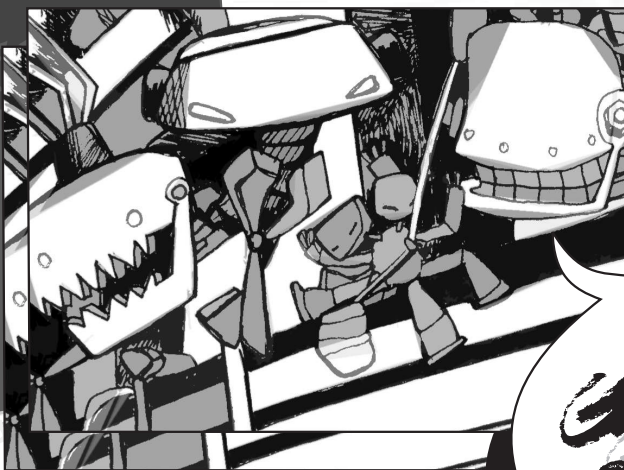


AUGUST 19

SEPTEMBER 3TH

DGA CONFERENCE 2006



GUIDE
PRATIQUE
PRATIQUE

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Attention! This practical guide contains a bunch of general information (political choices, contents..) which can be relevant in the different locations. However, quite a large amount of information is specific to the Dijon gatherings, and structures, spaces and ways of organising might not be the same in the other locations. Anyway, it's worth reading it in advance.

Here's a series of suggestions for the organisation of the meetings and, generally, of daily life during the conference... We got our inspiration from the last PGA gatherings, but also from other meetings and from our various experiences of daily collective life...

Unlike most massive political events, PGA conferences aim to blur the border between the organizers and the consumers of such political gatherings.

We've tried to conciliate practical necessities and things we really wish: avoid too much specialisation, have everybody take part in the organisation of daily life, avoid having just a few people managing the whole thing, so as not to end up with people getting burned out and/or having a huge amount of power over the whole of the organisation process.

This guide is also the result of one year of deep reflections about how we wish to organise such a conference. The ways of organising that are suggested here were decided upon throughout the stamp meetings. We started as an affinity group who felt like taking the responsibility of organising such a conference. Then we decided to open then process to other people or collectives who feel related to PGA by publishing reports from our meetings, so that they can react and get involved progressively, with full knowledge of the facts. We tried to explain clearly how we work in our information documents about the conference.

So we won't really question the structures we've thought up within such a short-term setting as this conference. We've tried to set up a structure that's down to earth and precise enough so that we can concentrate on the conference's content rather than spend all our time just organising it. However, anyone who wishes to get involved in the organisation process during the conference can join the logistic teams by attending the coordination meetings that will take place in the evenings.

These suggestions aren't a model for organisation, but rather an odd experiment regarding ways of organising we've agreed upon and which turn us on. They are leads and attempts to self-organise our daily lives; it's probably going to be quite chaotic, but also pretty much fun.

We hope that in the future other people will make their own experiments and organize more meetings of that kind in a totally different way. One of the things which is at stake with this conference is to make other collectives want to organise another meeting in the future, either because they liked this one or on the contrary because they were disappointed. Welcome to the next convenor!

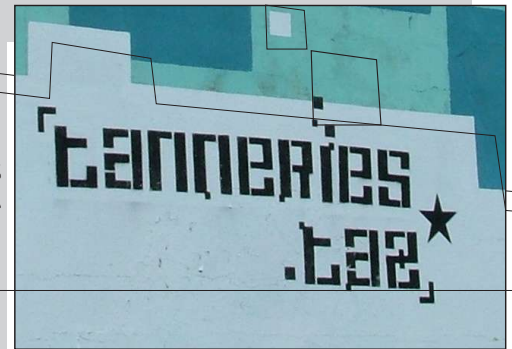
PRACTICAL AND POLITICAL ORGANISATION TOOLS...

quelques mots sur les tanneries

"L'espace autogéré des Tanneries" is an anarchist social centre, that was squatted in 1998 to carry a double project: an affinity & politically based housing space, working towards creating equalitarian relationships through collective life & daily self-management, as well as a public activity space, breaking with +profit-making and dominant culture, opened to all individuals identifying with its goals and means.

After four years of struggle and resistance against threats of eviction, avec the destruction of part of the space by criminal arson and after a number of protest actions, the city council owning the place finally dropped its plans. "Les Tanneries" could start focusing on long-term projects after a contract was passed with the city council, and a hacklab & internet open-access space, a free-zone, an infokiosk popped up alongside the existing gig room, workshops and working space.

"Les Tanneries" will celebrate its 8th birthday this year. Apart from the continuation of public events - gigs, performances, workshops on free software, band rehearsals, screenprinting, activist literature dissemination, etc, work has been put over years to make the structures suitable for welcoming working-groups sessions for anti-authoritarian projects & activist gatherings, such as the People's Global Action European Conference :)



Coordination of logistic groups

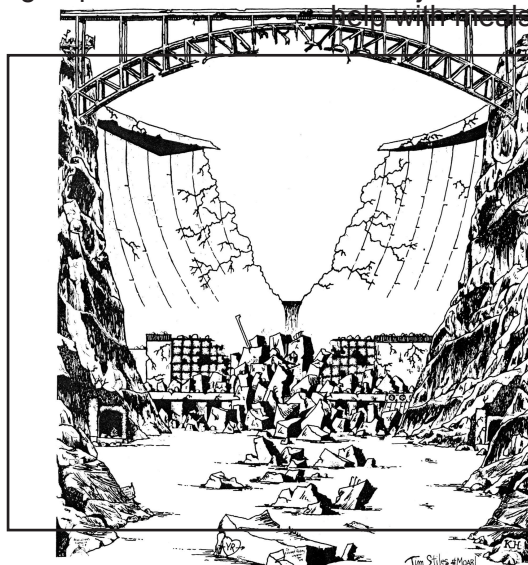
To facilitate the organisation of the gatherings and the participation of everyone in the daily running and logistics, we have decided to create various logistics groups. Most of these have already been set up before the gathering, but need your ideas and energy to continue while it is going on. The groups are:

Finances, kitchen and food, resolution of internal conflicts, accidents from within and without (accident risks, fire, cops), translation and facilitation, information, welcome and registration point, bar and cinema, infrastructure (toilets, showers...), party team (for the centralised conference in Dijon), infokiosque, housekeeping, legal support team in case something happens... organisation of the caravan from the centralised locations to Dijon, medics team, kids space, internal reports and wiki / producing a newspaper for participants, radio project, video project, open access.

Some of these groups will need to have daily meetings to coordinate what has to be done and deal with any problems that arise in the gathering. The times of meetings will be clearly announced (in the centralised

part, they will be in the evenings). Anyone can come along to ask questions or make comments to the group, or to join in.

Some activities don't need organisation meetings but just co-ordinators and people to help out, so they will explain what is needed on the task boards, and how to do the job, and you are invited to sign up (eg. cleaning, help with meals, infokiosque)



GLEN CANYON DAM

During the centralised gathering in Dijon (the decentralised gatherings will follow more or less the same model), the meetings of working groups will take place in the evening after eating, lasting no more than one hour, in the same space. This will let the various groups talk to each other to coordinate certain details.

Afterwards there will be a co-ordination meeting with delegates from each logistics group but anyone else is also welcome to go along. This meeting is to maintain an overview and resolve

any questions which cannot be resolved by the individual groups. The decisions made will be practical decisions which fit in with the previous general decisions about the organisational spirit of the conference.

Minutes from the co-ordination meetings will be posted

on the notice boards at the infopoint. If you have a problem or question for a logistic group, look there first. If you feel the need to speak about something which falls outside the remit of the logistics groups then talk about it with other people who are interested and present your proposals in the evening co-ordination meeting. For rants which don't need decisions or debates, make an announcement in the morning meeting.

To make sure everything is clear, and to aid participation, all meetings will be announced.

Dance floor & morning calls

Each morning, just after breakfast, we'll play a wonderful federative piece of music, so as to show people that parties don't always take place at night, and then spend a short while making calls and announcing general informations. Everybody will be able to express themselves about whatever is announced, but that's not when we should start long collective debates (otherwise, we'll be spending the day just doing that!). If you feel it's necessary, organise debates in small groups and then make suggestions in the evening during the organisational meetings...

Presentation of info point and registration

In each place and then in the centralised gathering, there will be an info and registration point. This is the way it's going to work during the centralised gathering.

