THIS SOLAR PANEL FED THESE SHOWERS WITH HOT WATER ALLEGEDLY, EXCEPT I NEVER ONCE HEARD OF THE WATER BEING WARM.





↑ HOUSE ON HILL ABOVE CAMP



↘ VAN NEAR CAMP

ILLUSTRATIONS & TEXT BY: EDD

edd@vazine.co.uk

CHECK OUT KEY MONKEY, RIOT #3 FOR MORE ON THE G8

OR LAST HOURS #16 THE OTHER ZINE

I WORK ON WWW.LASTHOURS.ORG.UK



“Sooner or later you will all be in trouble.”

Balkan Anarchists of Northern Europe

As it turns out, the words of an undercover cop in Berlin's Kreuzberg district during the street fights of the Walpurgis night some weeks before the G8 summed up the German police's reasoning in repressing our counter-summit. We saw how tactfully they treated Saturday's 2nd June mass demo and the blockades that followed. And yet the violent raids of housing collective projects and old haunts of Berlin and Hamburg outlined that they had decided to attack, and did so successfully, in two levels. First, they targeted those who got in trouble later, comrades known to them from the past: Anarchists, leftists and other activists were given the hint by house raids days before the summit. Then there were those who got in trouble sooner, that is, as they joined the movement. All it took was making the mistake of finding oneself at the front line: Water cannons, tear gas and rubber bullets proved the undercover cop of Kreuzberg right. For those who have been in trouble some time now and for those who confronted the police for the first time the counter-summit of Rostock was surely some key point. You could see this in the eyes and words of people who, even before starting off their journey to Germany, spoke out clearly: If mistakes of recent summits were to be repeated, Heiligendamm could easily, without any sense of exaggeration, mark the end of this movement - what we like to loosely describe as the movement against the globalisation of sovereignty.

So what happened? The next few paragraphs comprise a first attempt of writing down and analysing our experiences from the counter-summit of Heiligendamm. The text might, at some points, seem aggressive; yet this is only because we have an agony and lust to see all of the energy concentrated in Northern Germany in early June finally get channelled through more effective directions. We therefore ask that the stark style of the text is not misunderstood: This is nothing but a cry for thinking more before we act. Yes, mistakes were made; yet the fact that we all found ourselves there, that we are still

standing, talking of our experiences, is a statement in itself: Not only are we not finished, but we are arising again and sooner or later we'll be stronger than ever!

The Limits of Activism

Imagine: A young demonstrator arrives at one of the three camps that hosted us, all in the perimeter of the red zone. In which of the three they ended up was probably decided by random yet it largely mediated their experience of the counter-summit. For example, the atmosphere in the camp of Rostock (largely dominated by people of the organised/reformist Left) was entirely different to that of Reddelich (with a mass presence of individuals from the anarchist/anti-authoritarian scene) and that, in turn, must have been entirely different to the Wichmannsdorf camp, for which we have no personal opinion since we did not make it there. All in all, we did not find each other; this was the precise problem in an otherwise perfectly organised plan of actions. True: since our aim was set as being the complete blockade of the red zone our scattering in three camps, one convergence centre and tens of small affinity groups was necessary and largely effective. Yet in the name of a largely symbolic success (the temporary blockading of the red zone) we sacrificed a much more important process of communication and networking. Surgery-like-repression that followed now appears almost like a direct outcome of our very own scattering and self-exile. By denying ourselves the mass element in our protests we break up in small groups and individuals that are highly vulnerable to the attacks of the police. By fetishising activism we act under the handicap of being unable to select the terrain of the clash. Worse even, whatever attempted clash then takes place under near-military terms - at which we are (thankfully!) incompetent.

On Counter-violence, Once Again

So in what 'are' we "competent"? This is a good time to look back to our experiences from



previous counter-summits and see where they were successful. A common point of all counter-summits (Rostock included) was that the black block acted largely as a people's defence against the police. This is something recognised by most: During the 2nd of June demonstration in Rostock, the vast majority of the demonstration's participants stayed and mixed with the black block once the clashes started, making any serious attack from the police impossible. This is a fact the police were quick to realise and act upon, hence Rostock did quite likely signal an end to the old distinction between peaceful and violent protesters. From now on, cops attack both.

