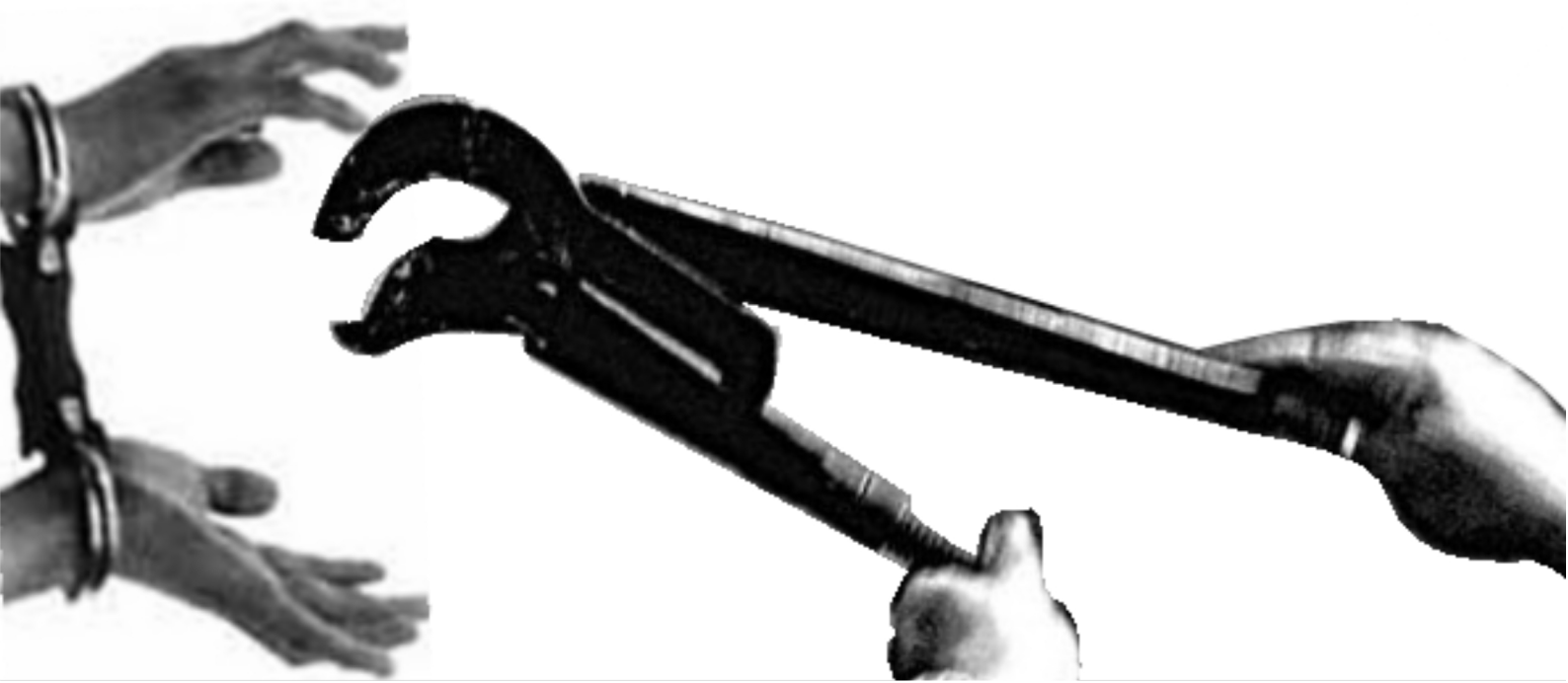


POGG

POLITICAL READER



WE WANT TO SPEAK ABOUT SELF-GOVERNANCE AND AUTONOMY.

présentation of the hoste place:

We are a collective of seven adults and two babies. We have been living in a farm located on Le Plateau de Millevache (700m alt., Limousin, central France) for one year. Some of us grew up in cities, others in the countryside.

The forests that cover the surrounding hills once sheltered one of the first units of the French Resistance during World War II. Fifty years ago, the teacher of a nearby village refused to serve when he was drafted for the War in Algeria. The war memorial in another village is one of the few pacifist memorials in France: after World War I people decided to engrave "Maudite soit la guerre" ("Damned be war") on it. Since then, it's said that people here do not allow themselves to be pushed around. Since the seventies, people have regularly come from cities to settle in this land and try out more autonomous ways of life: shared bulk buying, self-built housing, alternative press, organic farming, cooperative sawmill, diverse sorts of non-monetary exchanges (swap, bartering...), etc.

We are interested in the spirit of these practices for its political content, even if this content is not explicitly stated. The social networks associated with these practices have also been a great help to us in settling in the area.

We draw from it, as we feed it, something to enforce our collective project: we are beginning to obtain autonomy with respect to the capitalist system and the state. For many reasons, the countryside is an appropriate place for this; so we came here. More than food self-production (in the farm there are currently seven goats, four beehives, rabbits and poultry, a big vegetable garden, a bread oven and some of us want to start cow-milk production), we also need to organise on a larger scale for

What it means politically for us to be independent from the State and the market.

Self-governance means to be able to decide the rules and institutions necessary to collective life, whatever it is for a small group, a community, a group of communities, a region... To develop a political self-governance without material autonomy doesn't make sense, it's probably not possible.

Material autonomy means for a person, family, group or community to answer their needs with a minimum compulsion, their ability to choose the compulsions created by the way they satisfy their needs.