The idea of "registration" is that it should be minimal, not too tedious or bureaucratic. So, when you go, they will ask you: -if you had asked for reimbursement for transportation or visa costs. -if you had asked for, or need, accomodation that is not camping -if you want your email address to be included on a information list for future PGA events, or the internal discussion list pga_europe_process@squat.net -for a financial contribution towards the logistical costs of the

gathering, and also for the food. - how long you are staying: it has been difficult to be able to know in advance how many people will come to each place and then to the centralised part. So we need a more realistic account of how many people are here to be able to adequately manage logistics and supplies.

Also if you have specific food allergies or medical needs which you think someone should know about, you will be advised to go to and tell the medics group or kitchen collective directly.



You will be given a pass when you register. Show it at mealtimes.

During the whole gathering, you can go to the info point to: ask any questions you might have, store valuables in a locked room, borrow tools or bicycles, find copies of the programme and political reader, find marker pens and paper to make notices, recharge your mobile phone, find lost property, open the gate to the wasteground to let cars in and out and so on and so on.

Notice Boards

Just beside the infopoint are a lot of noticeboards. They include:

- * -the program for each day,
- the task boards and sign-up sheets for the various logistics groups
- notice boards for each logistics group
- minutes from the evening co-ordination meetings
- information from the other decentralised spaces
- transport boards, message boards and much more...

There are also press tables where you can leave copies of any texts, leaflets, zines, cd's or whatever you have brought with you.

IF YOU WANT TO PUT ON A WORKSHOP OR A MEETING

Go ahead - the program is yours to fill in just a few easy steps.

1. Choose the day and time that you want to put on your meeting.
2. Choose the space where you want to hold the meeting - the various available spaces are marked on the maps.
3. Write the title of the meeting, and a short description on one of the small pieces of paper which are beside the daily program boards.
4. Also make a note on that piece of paper if you need someone to come to the meeting to facilitate, or to translate (include into which languages you need translation)
5. Stick the piece of paper on the program in the space and at the time you have chosen

TRANSLATION

The people attending will be speaking many languages. We've tried to imagine ways of translating which would be useful (good and efficient translations) but we also wanted to put all the languages on the same level (for instance, during international meetings, people who are fluent in english are often favored, and we'd like to challenge this within such a network as the PGA...). The ideal thing would be for people to be able to participate and express themselves in a language they are fluent in. That way people won't be confused during debates and decisions-making, and it could also make the discussions more interesting. If you need any translating, don't expect us to do all the work for you, you can also try and organise it yourself.

How we've thought about translating

We suggest that at the beginning of each workshop or discussion, people announce in which language it's going to take place, and who needs a translation. The speaker will then be translated into english, and at the same time, there

will be several translations into the other languages needed. But in case there's very few or even no english-speakers, we can switch to another main language. It will be more convenient for all reports to be in english too, which will also make further translations easier... The different events will be posted on a wall. If you've planned a workshop or a debate or if you want to attend one, you can write which translations you might need on that poster. We suggest that there should be a person in each location coordinating the translations, and that translators meet at the beginning of the gathering and then, on a regular basis, according to their needs and to where they can be useful, share the work between them. We're also going to need written translations during the gathering (signs, reports, various texts and articles...). If you are able to do this and feel like participating, you're welcome, just get in touch with the translating team during one



FACILITATING - ANIMATING WORKSHOPS AND MEETINGS

WHY?

EVEN THOUGH THIS POINT IS UNDER DISCUSSION WITHIN THE COLLECTIVE, IT SEEMS TO US THAT SOME OF THE WORKSHOPS AND DEBATES SHOULD BE "FACILITATED" OR "LEAD" BY ONE OR SEVERAL PEOPLE SO AS TO BE MORE PLEASANT AND EFFICIENT. THAT WAY DEBATES CAN GO FORWARDS, EVERYBODY CAN EXPRESS THEMSELVES, INSTEAD OF HAVING A FEW PEOPLE MONOPOLIZING THE DISCUSSION, ETC. EACH PERSON OR GROUP SUGGESTING A WORKSHOP CAN DECIDE ON HOW IT'S GOING TO TAKE PLACE, AND HOW IT'S GOING TO BE FACILITATED. IT SEEMS IMPORTANT TO US TO PREPARE AND ARRANGE FACILITATION FOR THE LARGER MEETINGS. WE SUGGEST THAT AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE GET INVOLVED IN THAT ACTIVITY, AND SHARE THE WORK BETWEEN THEM.

WE'LL ALSO BE ORGANISING WORKSHOPS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE DECENTRALISED AND CENTRALISED PARTS OF THE GATHERING WHERE WE CAN SHARE OUR IDEAS AND EXPERIENCES REGARDING THAT FACILITATION. COME IF YOU'RE INTERESTED...

HOW DOES IT WORK?

JUST LIKE TRANSLATION, THIS ACTIVITY WILL BE SHARED BETWEEN A LOT OF PEOPLE, SO THAT WORKSHOPS AND DEBATES CAN RUN AS SMOOTHLY AS POSSIBLE. WE SUGGEST A COORDINATION BETWEEN THE TRANSLATION TEAM AND THE FACILITATORS' TEAM. PEOPLE PLANNING DEBATES AND WORKSHOPS AND WHO MIGHT NEED A FACILITATOR CAN WRITE IT DOWN (ON THE POSTER ANNOUNCING THE EVENTS). PEOPLE WHO WANT TO FACILITATE DISCUSSIONS AND WORKSHOPS WILL ALSO BE ABLE TO MEET ON A REGULAR BASIS SO AS TO SHARE THE WORK AND TALK ABOUT IT. YOU'LL FIND FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT "FACILITATING" (IDEAS AND EXPERIENCES) AT THE INFOSHOPS OR ON THE TABLES DURING THE GATHERINGS.

HERE'S A FEW PRACTICAL ADVICE ABOUT FACILITATING MEETINGS AND THE SIGNS AND GESTURES WHICH ARE USUALLY USED DURING PGA GATHERINGS (HOWEVER THEY CAN EVOLVE, BE CHANGED...)

Take note...

As well as workshops, presentations, informal debates and various other points of exchange, the PGA gathering will also be the occasion for discussions and taking decisions about the PGA network and its processes, structures, objectives and ideals.

It is important that notes are taken in these discussions, to facilitate the job of synthesising and elaborating new proposals. Because of this, here are a few « editorial conventions » to follow, as far as possible:

-It is preferable to make a synthesis than to record a line

by line transcription of all contributions -use the following notation for exact points:

* C for Consensus D for Debates I for Information P for a Person co-ordinating or required

Apart from this special case, we encourage all discussion groups to organise note taking. Whatever seems suitable – detailed minutes, syntheses, line by line transcriptions, subjective impressions of discussions... send your evidence of what's been going on to stamp-reports@pgaconference.org, or if you can then publicise them directly on the wiki (<http://stamp.poirvon.org/>), the collaborative work site of STAMP, the prepararion group.

Money

* We haven't asked for any outside funds for the conference. We knew we weren't very talented at finding money, and indeed we haven't found much. We've collected a few donations from individuals, organised a few fundraising parties, used what little money was left from the last conference in Belgrade. The money we've collected was used in priority to help the people who don't have enough money make the trip to the conference, to pay visas and communication expenses.

One of the aims we had with this conference was to strengthen the ties that were made with collectives from eastern europe, especially during the last conference in Belgrade, as well as to financially help people coming from these countries (and getting visas for them).

Most of the logistic expenses (equipment, tools and collective ressources, photocopies of such documents as the "reader" and the "practical guide", electricity, water, gaz, telephone, mail...) and food expenses will have to be payed back by individual donations.

We need not say that we've tried to borrow as much equipment as possible, or to get it for free, or to build things ourselves, but we still need quite a lot of stuff. Therefor, we think that everybody should put in a little bit of money so as to not end up totally broke. However, we are aware that some people have less money than others, so if the suggested donation amount is sort of respected, some will be able to give less money than others.

Working with donations allows everybody to donate the amount they want, according to their abilities, and that way we don't exclude anyone.

So for the centralised meeting, the suggested price is 1 or 2 euros per day, and 4 euros for each day's meals.

If at the end of the conference, we notice that there's money left, it will be used to help people come from Eastern Europe for future PGA conferences.

Because we care about about transparency, we'll post our expenses during the conference, and warn the participants if we notice that we have too much money, or not enough, and we will establish a post-conference statement.