This change in the attitude of the police contributed to the most important change in this summit compared to the counter-summit of Scotland: The big blocks (e.g. those of the Block G8 coalition) were significantly more diverse than in 2005 - bringing together anyone from NGOs to activist groups dealing with specific issues, giving a less reformist touch to the mobilisation as a whole. Should these blocks have been entirely reformist, they would have avoided clashing with the police - which is not what happened. In this regard the Campinski agreement worked: Each group acted in the manner it chose to, respecting the choices made by other groups, giving a notable diversity to the actions that occurred. It is needless to say that it comes as no surprise that ATTAC "condemned and apologised" for the actions of other groups on their behalf: We could expect no different from an organisation with so strong pro-systemic characteristics and attitude.

Precarity and Internalised Repression

The vast majority of people who found themselves at Rostock transcended the limits set in previous counter-summits. They were successful in acting in a subversive and a unifying manner - at least avoiding clashing with other elements of our movement. In this sense, the conditions were ideal for Rostock to become a high point in the long journey of counter-summits. This never happened. Why not? We tried to answer this question: Why wasn't the German police not trounced, even if their 'tough' reputation collapsed? During this process the words of Kreuzberg's undercover cop came to mind. People get in trouble sooner. The police's strike is one step before pre-emptive repression. Starting by crushing the Autonomen's movement in the late eighties the German State was careful to secure that whatever new generation of Autonomen would not easily arise. Beyond the typical direct attack against

known persons and groups repression was much more effective when targeting basic infrastructure of our movement in Germany. The treacherous and highly effective "legalisation" of squats in the late eighties means that in 2007 many such spaces are under the immanent threat of normalisation. Even when that does not happen individuals and groups might resort to their self-policing in order to avoid outside threats. In this way the excessive defence of our private spaces deprives our public actions from their necessary dynamism. Signatures put on legalised squats' contracts in the eighties were at the same time signing the agreement for the self-policing of our movements two decades later.

Smash the cities, not the crops!

The return to the city creates expectations. For more than half a year, the word on plan B had circulated around anarchist/autonomous circles. Constantly, throughout all "preparations" the voices of this alternative suggestion were heard loudly, sneaking their way into nightly circles and arousing fantasy and creativity! Our targets are not the pre-set meetings of the sovereign, where the entire repressive mechanism awaits us. Our targets can only be the structures challenging and limiting us daily. The bank's local branch, that MacDonalds outlet poisoning young kids, those forces gentrifying the town's historical centre. Those who design the New Berlin, which in order to exist, will have to be sold, bit by bit, to the hungry eyes of clueless global elite tourists. Our targets are many and so are the brilliant ideas (many comrades travelled all the way to Berlin only for these ideas). They returned to Berlin bidding to strengthen the cry for help from locals dreaming of a sudden break of light in-between the increasing darkness of the statist plans to exterminate all subversive action.

The trains from Rostock are heading towards Berlin in full capacity - group tickets instead of carriage occupation, perhaps an indication of low spirits? Departures already start from Thursday afternoon, second day of the blockades, and then there's another split, we are leaving despite tens of comrades still being piled up in the detention units. Back in Berlin, we're finally playing at home, we can finally breathe freely, the kind of air only available in the camp after June 2nd. At night the first fliers calling for a reclaim the streets party at Berlin's Hackescher Markt appear, figuring masked up people running with their fists in the air, the tension rises, how could we sleep, we wonder around Oranienstrasse, meetings with groups of comrades from all corners of

the world, what kind of plans are there, what plan are you going for... On Friday the whole of Kreuzberg is full of fliers, everyone's waiting for the party, the affinity groups are reaching the apogee of co-ordination, everyone has decided where they stand, more or less convinced of the validity of their decision. Last meetings before the action and ... void. Local groups pull out of the plan, why, because of insufficient planning? Excessive risk? Overridden capacities? Some void. But we keep going. The rest of us are at guard. The reclaim the streets party breaks out and asks for the city's attention, of the police, the air force... The night passes tortuously slow, you keep looking at your watch, much-promising meetings, we are blockading the centre of town until the promises are fulfilled. Yet one after the other disheartening news arrive. The tune of a violin in Rosentaler Platz, the only musical background to our party! People we did not invite ask to join the feast, they come to support what we left without any support. Why didn't we invite the whole of the city to our party? Our Reclaim the Streets never turned into the demonstration we wanted to see, it never turned into a party, there were too few of us and we were on our own. A social movement's confinement. Plan B had ended before it even started, it died inside us because we never believed in it. Once again, self-policing.