Food

Here's a piece of information regarding the meals. The suggested price is based more or less on dividing the food expenses by the number of participants. If you're not going to attend all the meals, it's possible to just put money in the donation tin. For the Dijon gathering, we're going to try and get as much food as possible from our organic farming friends (big up to the Auxonne crew), as well as to make bread with the baker and decorate it in a subversive way. Collective meals will be vegan, so as to respect the ethical choices of many of the participants, and so that everybody can eat the same thing.

A coordinating team has thought up menus, deals with the quantities needed for each meal, as well as with stocks and supplies. Another team will be necessary for each meal, with volunteers to cook. It'll be a "rotating" team. It's possible to join the coordinating team, which isn't necessarily already full up. A book with menus and quantities has been put out. We estimated that we'll need about 4 hours to prepare the meals, so we'll have to start

cooking lunch at 9 a.m. if we want to eat at 1 p.m., and start cooking dinner at about 4 p.m. For breakfast, which will take place at about 9 a.m., it would be cool if people started preparing it at 8 a.m. (tea, coffee, for 100 to about 500 people.)

Bar

The bar will be opened every night, from 8pm to approximatively 1am. It will serve beer, but also juices, as well as zapatista & insurgent coffee.

During the previous European PGA conference in Belgrade, it was decided not to sell alcohol during the event. This time, we have chosen to run a bar, since some participants willing to consume alcohol anyway wouldn't have any choice but to enrich supermarkets and drink multinationals otherwise, while we have the possibility to buy quality beer to a local brewer. Money from the bar will first contribute to refund conference expenses, and will be given to political projects in case of any surplus.

However, we remain pretty worried about the fact that alcohol consumption often stresses or leads to quite some annoyance, such as macho & oppressive behaviours. Needless to say we expect everyone to be watchful and to act in a responsible manner, as to make these encounters a pleasurable & exciting time for all participants!

Waste Management

*Please bring all rubbish to the rubbish point just outside the main gate.

*Sort it as follows: Bin with green cover: glass recycling. Bin with yellow cover: cardboard, paper, tins and plastic bottles only (no other plastic). Bin with grey cover: all other waste

*Compost: There is a compost heap in the garden, and it will be collected regularly from the kitchen and brought there. If you have a spare 5 minutes, then why not pass by the kitchen and bring the compost wheelbarrow into the compost heap? camping and lodging don't walk through garden. noise valuables mess

*Two people each day are needed to empty bins and check that the system at the garbage point is working well. If you feel like doing this job then sign up at the info point.

Where can I find ?

The nearest bus-stop: Turn left when you go out the gate after Les Tanneries. Then turn left onto Rue Ernest Champeaux and then there are two bus stops, either on the first street on the right or the first street on the left.

Phonebox: Turn left when you go out the gate after Les Tanneries. Then turn left onto Rue Ernest Champeaux and then take the first street on the left. A supermarket: Turn left onto Rue Ernest Champeaux, then take the second left (Rue d'Auxonne). Walk 5 minutes until Super U on your right.

A post office: First street on the right after the supermarket (Boulevard Mansard)
A tobacconist: Turn right along Boulevard de Chicago
A Laundrette: Rue d'Auxonne, near Casino
Acashpoint: Near supermarket

A pharmacy: Near supermarket
A photocopier: There is none here. Look for Thomas or Saman, who will be at the Zanzara Athée table in the infokiosk, and will be going regularly to the copy shop.
Or go yourself: Imprime Service, 90 Rue de La Mirande

Bus timetables: www.divia.fr
Train timetables: www.sncf.com

Finding your way around Les Tanneries

There are maps and signs around the area, and in this guide which show meeting spaces, toilets, camping and so on. Big plenary meetings will be on the dancefloor.

The parts of the building which are the living space of the people who live here will normally be locked during the gathering. If for any reason they are not, then don't enter, or any other space which is obviously not part of the gathering.

The door between the wasteground and the H17 will be locked at night for security reasons. If you need to get to the wasteground or vehicle parking area, then walk around the front of the building.

If you can't find something, ask at the info point.

Access

We have tried to make the gathering as accessible as possible, based on the needs people told us about when registering in advance.

*All spaces are wheelchair accessible, except for the dancefloor. No wheelchair users have informed us that they are coming, but if the need arises then a ramp can be built here too.

*We will try to amplify big meetings through loudspeakers to make them easier to hear. If you are having problems understanding in any meeting then make a hand signal:

move both hands upwards, palms facing up, if you want people to speak louder,

for people to slow down, make downward motions with your hands, palms facing down

If you need translation, make an L shape with your thumb and forefinger.

*Hearing speakers of the various sign languages should make themselves known to the facilitation and translation group, in case there is a need.

Vehicles

*there is some vehicle parking outside the main gate.

*trucks, vans, wagons, can park inside the hangar at the back of the wasteland. You need to ask the people at the info point to unlock

the gate for you.

*there is a bike parking area inside the H17.

*there are a few bicycles that can be borrowed. Ask at the info point. Some of them could use a little attention - so if in a spare moment you feel like tuning them up a bit then that would be great.

Sleeping Arrangements

Camping

*The main accommodation is camping. The campsite for the decentralised gathering is in several grassy areas across the road from Les Tanneries. To get there, follow signs (routes aren't marked on most maps and in practical guide), please follow these routes and avoid going through the garden to get to camping areas. Also there is some camping space in the grassy corner of the wasteland.

*Part of the camping area is for women-lesbian-trans only camping; no-one else should camp there and should have no reason to pass through there.

*Be careful about what you leave in your tent. If you have valuables that you want to leave in a locked room, then people at the info point can arrange this.

*Any spare tents and blankets will be placed in the free-shop, so if you need anything then you can try looking there, but these should be brought back when you are finished with them.

*Please be quiet at night, to avoid disturbing the neighbours and other people sleeping.

*Please try to keep the campsite clean - pick up your (and other people's) litter

*The campsite has been squatted for this event, so it may be that police or other officials will come at some point to have a look. You don't need to talk to them, but if you see them, tell the people on the infopoint who will find someone to deal with it.

Other possibilities for sleeping

*If you haven't brought a tent then you can sleep in the far end of the dancefloor, but you should wake up before the morning meetings start! There are some mattresses in the H17 you can use, and if you're lucky some pallets to put underneath them.

*Some people have offered the use of their flat for sleeping for people who, for whatever reason, cannot camp or sleep on cold hard dirty floors. If you need this then ask at the info point.

FIRE RISKS

Take care for fire.

*There should be no open fires in the camping area.

*In the camping area there are fire points with buckets of water, sand and beaters to put out small fires

In the building there are fire extinguishers at the info point, in the kitchen, in the concert room and at other locations marked on the map.

*In the case of a major fire, the assembly point is outside the main gate.



★ Legal Support & Da Action Issue

Firstly, let's keep in mind that the PGA conference isn't a direct action camp, nor a counter-summit! This conference isn't the right setting for "offensive actions". The idea, here, is not to mix everything up, and create spaces where we can meet, live and work in a rather quiet atmosphere. We'd like you to take this into account, so that you can think about anything you want to initiate and how appropriate it would be!

However, the police are never very far away and like to keep a close eye on us! We can't say we won't have any trouble with the authorities, be it as individuals or as a group, going to the conference or while it's taking place, inside the locations or outside.

In any case:

* If for any specific reason during decentralised events, actions are proposed or made necessary, we're asking you to take into account the local setting: the places hosting the meetings are militant as well as living spaces for a large number of persons. They've often struggled during years to get these spaces and set them up. They usually have to deal with complicated and tense relationships on which their fragile existence depends. So don't think that you know better what is best for them or not and keep in mind that any strategies of action can only be appropriate if we think about the context in which we might put them into practice.

If you want to get involved in the legal team, during the meeting as well as afterwards, let us know at the info-point when you arrive. Or by writing to stamp@pgaconference.org.

* In case there's any repression, we want to show solidarity towards the people involved, be it immediately or in the long-term. Whatever people might have done, our "common enemy" is State justice. Let's not judge instead of the judges!

* In the same way, as we strongly criticize jails, punishment, the police, the state, justice and so on, we'll try to solve any problems that might arise internally, and use the police/state/justice system only as a very last resort and hopefully not at all.

LEGAL RESSOURCES DURING THE CONFERENCE

Given the "non-offensive" setting of the conference, we believe that there's little chance that we will be faced with any repression. However, a legal information group will be constituted, (possibly) as well as groups of people who know about that stuff at each location. For further information or if you want to get involved, just ask at the info-point on your arrival or write to stamp@pgaconference.org.

You can also read the "first advice", available printed out at the different locations and that can also be found on the wiki: <http://stamp.poivron.org>

SECURITY AND OTHER DUTY WORKS

Everybody should feel responsible for the security of the conference. We don't want any specific organized militia for emergency situation, but aware people and emergency call systems if needed.

If difficult problems arise with visitors, people from the neighbourhood or if cops passing by try to get informations or to check people, you should try to tell people from the infopoint or people from les tanneries about it (if you need to call : tel 03 80 66 64 81). People with a good knowledge of the local context will often know better what to say and how to deal with such situations.

There will always be people at the infopoint who can contact others as well as people from les tanneries in case such situations happens. The people doing the infopoint night shifts will also have a look around the camping site and conference sites from time to time.

If agressions are committed on participants to the conference, we should organize collectively to control the immediate aggression, preferably without causing general panic through the whole gathering, but also be ready to deal with it in the long term if needed (see "Suggested steps to take in case of physical and/ or psychological violence")



Taking decisions in crisis situations

There might be improbable (but somehow unpredictable) cases of big emergency situations/ complicated general problems or big political decisions that could not be easily handle by existing working groups coordination team within the frame of consensus made during the preparation process.

Such a problem could range from state repression on the conference to big tensions that arise inside, or a common public statement that would have to be made on whatever problematic situation, or if some important consensus made on the organization turns out to be practically unworkable...

It could be dealt with by first having a small plenary so that everybody has the same information and then by having a spokes-council type plenary meeting to deal with it, try to find a common agreement and a group of people that want to work on the situation.

MAP

LES TANNERIES

centre-ville
city center
CAMPING

WET WC
WC = MOUILLÉ

SHIT
CENTRA-
LISATION
SPACE

PARKING
BUS
VAN
CAMIONS
CAMIONES
WAGEN

DRY
WC

CUISINE
KITCHEN
COCINA
KÜCHE

CHILD
ENFANTS
KINDER
NIÑOS

INFO-
SHOP

FREESHOP

CLEANING
STUFF

(i)

DOUCHES
SHOWERS

i

DANCE
FLOOR

BAR

WC
MEDICAL
SPACE

(i)

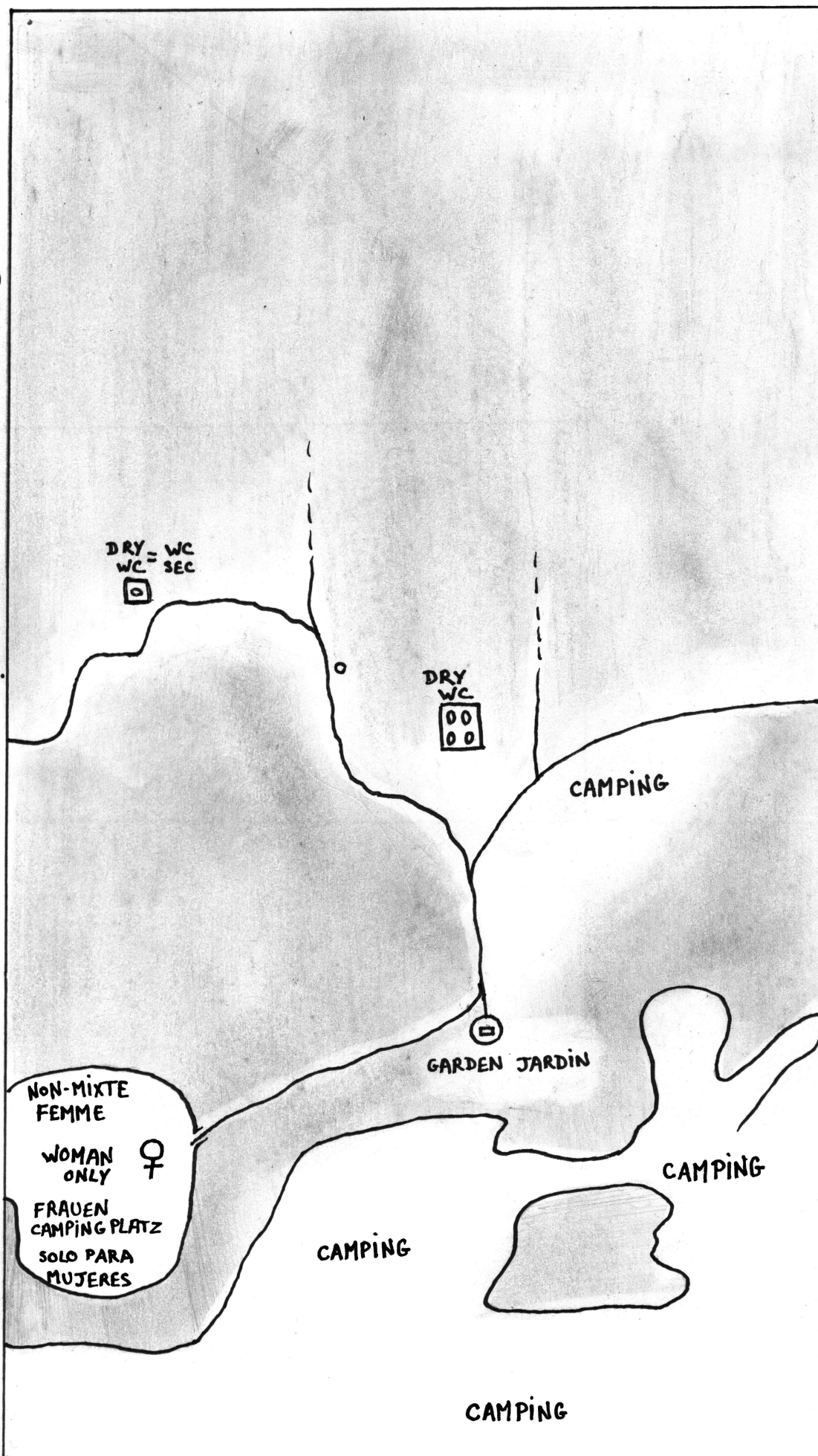
POUBELLES
GARBAGES
ABFALL
BASURA

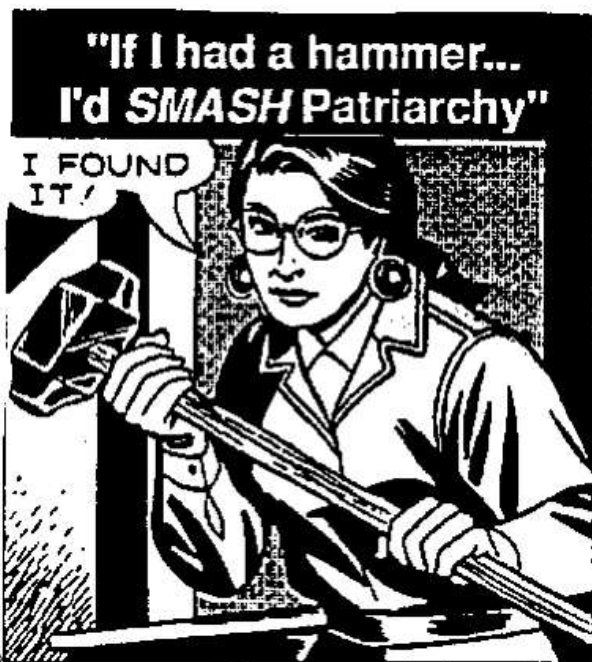
PARKING

CINÉMA

i = INFO POINT,
(i) = INTERNET OPEN ACCESS, LIBRE ACCÈS INTERNET

BOULEVARD
DE
CHICAGO





**"If I had a hammer...
I'd SMASH Patriarchy"**

**I FOUND
IT!**

KID'S SPACE

Children are welcome to come and participate in this conference, and especially in Frayssinouss. There is a special place for children and a daily programme can be decided with the kids or by the kids. The children coming for the conference and those that live in the places hosting it will also be able to join together.

Workshops for kids will be run by volunteers who will be participating in the rest of the conference. Therefore they will need you to join them as volunteer for a workshop, to translate, or to introduce an issue, a debate or a workshop of the conference, or even to facilitate the participation of kids in meetings if they want to, whether you are a parent or not.