We painlessly return to our homes, our squats, our neighbourhoods. We dive deep into each others' gaze to see if we can feel what we had felt... Some leave the country to report back to others, many remain to organise anti-repression. There is no need. The punishment is instant: wasserwerfer, pepper spray, baton hits, broken noses, arrests, detention units. Passive presence is punished at equal with active resistance. The unprecedented stance of the cops, "there are no peaceful protesters" brought about a new concept in the insofar "peaceful" demonstrators' circles: "There are no peaceful protests!" In the night of June 8th and after the last few delegates had retreated from the zone, our last comrades were also released from the dungeons of democracy, only to face the paranoia of neo-Nazism waiting for them outside the detention centres. Once again our lawyers came to our rescue, the law now standing as the sole escape route from a paranoid reality, holding us by the hand and leading us to the path of legality... And so the week to follow has nothing to ask from us, from the convergence space, the occupations; after the withdrawal of the powerful, it is all over.

Lights out, the spectacle is over but the stage is not yet empty, it stays full of our daily local struggles.

The summits of resistance give us the chance to communicate, exchange and organise our next actions. We don't see them as the milestone of our fight but as an opportunity to enrich the form of our local struggles and maybe as a reminder that we don't need the spectacle at all in order to unite our resistance globally._

United Colours Of Resistance

*I wear black for the poor and beaten down...
And for the prisoner who has long since served his time.*
-Johnny Cash

The following text was written by people belonging to the radical left in Germany, who, like many others, have different perspectives on and opinions about the incidents of the 2nd June 2007 in Rostock during the protests against the G8-summit. One thing we do have in common is our will to resist, which in its practical realisations, with their different means of expression, is respected by all of us. Public denunciation and one-sided apportioning of blame are not our means. With this text we aim to engage in positive and negative criticism, of ourselves, and also of those with whom we have worked on a common concept of resistance over the past two and a half years.

The Mass Demonstration 2nd June in Rostock

The demonstration on the 2nd June in Rostock was a success. Not despite, but because of the Black Block and the massive resistance from the different blocks of the demonstration. The confrontation with the cops and the attack on the Sparkasse Bank produced images which unmistakably demonstrated a radical critique of current ruling conditions, as well as a disapproval of the official G8 meeting. There were so many people who didn't want to "engage in a dialogue" with the rulers, who didn't want to "be heard", and who didn't want to express "constructive critique" (i.e. take part in the organisation of capitalist exploitation).

The Rostock riots were one of the few signals against the meeting of the self-declared rulers of the world that could not be co-opted or re-interpreted. Symbols of the capitalist system were attacked directly, whether cops or banks, in order to say "No"; "no" to an unjust and oppressive world economic system.

"Attacking Capitalism" – on the 2nd June this slogan was actively brought to life as a non-

conciliatory sign, carried by many international autonomous, left radical and anarchist groups and individuals. "We", people from small or large organised groups, were not the only ones who took part in this; on Saturday many people furiously picked up stones.

The riot was not only an expression of anger at the arrogance of power, but also made resistance incalculable for the police and state apparatus. This anger at the arrogance of power has to be understood against the backdrop of growing state repression, such as the raids on the 9th May 2007, as well as the massive restrictions on the right to demonstrate that have increased over the recent years, e.g. the banning of masks, police filming during demonstrations, snatch squads, regulations on the size of side banners, controls and searches before demonstrations, "walking kettles" (complete cordoning of demonstrations) and so forth.

This sign was strategically aimed at preventing, effectively blockading and making impossible the large meetings of rulers (WTO, G8, IMF). In our opinion, due to the militant clashes during the WTO conference in Seattle in 1999, the IMF/World Bank meeting in Prague 2000 and the G8 summit in Genoa 2001, the G8 states decided to hold future G8 summits far away from large cities and metropolises, instead meeting in rural areas where they mistakenly believed the potential for resistance to be weaker. If we can keep up the massive and intensive resistance over the next years, G8 meetings may only be able to held high up in the mountains, at the North Pole or virtually.