Please let us know as soon as possible how many kids are coming and how old they are. Whatever you come to the conference for, if you have any activities for children you wish to offer, please get in touch. Relationship with childrens and possible discriminations are also one specific issue of this conference. Please take care!

women-only spaces

Women only SpAces

Since the need for women-only spaces is often misunderstood, we'd like to explain why we felt it was necessary to have one or several women-only spaces during the conference, and what exactly they imply. And we'd really like to avoid tensions regarding that point throughout the conference.

The activist scene, just like many other scenes, is mostly male-dominated. That is to say that the "norm" is to be a white, isolated, heterosexual male, accepted everywhere without discussion. Anything that challenges that norm, especially anything regarding the interests of women or differently-gendered people (transgendered, transexual, intersexed individuals), often causes intense debates, or is made invisible (rejected as a major political topic).

* There's a dissymetry between the space awarded to dominating norms and elements, and the norms, rejection of norms and elements who find themselves dominated and oppressed. This dissymetry reflects the blatant inequality in

regards to the power we have on our own lives. Women and "wrongly-gendered" people must submit or disappear. Sometimes we feel the need to live, struggle, and socialize in the first place with people who are oppressed by patriarchal norms. No one can do it instead of us. Therefore, we need to be able to meet in an environment where we don't always have to prove and discuss the kind of oppression we endure, with the unpleasant feeling of always having to gain consideration, respect, and attention regarding the same old things. Because we've experienced such things, and for all the oppressed and stigmatized groups, we've decided that we needed to be able to meet between women.

Women-only spaces are a tool, with many uses. Its' shape and limits can only be determined by people who've discovered they've lived through the same things. That is the reason why there isn't just one kind of feminist women-only space. In france, for instance, women coming from cultures that were colonized, or from inferiorized groups, have decided to create their own spaces, when mainstream feminists neglected such points as racism, classism, homophobia and transphobia. Women-only spaces are not seen by the people involved as a way of excluding anyone. First because we believe that the oppressed can't oppress their oppressors, as mentioned above. Also because this is an act which is focussed on us. Furthermore, people who define as men but who oppose patriarchal norms have also created men-only structures.

Within the conference, we wish to have women-only spaces inclusive of all identities and experiences that go beyond patriarchal norms, be it in practice or by definition. We know from experience that sometimes it's better to meet in very large groups, and at some other times to meet in all kinds of smaller "-only" groups, according to the relationships of power that might arise between us.

solving conflicts and safe space

If people get fed up with the lively atmosphere during the meetings or have any problems to solve, there's going to be a quiet area where anyone can come and rest (because there's too many people, too much noise, because you're about to freak out, or feel bad). We thought up this area so that people can be there by their own, or with a few other people, so as to get some rest.

We're gonna try making this area nice and cosy, so that everyone can feel comfortable, however we don't want it to be a tea-room (we'd like to avoid having large groups of people walking in and out, socializing, hanging out)

We're also gonna try setting up some kind of service so that there's people in that area who can listen and solve conflicts, in case these problems can't be solved by the people involved, or within a group of friends. So if someone feels the need to talk about a situation that s-he can't handle, you can come and talk about it.

SOLVING CONFLICT SAFE SPACE

We haven't formed a problem-solving team yet. Just like the rest of the logistical structures, this team is opened to anyone who wants to get involved. People interested are strongly encouraged to share their experiences and set up a coordination so as to carry through this project.

Suggested steps to take in case of physical and/ or psychological violence

The PGA Europe Conference in Belgrade found a consensus on the following steps to be taken in case of physical and/ or psychological violence during movement meetings. This is not seen as a rigid guideline but as an inspiration about possibilities to act in such painfull situations.

It is based on the premise that the affected person always defines what counts as sexual harassment or rape - and will not be questioned. This does not imply that the accusation is taken for granted as a fact. The confidentiality of the affected person should be respected. The consequences should be build on according to the following principles.

1) When a person talks about/reports an assault committed against her or him, or when others confirm that something has happened, the work of putting together groups should start as quickly as possible. A group can consist of two or more persons. While this process is under way, the alleged perpetrator is not welcome to the movement's activities and spaces, or, alternatively, the gathering at which the event occurred.

2) Set up a group who talk to the affected person. The group should contain more than three people and consist of people the affected person trusts and is close to, as well as of people being prepared to deal with this kind of conflicts. The suggestion is to set up local groups and groups in advance of an event who are willing to deal with these issues. In every event there should be a visible contact point for this.

3) Set up a group of people who talk to the alleged perpetrator, according to the same principles.

4) Hold a general meeting if appropriate, unless the affected person objects.

5) The affected person (s) support group and the alleged perpetrator(s) contact group (and the affected person, if (s)he wants to be involved) develop a working plan: Should the alleged perpetrator be excluded from the movement/

gathering; will the alleged perpetrator be allowed to work in contexts outside of the groups where the affected person is involved but inside the movement/ gathering; should the alleged perpetrator be allowed to rejoin if (s)he works with the problem? The point is to create a basis for the alleged perpetrator to understand what has happened, and the goal is that (s)he should not do it again. During the process, the support group stays in contact with the affected person and tells her or him about what is happening, and follows up on how (s)he is feeling. The goal is to help the affected person to put into words what has happened, and strengthen her or his self-confidence.

6) The support group and the contact group (and the affected person, if (s)he wants to be involved) decide whether the alleged perpetrator is welcome back into the group, or whether the contact with him or her has not produced any results.

7) Finally:

First, one principle of this process should be the recognition that immediate an selling may be a very important route to take.

Third, the effect of the violence is not over after the event. The contact group should try to stay in touch with the affected person to provide support, and should also stay in contact with the alleged perpetrator.

These steps have first been developed within the Anti-Fascist Action in Stockholm/ Sweden, then further discussed during a European wide gender seminar at the Escanda collective in Spain, and finally consensed upon during the 3rd European pga conference in Belgrad, Ex-Yugoslavia, 23.-29. July 2004.

open access Internet

Lots of spaces are available! - the "digital truck", situated at the far end of the central corridor, between the plenary space and the collective kitchen, contains five computers and a WiFi access point. It therefore lets you read your emails between two sessions of peeling potatoes, to hide away with a small group in order to work, or to run an informaticised workshop.

The "chill-out" space between the bar and the cinema contains eight computers, a wired or wireless network to connect laptops, and sofas for typing or discussion. Above all, it's been planned as a place for hanging out and being sociable, with literature to read, drinks and film projections nearby.

Laptops & WiFi

For laptops, you can find ethernet cables and power sockets in the "chill out" space. The network is also available by WiFi, also in the plenary room and the main corridor. Access to the network via Wifi is "protected" by a WEP cryptographic key, which you can find out in the access points or at the info point.

"Security"

As the network is also transmitted over radio waves, it cannot be totally secured. An elementary precaution: if you read your email over a web navigator, make sure that you don't connect via http, but instead via https - this means that the connection between you and the server is encrypted. Otherwise it is very easy to gain access to your password and the contents of your mailbox.

If the server which stores your mailbox doesn't let you connect

with https, it is maybe time to change it, and to move to an alternative provider. The gathering in Dijon is the perfect time to meet the administrators of several alternative servers, and to reflect together on the development

relatively safe policy. But times are changing even more rapidly: with data retention, which translates mobility and administrator

Europe, countries are adjusting to enforce police access to internet privacy. Server seizures, as they legal or not, have increased. As users, we face the authorities; but as administrators, we have to denounce - to become political. Because our tech activism is not just about providing ourselves, as

LOCAL NETWORK AND SERVICES_

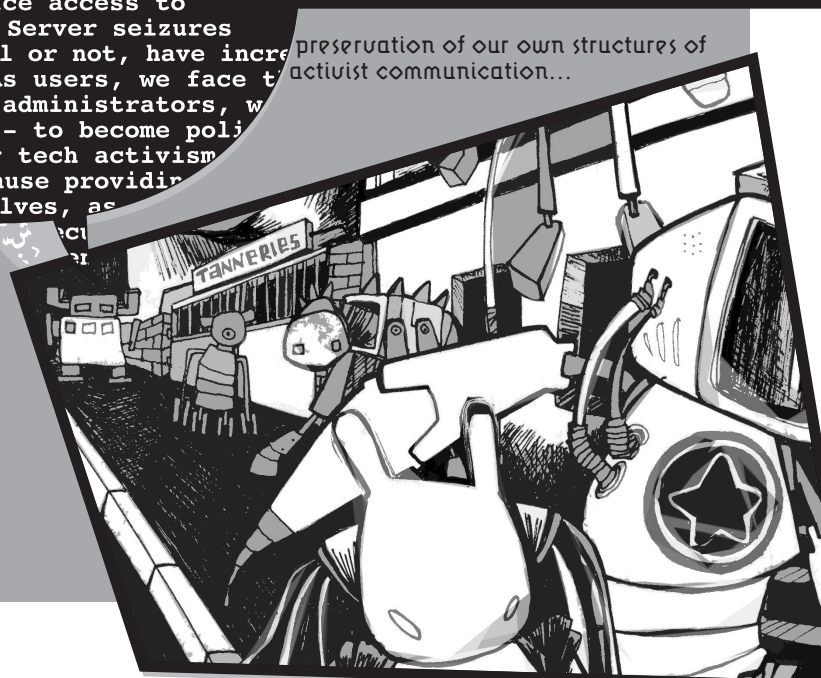
A local network - pga.taz - has been put in place for the meetings, and has various spaces to store and share files_

- <http://video.pga.taz/> for video files: independant movies, activist documentaries etc. -
<http://audio.pga.taz/> for audio files: free and DIY music, sound recordings, etc_

- <http://photo.pga.taz/> for photos taken during the conference (attention - read the notice about photos_

If you wish to save a copy of a film that has been projected, something you heard, or any saved document that you want to discover at leisure when you get home, a machine capable of burning disks can be found in the cinema space. You'll find CD's and DVD's there to burn and take away_

preservation of our own structures of activist communication...



Cinema

Video-screenings will take place every night, from 10pm onwards, in the cinema space. A few nights will be dedicated to topical scheduling ("squats & self-managed spaces" and "student struggles & social movements" for instance), but most timeslots will be available for screening various videos.

Of course, you are encouraged to contribute to the video database, by adding your documentaries, subversive movies, demonstration footage and action clips to the video server: <http://video.pga.taz/>

Mediactivist collectives are invited to drop material on press tables located in the cinema; a multimedia machine can also be found there, allowing on-the-fly burning of documents one would like to bring back home.

The radio project

The radio project during the centralised part of the conference aims to do two different things: On one hand, to allow feedback about the decentralised gatherings by broadcasting recordings from the five different locations and by letting people who've partaken in the various discussions express themselves. On the second hand, to make it easier to spread information regarding the organisation of the centralised gathering (calls for meetings and debates, presentation of what's planned each day, short reports from the meetings for those who couldn't attend...)

The radio is pretty easy to install, from a technical point of view. It'll be in a small studio in the "print" basement: there will be a mixing table, a few mics around a table, a sound-editing station so as to rapidly edit recordings from the decentralised and centralised gatherings, and a computer that will be used as a playlist to broadcast sound-cuts.

All the transmissions will be downloadable from the Internet and will serve as useful post-conference documents, that can be broadcasted on different radios or used to report upon the conference once you get back home.

We invite you to join the radio team, which will meet daily, and you can also suggest contents and programmes.

Film project about the conference

From the very beginning of the organisation process, a team has decided to make a movie about the conference. With this project, what we want to do is:

- * document our political activities ourselves
- * take possession of techniques and thoughts regarding medias and video together
- * avoid the usual, blocked relationships we have with the mass-media
- * help broadcast and spread our political thoughts and activities
- * have great fun sometimes putting on silly costumes if we feel like it

Therefore, there will be a movie-team on each location and during the centralised gathering, shooting footage, recording sounds, and who might suggest situations for discussions to you. We'd like to put out a dvd about this conference, full of interesting stuff.

This movie really is a collective project. The idea was brought up, discussed and accepted by all of the people involved in organising the conference. This gives filming a more "comfortable" status, in a political setting where cameras aren't always welcome and where it's sometimes hard to film anything. Little by little, we've tried to establish a relationship based on confidence between the people being filmed and the people filming. If you don't want to be filmed, you can tell the people filming.

And if you want to, you can get in touch with the movie-teams, if you want to get involved in the project.

Photos and films during the conference

If you want to take your very own pictures (video or photographs) during the conference, just remember that some people don't like to be filmed for lots of good political/personal reasons. So always ask everyone around you before taking any pictures.



IN/VISIBILITY THROUGH MAINSTREAM MEDIAS

We haven't taken any initiatives to publicize the global conference in mainstream media. We want to outreach and inform people about the conference and its content, but better through independant activist medias or our own communication tools.

If journalists come anyway, coordinators from the infopoint will find a way to explain them that they're not welcome inside the conference.

However, depending on needs, and more specifically in Toulouse where an occupation/action takes place, local groups may decide to have some communication with the mainstream media.

Mainstream media communication could also be engaged in the case of state repression during either the centralised or decentralised gatherings.

Entering into any communication with medias, nobody should speak in the name of the PGA network, but use their name or that of their collective.

The PGA caravan

Above all, the aim is to create dynamics between the decentralised gatherings and the centralised one. So the two days between the different parts of the conference won't just be two useless empty days. They will be an opportunity to bring together people to head to Dijon, to transport equipment and to organise ride-shares. They will also be the occasion to discover the joys of collective and colorful nomadism on the roads under the sun.

A caravan will leave on the 28th of August from Toulouse and get to Frayssinous by late morning. The meeting point will be in Saint-Affrique, the closest town. From there, the caravan will head to Alès, while at the same time handing out flyers, broadcasting music, and organising debates in each city/town it will pass through. It will then take the Bouches-du-Rhône "nationale" (main road). It will stop for the night just before Lyon, and will get to La Fliche on the 29th of August at noon so as to gather more people. It should get to Dijon on the evening of the 29th.

We'll try to find time to coordinate the caravan at each location during the decentralised meetings.

CENTRALISED GATHERING - CONTENT

In preparation for the centralised gathering, strategic debates, decisions regarding the network's structure

This PGA conference will be the opportunity not only to share our informations, tactics and struggles, but also to strengthen the network. Some of the big issue we wanted to raise as such during this conference were **STRATEGIES OF STRUGGLE** and how to **MAINTAIN THE PGA NETWORK**. These debates will be started during decentralised gatherings and be a big part of the centralised gathering.

general structure during
the centralised gathering

9H : WAKE-UP CALL

9H-10H : BREAKFAST

10H-10H30 : "BURN THE DANCE
FLOOR 5 MINUTES" +
ANNOUNCEMENTS

10H30-13H : PLENERY
MEETINGS / 2 DAYS
ON FEEDBACKS AND
PROJECTS / 2 DAYS
ON PGA
STRUCTURES.

13H-15H : LUNCH TIME

15H00-18H00 : STRATEGICAL
DEBATES

18H30-20H : WORKSHOPS -
PRESENTATION -
DISCUSSIONS

20H-21H : DINNER TIME

22H : MOVIES, EVENTS,
GAMES, NIGHT STORY
TELLING AND ROMANTIC
ADVENTURES

21H - 22H : LOGISTIC GROUPS
MEETINGS

22H - 23H : COORDINATION
MEETING

There will be a schedule with suggestions in the newspaper that will be put out before the caravan heading to Dijon leaves. It will be based on the suggestions made in the different locations during the decentralised meetings.

Into details

Feedback of the decentralised gatherings and new projects

During the centralised gathering, the first two mornings will be spent concentrating on feedback and presentations:

- feedback about the discussions that took place during the decentralised meetings

- presentation of projects that arose during the meetings and possibilities for how to take them forward. There will also be announcements of times to set up debates or work-groups for these future projects for interested people.

For this, we need people who've worked together on a topic during the decentralised gathering to meet at the end of the week, to make a synthesis and see what they want to present and how they want to do it.

Referents from each location should meet on the 29th (evening before the beginning of the centralised gathering) in the evening with the facilitation group so as to organise this feedback time.

We thought that it would be better to split into two different groups during these moments so that there's fewer of us and that we can take a bit more time and talk in a deeper way about what to feedback.

These meetings are for exchanging informations, they don't need a decision making process.

Pga process : debates and decisions about the network

The last two mornings will be dedicated to making decisions about the PGA structures and projects.

The PGA gatherings and structures don't exist "all by themselves". Many people got involved in organising them, and in maintaining the network's structure (web site, newsletter, infopoint, winter meetings, convenors, support group...), to ensure that it keeps existing.