Many militant activists joined the "make capitalism history" block organised by the Interventionist Left (IL). This block was a "closed" Black Block, open to all autonomous and anarchist

groups. With hindsight, this concept allowed for the joint militant actions that followed later, and made them easier. The character of this block was made clear in the mobilising posters of the IL, which depicted masked up and helmeted demonstrators.

Already during, but especially after the attacks on the police and banks, representatives of the different organisations who had helped organise either or both the large demonstration and blockades planned for the following days made desperate attempts to distance themselves. Together with the mainstream press, they tried to depoliticise this militant form of resistance. The result of these distancing attempts was that the mainstream media reported exclusively about “violence” (that is naturally only acceptable if it’s exercised by the state). In the end, this is an old and well-known game, and from the German media organisation like “Spiegel”, FAZ and TAZ we don’t expect anything different. Thus the declaration, “make capitalism history”, went completely unheard in the media in the next few days.

The distancing mania of some of the ATTAC spokespersons was no surprise to us. More important for further debate, however, is that at the ATTAC plenary meeting at the Rostock Camp on the Monday, ATTAC members rejected the attempts by coordinating group members Peter Wahl, Pedram Shahyar and Sabine Leidig to split the movement through proposing the organisation of an ATTAC-only blockade separate from Block G8 and in complete agreement with the police. This split was prevented by activists at the grass roots level of ATTAC.

New to all of us was the immense distancing from members of the radical left camp. A particularly low point was the statement of Christoph Kleine (IL, AVANTI and spokesperson for Block G8) about

who the participants were: “It was a wild mixture of hooligans, youth from the region and people from abroad” (Die Welt 04/06/07). Doubtlessly more intent on defamation was the totalitarianism theory for beginners by Monty Schaedel (managing director of DFG-VK [United Opposition Against Military Service], co-organiser of the demonstration). He compared the pictures with the 1992 pogroms in Rostock Lichtenhagen:

“The biggest failure is that we’re now left with the kinds of pictures that we, as the Rostock Coalition, had tried to avoid: the repetition of the kinds of pictures we saw in 1992 during the assaults on the homes of asylum seekers. This is precisely what we didn’t want, what we didn’t intend and what we certainly don’t condone” (ZDF 03/06/07, Indymedia link to the interview streaming 03/06/07).

Even one of the spokespersons of the IL, Tim Laumeyer of the ALB, a radical left-wing antifascist group from Berlin, tried to distance himself and find a justifiable excuse: “Towards the end the situation escalated in a way that we did not want and explicitly condemn” (Junge Welt, 05/06/07) or, “The vandals were only a minority, we don’t want violence” (Berliner Morgenpost 04/06/07) and, “There must never again be an escalation like in Rostock” (Vanity Fair, dpa, 06/06/07). This is not merely a political distancing, this kind of language also uncritically takes on board the terminology of the ruling regime and thus serves to depoliticise, when for example there is talk of “vandals”. It’s interesting to note that whilst individual spokespersons of the IL distanced themselves from the militant events and confrontations with state power in Rostock, at least some parts of the IL enjoyed taking part in the riot. Since then, apologies and explanations for the



distancing attempts have appeared from many sides (e.g. ALB, 05/06/07 <http://www.antifa.de/cms/content/view/564/32/>). This is good.

It's nonetheless doubtful whether a sufficient explanation for the misconduct of individuals can be that they were simply 'overrun' by the media. It's much more important to reflect on how it can be possible to participate in broad coalitions that reach far into the middle of bourgeois society without having to succumb to a logic which forces one to distance oneself from radical left struggles. The events prove that the avoidance of a discussion on militancy during the organisation of the Rostock demonstration was not a good decision. This also applies especially to us autonomists.

Within an anti-state orientation, the struggle for the acceptance of militant resistance is an important counter-hegemonic struggle. This is at the same time also the struggle for the acknowledgement of how violent the circumstances that we live in are. To take oneself seriously and speak of racist border regimes, the ruthless logic of capitalist exploitation and wars of aggression, means militant resistance. Of course, this is still only about a symbolic struggle. To throw stones at window panes or heavily armoured cops does not mean smashing capitalism. It's about sending a non-conciliatory message to a system that holds human beings in contempt. No more, no less.

Well-meant but in the end just as distancing is to say "The cops started it".

We know that the police have many ways of manipulating situations: agents provocateurs, direct attacks for trivialities (like wearing a black baseball cap or black scarf), or they invent something. All of this happened in Rostock.

Added to that you have a media which in the first instance took on board and spread all, if even completely stupid lies the cops came up with: At the demonstration there had been 400 injured cops, of which 30 severely – later it materialised that it was 30, of which 2 were severely injured. Supposed acid attacks on individual cops by the Rebel Clown Army; in reality this was soapy water, used to blow bubbles. The police denied having used agents provocateurs during the summit; as the police press officer stated: "There are no plain clothes officers at demonstrations". On the same day, many different videos appeared showing how a police officer from Bremen, all clad in black, was exposed as a plain clothes officer on duty. There are many more examples but the fact that the cops often attack us must not be used at every demonstration as the sole

explanation for militant resistance.

We don't have to apologise for questioning the state monopoly over violence. We wanted to attack and we did so in Rostock, even if that particular time and place was not what we had had in mind! Already in 1999 at the time of the protests in Seattle against the WTO conference, which so many of the people in the anti-globalisation movement refer to positively, an anarchist group, the ACME collective, issued a so-called "Black Block Communique" titled "Peasant Revolt", in which it detailed reasons for the necessity and legitimacy of attacking capitalist symbols in Seattle and smashing windows of multinational corporations such as the Bank of America, US Bancorp, GAP, Starbucks, McDonalds, Nike Town, Levi's etc.

At last constructive criticism

Other criticisms beyond the wave of distancing should be more important to us. Yes, not everything went well in Rostock. For example, it would have been much nicer if the "make capitalism history" block hadn't dispersed at the end of the demonstration and before the attack on the Berlin police unit, but had collectively and resolutely moved into the centre of town. There, there would have been enough capitalist targets where "uninvolved" people would have been less endangered. But seemingly this was neither wanted nor planned. Much later there was an attempt by a few hundred masked up people to go to the town centre. However, they only got the first bank, which was smashed.

With hindsight, we lacked a new meeting point to continue. The attack on the lone standing police car (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDqThVpulAM>) has to be questioned. Many militants criticise that after the windows of the cop car were smashed, the two unprotected police officers who were sitting in the front of the car were attacked with stones and poles. Severe injuries could not have been ruled out. Some of us believe that the limits of legitimate militancy were exceeded here, because it's not our aim to (severely) injure police officers.

At the subsequent riot at the Rostock Harbour too many comrades, and in some case "uninvolved" people were hit and injured by bottles and stones. We have to find ways to make sure that people are not injured by people throwing things from the back rows. For people that don't want to be involved with these kinds of militant confrontations there has to be a way for them to retreat properly. Responsible militancy also means drinking the contents of the

bottle the night before and not at the demonstration. Here everyone is called on to approach people who booze at demonstrations! We have to admit to ourselves that we haven't yet reached a point of responsible militancy. This is difficult and was not necessarily to be expected in Rostock; all of us were amazed at the number of people we were there. Lack of experience, however, should not be a reason to not conduct militant demonstrations.

It's much more the case that a new culture of demonstration is needed to make militancy 1. more accepted, 2. safer for everyone and 3. more successful. This can only happen if afterwards people don't just boast, "I was there and then I gave the cop...". We need a debate about militancy. This can happen through texts like this, discussions at autonomous plenary meetings, during the preparations for the next demonstration etc. Criticism has to be taken seriously and has to be understood as a call for better militant organisation.

Swords to ploughshares, stones to messages...

But not only the actions themselves, also their communication, has to be better organised. The dictum, "actions speak for themselves" might be true, if attacks on capitalist symbols are successful. Sometimes, like in Rostock, it's not true. After Saturday, we didn't manage to communicate the legitimacy of militant resistance against the violence of state and capitalist relations.

This certainly has something to do with potential repression. There were numerous requests to get a participant to the riots in front of a camera. The possibility to communicate our motivations and reasons via the media was there but on the whole there was nobody who had the courage or even thought it right to do so. This is also the case for the Campinski Press Group that was run by people from the autonomous spectrum. Even "our" press group ignored some of the press statements, e.g. the declaration of the International Brigades (*printed on page 42, this issue*) which was posted on Indymedia on the 6th June. Likewise, the Black Barrio statement from the Reddelich Camp (<http://www.gipfelsoli.org/Newsletter/Militanz/2709.html>), published in response to the accusations and distancing of the ATTAC leadership.