We'd like to start discussions that would allow everybody to feel that they are part of these structures, and make something come out of them. We'll return to the last decisions that were made regarding this point during the last conferences, to see what has worked and what hasn't, what could be changed, and what can just be forgotten altogether...

These discussions will probably be a lot more "technical", but to us they are highly political. If we believe that these structures are of any use to our struggles and our existences, then it is important that we take care of them. By being passionate about them, we are also making political statements regarding ways of organising and lifestyles that we find worthy of acceptance or not. Generally, we want to reflect upon the relevancy of the network (on a european scale), understand how useful it has been in the past, and think about how it could evolve or disappear...

Without making great statements of principles, we can say for sure that the debates will depend on deeper reflections developed by smaller groups during the centralised conference, in the afternoons (as described above).

Ideally, suggestions should be brought from the decentralised gatherings to the beginning of the centralised gathering and it will be possible to base part of these pga process discussions on them.

We thought about dedicating two half-days to the PGA process in each decentralised gathering beforehand. One day would be dedicated to presenting what's at stake, and during the next day debates would take place so as to bring up suggestions for the centralised gathering. People might choose various topics on which they want to concentrate on in the decentralised locations.

The "plaisantation" is a pretty good introduction and summarization document about the PGA and its network.

Another summarization document containing the last decisions that were made relating to the PGA structures will be available during the decentralised meetings, stating explicitly the issues debated, as well as a more precise list of which topics need to be dealt with.

The third morning of the centralised gathering will be dedicated to meeting in smaller groups, taking a deeper look into pga process proposals that have already been made and eventually making new ones. The last morning will be a time for decision-making during a plenary meeting in the shape of a spokes-council composed of affinity groups. How a spokes-concil works is explained in the "facilitating" chapter of the guide.

Again we'll need a group of people to meet with the facilitation group during the centralised gathering so as to prepare these meetings.

Aside from the logistic coordination meetings, this will be the only moment when decisions in big group and potentially concerning every participants will be taken

during the conference. This can be really exciting or really boring (it was pretty interesting in Belgrade anyway). Lets see what will happen!

These are some of the proposed issues to be debated regarding the networks' structures:

- The network's structures: lists, info points, spaces, newspaper, presentation documents, reports from this conference, web-sites, work-groups between the meetings...and how to inject enthusiasm into them or just make them exist.

- Feedback on the way this conference was organized and how it took place, looking for a new group to host the conference (convenor), and reflections about how the next conference might take place

- the global process and the relationships with the other continents.

- the question of possible campaigns and actions that could be made, and supported by the PGA network, bearing in mind that it is open for discussion whether the PGA is a more a seen only as a tool for coordination and meetings, or also as a way of organising actions and campaigns "labelled pga".

- how this kind of network can help coordinating social struggles, as well as actually support local initiatives, and network solidarity and exchanges between spaces and collectives.

- questioning the very existence of the PGA and its' relevancy...

- questioning the aims of this network and what we mean by a radical or revolutionary social change. What does the PGA structure have to with this?

Strategical debates

The four afternoons of the centralised gathering will be dedicated to strategical debates. These debates might have been initiated during the decentralised meetings, and might be relevant accross the board of the different topics that have been reflected upon.

The PGA network was thought up as a tool to coordinate struggles. Wandering through mass actions and meetings, we've often realized that we didn't spend enough time reflecting upon our strategies for action and what motivates us to struggle.

Organising a conference that goes beyond the agenda of counter-summits also allows us to create new spaces to have deeper reflections, and in this way contributes to building relationships based on confidence and friendship, clarifies our aims and tactics, and basically strengthens our struggles by networking them.

We're not here to discuss « global strategies for the worldwide revolutionary movement »,

We want to talk about our own strategies, and about the context in which our struggles take place. We don't have to make any decisions "in the name of pga" during these discussions. Their contents will contribute to transform us, and will be a way of going forwards and clarifying our strategical options. It will also give an opportunity to address issues which are often only reflected upon within specific scenes and struggles. .

We propose to debate about these broader issues in groups of about 15 to 40 people, and try to promote encounters between people from different collectives or who've attented discussions during the decentralised

gatherings. It's possible to reflect upon one specific issue per afternoon if some people want to do so. Groups of people can concentrate on taking a deeper look into one topic each afternoon.

The last afternoon of the centralised gathering could be used for feedbacks about these strategical discussions. Each group should also think about ways of making written reports so that these debates can go on.

Basically, 4 issues will be suggested with 4 different spaces. People who wish to attend the meetings can gather at the meeting point and then split up into different groups if they wish.

Issues :

- Confrontational, Violent/peaceful, centralised/decentralised actions ; militant and dialog based attitudes. Our relationship to other struggles in the context of an international and global strategy. What did we learn in the past years and how to we carry on?

- Strategies of autonomy and the construction of practical alternatives. Modes of organisation and debate. Modes of

relations inside groups. Practical and ethical considerations...

- Our ghettoisation and our positions on the idea of "popular"/"people's struggles". Our dialog or confrontation with institutions, unions and the political left in general.

- the questions of class, gender and racism inside the struggles

Workshops, Presentations, Movies, Party And Adventures

During the second afternoon time, there will also be smaller workshops to work on projects, groups and collectives involved in the network introducing themselves, as well as the campaigns and struggles they might have been engaged in lately...

The evenings will be dedicated to various screenings and performances.

We've tried to inject enthusiasm into all this feedback, process and strategical debates stuffs, and hope that many of you will participate, but you don't necessarily have to attend these meetings, and can always suggest propose other contents in the meantime.

TIPS TO HAVE GOOD MEETINGS: FACILITATION, CONSENSUS

CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING

Consensus is the agreement of all involved parties. We try to reach consensus in gatherings so all individuals can take part in the decisions over their own life in the gathering. The proposed consensus can be 'blocked' by anyone who has strong objections, although this power has to be exercised with utmost care and responsibility. In the following paragraphs we describe the most important methods that help the process.

THE FACILITATOR

Each individual is responsible to ensure that everybody has equal say in the meeting and that the discussion stays relevant. However, especially when many people come together, the need arises for a person who explicitly facilitates the meeting.

The facilitator (also known as moderator) has an active, guiding role. The facilitator guides the discussion while making sure that each person is allowed to say his or her piece, and that members listen to each other and take each other seriously. She ensures a clear structure for agenda points in a logical order and making sure that the meeting sticks to these points. The facilitator ensures that each point is introduced properly, and that as many people as possible take active roles in the decision-making process. She gives the word and periodically updates the participants on the status of the meeting, like which agenda point is under discussion, what are the major proposals and arguments, how much time remains to reach a consensus. If she smells that consensus may be near, she summarises the current proposal and asks the participants if they accept it.

In big and complicated meetings it is good to divide the roles and powers of the facilitator between several people. For example, someone can keep a list of people who are waiting to speak and gives the word, while another person takes care that the meeting constructively follows the agenda, and a third person ensures that the atmosphere stays under control.

THE MINUTE-TAKER

The minute-taker's role in the meeting is equally important as that of the facilitator. The minute-taker listens closely to the arguments and writes them down, as well as the decisions made. Good and complete minutes avoid misunderstanding. It's important that the reader gets a complete picture of the discussion, the arguments exchanged and the decision taken. When a degree of secrecy is required, the minute-taker can use only nicknames, or perhaps completely omit references to individuals.

THE CONSENSUS MEETING METHOD

In consensus meetings, the group chooses the facilitator and minute-taker at the start of the meeting. Then, after a round of proposals, the agenda is decided upon. If an agenda point is not explained well or is unclear, then reaching a good conclusion and decision is already impossible before discussion has even started.

Step 1: when an agenda point doesn't cause much discussion, then consensus can sometimes already be achieved after the first discussion.

Step 2: when there are objections, probably more discussion and/or clarification is necessary. In order to avoid discussing all objections at the same time, a list can be made of the objections. These can then be grouped according to the type of objection.

Step 3: each group of objections is considered one by one. For each objection you try to reach a satisfying solution which shows considerations for the objection. Then you try again to see if there's consensus.

Step 4: if that's not the case, then the point is obviously so sensitive that more discussion is necessary. You then note the remaining objections and ask the objections for more clarification. Then you ask what would remove the objection. You do this for each individual objection.

HAND SIGNALS

In meetings, it can be helpful to use hand gestures to communicate. By using hand signals, people can participate without having to interrupt the conversation, which usually makes the decision-making process easier. Below you can find some of the most important hand signals.