It has been shown how important it is to better use and support our own structures such as Indymedia, free radios etc. This includes a broad discussion within our radical left spectrum about how to deal with the press and the question of its role as the "fourth power of the state". In the end it was

those well-known faces that appeared in the media, whose comments were a relief after the previous media smear campaigns, but they were given by individuals without the backing of groups.

Principally we think it's more sensible to publish opinions of groups and associations that have been collectively discussed beforehand, instead of individuals, mostly men, raising their own profiles with their interpretations of events. This is our starting point for an antagonistic movement. The goal should be to evaluate and publish the events of Rostock together, not to leave this to self-proclaimed or even designated spokespersons. Lamentably, this happened continuously.

Even the left scene newspaper "analyse und kritik" only gave space to male individuals to voice their views and comment: from Sven Giegold (ATTAC), Olaf Bernau (no lager), Thomas Seibert (IL), Christoph Kleine (IL), Michael Kronawitter, Tim Laumeyer (ALB), Ulrich Brand (BUKO), Daro Azzelini (FelS) to Raul Zelik and Geronimo. This a step backwards. Apparent is that it's neither a coincidence nor the result of anti-patriarchal discussions that primarily men were allowed to speak or wanted to speak. We don't want to make blanket accusations in this respect, but we think that there was at the very least a lack of the necessary sensibility. In the end, we have to look to ourselves too. We hadn't only hoped for, we had wanted riots. The media reaction was predictable. With our silence, we left the space to NGOs spokespersons, ATTAC and IL, which led to distancing. We have to face this dilemma and urgently need to discuss how to communicate militant praxis at demonstrations, and how to deal with the media.

Dress for the moment

Although he doesn't want to know, Ulrich Brand's suspicions can be confirmed: "*I suspect (although I don't know and I don't want to know!) that people who march in the Black Block and even those who take action, are otherwise part of similar political contexts as many other demonstrators*". Being militant at a demonstration is not about identity – at least it shouldn't be – It's a tactic with strengths and weaknesses just like any other tactic. Sometimes it's useful, sometimes it's not. In Rostock it was useful in order to give the G8 resistance a non-conciliatory note._

For an Emancipatory Militant Resistance

"There must be a better world somewhere" (BB King).

Plan B has started already, join the Battle of Joy

International Brigades

There are certain moments when it seems appropriate, without it ever being a matter of calculation, to address everybody in a manner as simple and direct as possible. One of these moments has arrived. We want to speak briefly about what happened on the 2nd of June in the city of Rostock during the demonstration against the G8. We speak, of course, from a partisan position, but one forged of multiple voices, which at certain moments manage to become singular. One of these moments has arrived.

This 2nd of June, thousands of people didn't wait for the ritual which we have so often been subjected to in this movement to play itself out: mobilizations, demonstrations, less than symbolic actions, conferences crowned with pat conclusions long ago prepared by some obscure functionary. Nor did they accept donning the worn out postures of those who pretend to be concerned with the state of the world and abandon themselves to a pious compassion for the most misfortunate.

These thousands, on the contrary, did not content themselves with reacting or resisting, but took the initiative, consciously attacking the places where, day after day, capitalist exploitation and the material effectivity of the global civil war are extended. The G8 is not only the expression of the domination of capital over the world, a theatre of dubious quality where the leaders put onto the stage another ritual, one that serves to codify their rule over the lives of subjects. The G8 is the symbol of the suffering inflicted daily on millions of people. That we should be reproached for our violence when it is they who have their hands full of blood!

In the end what happened was very simple: free beings decided to collectively and practically oppose the symbols of capitalism and the baleful face of the state incarnated by all the police of the world. The assemblies and long speeches, if they are not followed by irruptions in the streets of our metropolises, produce only suspicion and resignation.

We want to also recall another truth in relation to the combatants in the battle of Rostock: they

are women and men originating from every corner of the world and have no need of an identity card to recognize each other, constitute gangs, and experiment new forms of life. We are the nationless who seek to destroy the frontiers - as much material as symbolic - which separate our lives, thought and bodies. We are made of multiple singularities who desire to join in order to create the conditions of a more ecstatic life. We come from everywhere, it is why we are everywhere. Those who affirm the contrary are brazen-faced liars.

There is another truth: under every black mask was a smile, in every stone thrown against the common enemy there was joy, in every body revolting against oppression there was desire. We don't harbor sad passions and resentments, if that had been the case we wouldn't have fought and resisted for so long. Thus don't be deceived, look at those with whom you are connected, or whom you love; perhaps you will find one of these bodies, one of these smiles, one of these hands engaged in the struggle. Joyful passions placed in common and joined to the assault on command - such is the secret of the battles waged in the heart of the asymmetrical conflict which opposes us to the sadness of the weapons and bodies of power. Individually we are nothing, together we are a power. Together we are a commune: the commune of Rostock.

We all arrived here with a personal and collective history, a history of struggle and battle waged in every corner of the earth. We don't want this event to be perceived as a simple continuation of the old cycle of struggle which, since September the 11th, has known so many disappointments. We believe on the contrary that the 2nd of June was the signal of a powerful and determined rupture with this phase of defeat and that this battle inaugurates new offensives. That this breach permits us to flee together to the other side of the mirror, the side of freedom.

And now comrades, we block the flows...
Long live the commune of Rostock and Reddelich!



For a Summit against everything

Comrades from Everywhere

(...touching ground)

It has been floating around everyone's mind for quite some time. In fact - it has been argued from the very beginning of this wonderful adventure, the manifestations against summits of the sovereign. The question has always been there: Sure we need to meet - and our counter-summits are an excellent opportunity for doing so. But why follow them around in their summits, why give them the tactical advantage of selecting where and when our battles are to take place?

We are not an anarchist travelling circus, nor should we be focusing exclusively on the meetings of the sovereign to express our anger. Their meetings merely represent and reflect a fraction of capital's barbarism, inhumanity and exploitation. We know that and yet, for quite some years now, so much of our energy is spent in co-forming predefined spectacles with them; we are first role actors but the script is not ours.

For all its positive outcomes (and there were many), the counter-summit of Rostock reminded us something we should have never forgotten. Win in their game playing by their rules and you've lost. For a moment, we cried "victory" in the fields and roads of Rostock. What had been set as our counter-summit's main goal was achieved: All roads leading to Heiligendamm, the venue of the G8 summit, were blocked off - and yet those trapped at that very moment were us, not the state leaders.

Are we trapped? What direction do we go now, having achieved the aim of our counter-summit, only to find ourselves back at point zero? This is not an easy question and we surely do not intend to answer it alone. We have booked a room at this year's Anarchist Bookfair in London, to allow for some preliminary discussion*. We hope this will be the beginning of an organising process leading to the first counter-summit against much more than yet

another summit of the sovereign. Rather than waiting for them to decide where and when to meet, no longer running behind them, we'll jump on the driver's seat and decide this for ourselves. For once, the where and when questions should be answered by us.

Where? We say London. If there is one place that can aptly symbolise all of global capital's barbarism, inhumanity and exploitation, this must be our city. However, both this and the when question are to be answered in the bookfair meeting and the ones that will hopefully follow them. We do not pretend to have any pre-set answers to these questions, only lust and energy to co-form the answers with all interested comrades. What we do know is that it's finally time to move on from organising against single-issued summits of power; it is time to attack capital in its totality, in the everyday, in the spaces in which it rules.

It is time for a Summit Against Everything!

* The first organising meeting for the Summit Against Everything will take place during this year's Anarchist Bookfair. The Bookfair is happening on *Saturday October 27th* at Queen Mary & Westfield College, Mile End Road, London, E1.

See www.anarchistbookfair.org and occupiedlondon.org for details.

FUCK



THE SYSTEM

Outroduction

“Images contaminate us like viruses” (Paul Virilio)

If texts in this journal were images, the article on the Gwangju uprising would be a flashback. Prior to discussing current urban struggles we needed an image from the past to confirm the hypothesis: Resistance and revolt can only be *integral* to a system that produces inequality, exploitation and misery.

What Virilio calls the integral accident is an accident that can, potentially, work for us. From Durban to Paris and from Gwangju to Copenhagen people always would - and will still - organise, resist and revolt. This is the true TINA (There Is No Alternative): To break social consensuses and survive, to revolt and live.

European streets might seem to be running out of steam - but then what was Copenhagen all about? Paris? Thessaloniki? Madrid? The question is no longer of whether revolts light up more or less often, the question is about the nature of such revolts and where we place ourselves within them.