Pointed index finger

This means that you have a question or remark and that you would like to let the facilitator know that you want to speak. If a lot of people stick their



Two hands held in the air

You want to directly react to something the last speaker said. This gives you



Waving both hands ('twinkling')

This is how you say 'I agree' or 'I think that's a good idea'. This is a quiet, easy way of letting everyone know, especially the facilitator, what you think.



Moving your hands up or down. This is how you ask someone to speak louder or slower.



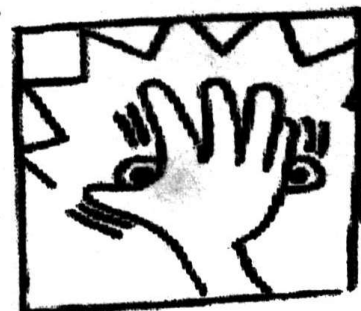
The time-out sign

With this gesture you ask for the opportunity to make a technical remark



The L-sign

Making this sign shows that there are language or translation problems.



Wiggling your fingers in front of your face.

With the gesture you are showing that you don't follow the discussion anymore, and that another explanation is necessary. It can also mean that you are dizzy from too many details.



By doing this you are saying 'This is unacceptable'.

HOW CAN YOU MAKE THE MEETING WORK

Be honest: How often have you sat in the pub and taken the piss out of the political meeting you have just escaped from? Most of us have experienced tedious, frustrating and unproductive meetings. And most of us would never like to experience that again. Here are some of the reasons why meetings stop working:

People are not straight. Say what you are really thinking during a meeting. If for example you believe that what someone said is irrelevant, wrong or just stupid, say so. Then you can discuss about it, and improve the decision. Do not sit silently at the back of the room and complain about it later.

Communication breaks down. The aim of a meeting is communication. Every person present must understand what is being said. Talk slowly, talk plainly – because not everybody is a native English speaker. Make sure there are translations. Make sure that people talk loud enough. Stop and have a break if some people are finding it hard to concentrate. Not everyone is a masochist...

Too much blablabla. Meeting should be as short as possible. Respect the goals of the meeting by making succinct comments that are relevant to the objectives addressed in the agenda. Think about your comments before you make them, whether they assist or divert the direction of the meeting. The fact that you have thoughts about a contribution does not automatically mean that is useful to say it.

Tone and Body Language. Be aware of how your attitude influences others as well as the effectiveness of the meeting. Make thoughtful comments that maintain a positive and constructive vibe.

TRANSLATION

Arrangements for translation should be made right at the beginning of the meeting (or even before), and the facilitator should check periodically if the translation is working properly. Kick bad or tired translators (professional interpreters swap every 20 minutes) and change the translation method if necessary.

- Seating: most often the organisation of the translation involves the reconfiguration of the seating, because translators should sit as close as possible to translatees.

- Simultaneous translation: if the translators are very good then they can listen and translate roughly at the same time, summarising contributions for the people with language difficulties. - Non-simultaneous translation: unless the translator is very good they will need time after each one or two sentences. The facilitator and the participants should take special care to stop regularly, because it is easy to forget this.

- Remember that some people will be participating in languages that are not their mother tongue. Speak simply, loudly and slowly, allow people sufficient space to formulate their contributions, and remember that such things like reducing background noise, regular breaks and having the agenda and proposals written clearly on big boards can make a real difference to concentration and understanding.

SEXISM AND AGEISM DURING MEETINGS

SEXISM

Women and men have mostly been conditioned to communicate in different ways and these differing ways of expressing themselves can create inequalities in meetings (as in all of life), leading to women having less say in the process than men. Although these mechanisms are in work in the general dynamics of a meeting if they are not challenged consciously, it is not uncommon that individual persons do not fit that pattern: therefore, the following guidelines should be read as describing good or bad practices in the discussion rather than statements on the nature of women and men.

There are various ways in which men tend to dominate conversations:

- By using aggressive communication to seize control of the conversation like talking especially loud, quickly and emotionally, or standing up.

- By expressing their opinion about every single thing even if they have nothing substantial to say, or talking too long.

- By simply interrupting women which is a sign that they don't take them seriously.

- By rephrasing the concerns voiced by women as their own proposals.

AGEISM

Children may be excluded from understanding and participating in the horizontal process by being treated differently by the facilitator than adults. For example if a child attempts to speak on a subject which is not currently discussed it is appropriate to stop them, explain why and offer that they introduce the topic later in the meetings as one would an adult.

It is also appropriate to point out to the group if it occurs that condescending behaviour towards an individual is not acceptable in meetings. For example when a child speaks it is inappropriate to laugh and clap at their contribution as if they were a performing animal.

WHAT IS A SPOKESCOUNCIL?

In large meetings, to enable co-operation and share information between lots of different groups we will use a process called a spokescouncil.

At a spokescouncil, each affinity group delegates a 'spoke' to act as a spokesperson to the meeting. The 'spokes' can be rotated or for the duration. Often, the spokes will form a circle with the rest of the affinity group sitting behind them to simultaneously feed back info from the affinity group to the larger meeting. The responsibilities of affinity groups are to delegate a 'spoke', and through this person to articulate clear proposals to the meeting at large. The meeting could additionally be broken up into smaller groups for the more important or specific decisions to be reached inside of the different affinity groups. Sometimes, a quick spokescouncil can be called consisting of the spokes, if it takes place while lots of other things are happening. The spokescouncil method can provide an example of a flexible and inclusive decision-making structure that can function on a larger scale than the simple meeting.

Spokescouncil cannot impose codes of behaviour on the autonomous affinity groups or make decisions on behalf of those who are not present, and groups cannot try and stack out the meetings or impose their positions on those who have different ideas about tactics or aims.

This enhances co-operation between a multitude of groups – otherwise, meetings can degenerate into groups trying to make their positions prevail.

for more information www.consensus.net

as an example, this is the way the spokes council had been organized during the last pga conference in Belgrade

Regarding the discussions and decisions about the PGA network, we decided to find something else than a group of "specialist" meeting during the conference week, with a big decisional plenary at the end, as it happened in Leiden. It was in many ways a quite interesting experience, but also, to many people's opinion, quite frustrating and not accurate to take decisions with 400 people).

Therefore 4 PGA process groups have met everyday during the conference. They divided themselves around four main issues.

1 actions and campaigns

2 relations with other political/activist organisations and structures such as NGOs, trade unions, social forums, political parties.

3 PGA structure

4 Global process These have produced a list of proposals to be decided upon by the whole conference in a plenary session through a spokes council. An extra group during the gender day and has produced a set of proposals relating to physical and/or psychological violence during the PGA events.

Process of the spokes council:

(To be facilitated by a rotating group, two spotters and two minutes takers at any one time).

. between 9 and 10 a.m, people will be asked to form affinity groups preferably between 10-20 people and decide upon a spokes person (which can rotate if they wish). An affinity group is a group of people that share common ideals and affinity.

. if people do not have an existing affinity group or prefer to work with people they do not already know, some attempt will be made to create a space for forming temporary groups for the purpose of the spokes council.

. the spokes -council will then be divided into five parts of forty minutes dealing with each agenda item in turn. Discussion on each item will be suspended after this time so that consensus can be reached on the uncontroversial decisions from each agenda item. Controversial decisions will be given a chance to continue at the end if there is time left. (Remember we do not have to have consensus on everything, sometimes it's not possible).

. within each 40 minute Agenda item, each group will have 20 minutes to discuss the proposal amongst themselves. During this time, members of the working group that produced the proposals will be available for questions and clarifications if groups ask.

. after this, spokesperson from each group will be asked first if their group has any alternative proposals/amendments, secondly if there is anything that they feel they need to block. (any block will require an explanation). Any issue that is not mentioned by any group will become PGA consensus. Thirdly they will be asked if they have any new consensus on the agenda item in question.

. Discussion will then only progress on the Blocks, amendments/alternative proposals and new proposals. The spokesperson will speak for their group that will be standing around them in order to interact with them at any time. This will continue until consensus is reached or the time runs out.

The time restrictions are due to visibility day and the need to clean the conference spaces before leaving. If more time is needed consensus must be reached to continue by the spokes council. (Sorry this is the best we could do under the conditions presented to us).

We ended with a decentralised Collective clean up of the conference by affinity groups
YEAH !!!







or you in the streets ? ? ?