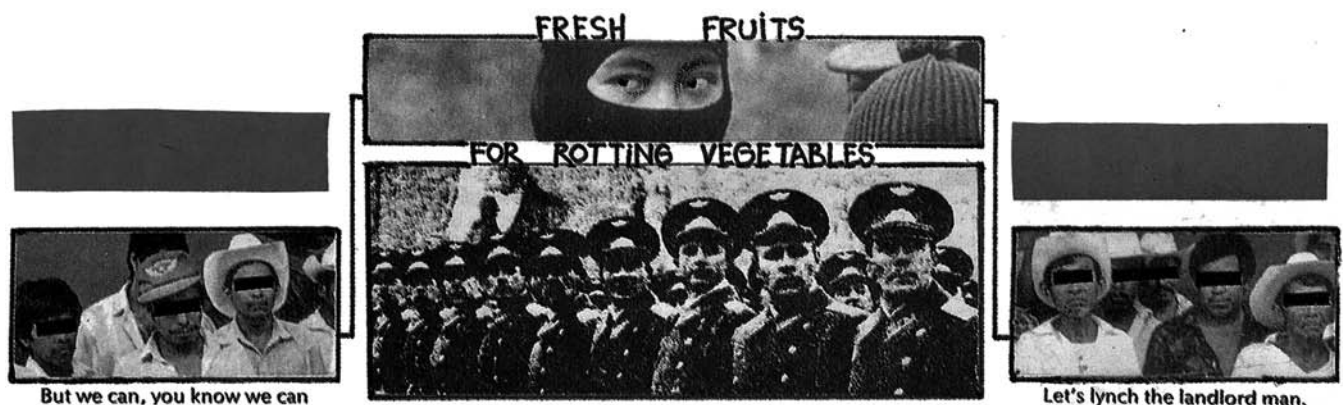
Hardly surprisingly, the revolted of the banlieues seem to have “*a lucid comprehension of the political exploitation that power can make of them*” - such discernment is sorrowfully missed in our ranks. “*There hardly exists an accessible place where only Power can be hindered or*

attacked”: And yet we attack, at the most inaccessible places, at the most unsuitable of times, when *they* are most protected.

Whatever images of our action get channeled through corporate media are increasingly set to fulfill the media’s very own lust; our action has to be supplementary to the image of our opponent - and that’s what it becomes. Is our action *contaminated* by the image?

Truly effective struggles are *un-image-nable* (not unimaginable!) The fascinating grassroots work of the Abahlali baseMjondolo in Durban’s shack settlements has been, in its most part, unsuitable for media purposes. The Abahlali have launched an attack against the neo-liberal paradigm on an everyday level and leave the media machine hungry for an image depicting the clash - *there must be a lesson for us there somewhere.*_

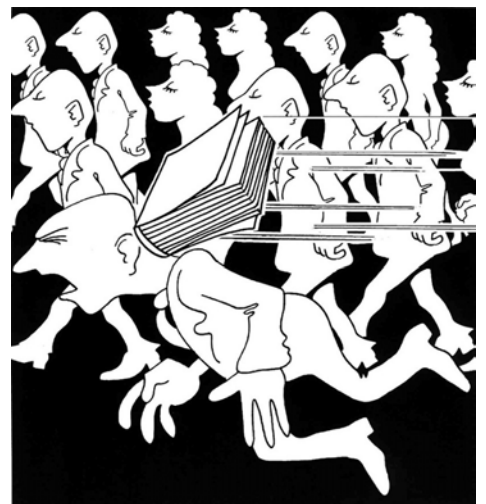
*Issue Three of the journal is coming out in mid-December (honest!) and is a London-special, themed “*Life in the Occupied City*”. Submissions, comments, whatever: occupiedlondon@riseup.net



Meet us at the Anarchist Bookfair!

Saturday 27 October 2007, at Queen Mary & Westfield College, Mile End Road, London, E1. From ten a.m. to seven p.m. Look out for the Occupied London stall...

<http://www.anarchistbookfair.org/>



Voices of Resistance from Occupied London

www.occupiedlondon.org/
occupiedlondon@riseup.net

Printed at Footprint Workers Co-op,
www.footprinters.co.uk/