To shorten the compulsions leads to reduce dependency toward specific sources of goods (state, market,...) as much as to build a different world with its relationships, tools...

Around this central question come points about the link between thoughts and concrete world,

There are questions about who we want to produce for (our own community, friends, people from the same region, people that we don't know) and what links we want to have with the people with who we are connected to satisfy material needs.

Bellevue

In Bellevue, these questions about autonomy lead to experiment concrete practices, among the group of people living here, and linked with people from the region (mountains, in the centre of France). We experiment different ways of exchanges for the bread, the hay and baby/childrensitting.

everything that is more difficult or less interesting to produce at home such as clothes, means of transport, books... While necessary, this quest for material autonomy is not for us an end in itself. In variable proportion according to individuals in the collective, the objective is (1) to dismantle the capitalist system, (2) to make it possible to build a life free of the constraints imposed by our integration with the capitalist economic system and by conformity to State rules, (3) to create appropriate conditions in order to free ourselves from reasoning and behaviour embodied by years of education. We have thought out our internal organisation in order to limit personal specialisations and to favour sharing of skills and knowledge. The collective's members rotate the daily tasks (milking the goats, washing up, account keeping, yoghurt and bread making, etc.). Decisions are made by consensus during weekly meetings.

Our move to the countryside is not only politically motivated. It is also a result of discontent about town life: primarily concern about pollution and lack of space. Some of us like to say that concrete is an insulator; it cuts those who live in it off from the source of their means of subsistence (energy, food...). They add that town is not appropriate for life. Our countryside is also a place where there is space to live and a community spirit to make a better life. The way we choose to live allows those who want to, to find a rhythm and a pace of life that suites them. They can fully feel spring starting up and the pause announced by the arrival of winter.

Having said this, many questions still arise. Among them: How do we organise the relationships between individuals, pairs and the collective? What education for the kids? How to get the necessary money without the constraints imposed by the outside world? How to exchange without trading with people close to us? How to balance between our will to avoid personal specialisation on one hand and to ensure quality and continuity in things we do on the other hand?

We discovered specific legal status of property in Limousin, legally common lands for a village or group of houses. We witnessed the creation of « Société Civile Immobilière Chemin Faisant » which is a tool for land access.

And the practice led to further questions :

1) Why we want to produce locally things we need ?

Because we don't want to exploit the work of other people who did not choose it (workers from here and mainly from poor countries).

And altogether because we feel better being connected with our environment, to be present and live the whole process of production (from goatbirth to cheese, from the tree to the house, from the seed to the tin).

In our region, we witness the contradictions of capitalist production, being a nature reserve for urban workers to recharge their batteries and survive longer in urban hell. In opposition with the bucolic picture of « good artisanal and local product », very few things are produced here. And even for example the cows are sent to Italy to be fattened.

There is thus a meaning to produce here in order not to import all our goods and to recreate a link between what we eat, the objects we use, the house we live in and the people who grow the vegetables, who shaped our tables or windows.

2) Which dependancy-ies do we choose ?

We are not able (or we don't want ?) to produce locally all the things we use for living. That means we still need money : for petrol, water, phone and electricity, and all sorts of tools we want/need. In that way, we stay connected to the capitalist system, profit and competition.

But we can choose what sort of mean will bring us money, and which consequences it creates.

We can sell our production ; to the tourists (only during a short time in the summer), or to people elsewhere in cities, ready to pay much for organic products. The problem with this comes from the type of relationship with the consumers, the fact that our products get transformed as « normal merchandises on the capitalist market ».

We can depend from the « taxpayers citizens » thanks to social helps (RMI, family allowances,...). This solution offers to us much time to do non-profitable activities. But the main problem comes from the look of other people, their criticism, and the fact that some will even not accept to speak with us.

We can choose to work elsewhere, get a paid job out from our universe. But then, the shift between those universes can be very difficult to manage.

We can finally choose to sell our productions to people close from us, geographically. This is a good solution on an ethical level : we find a place locally while producing for the local people. It fits with our « local autonomy » philosophy. The negative side is that it will never bring us enough money, because local people are not rich. And also that we then create a « producer-consumer » relationship with our neighbours, the same with which we would better like to create a common universe.

That leads to develop more precisely the type of relationship we would like to create and share.

3) What sort of exchange for which products ?

We would like to wonder about the type of relationship created by different types of exchange :

the trade exchange, which mean product against money

the trade exchange which means product against product, the value of the products estimated following their price on the market

the exchange based on another scale of values,

discussed between the people who exchange : working time, use... exchange without reckoning, estimated personally by the people engaged in it (following the friendship, the desire to help the other person, common interests...). For example, I decide to give you hay so that you can go on with your activities.

We don't speak in this list about giving because it's a spontaneous act which doesn't mean the wait for something in return... although our last example is very close from the principle of giving.

Beyond the relationship, it's interesting to see the political meaning of the different exchanges.

There is the link between a producer and a stranger (someone who pays without giving anything from him/herself), interdependence link, trust, reconnaissance of the person through his/her production. We leave the world of objects to speak about the people behind. The question of how to exchange is related to which of community and common : with our are we connected, and with who do we want to be connected ?

4) What community, which commons ?

« Commons » and « communities » are things, properties organized and protected in common. They are used to answer social needs by non profit means. They permit a direct access to social wealth, direct because non proceeding by market and competition. The commons are necessary created and supported by communities, which means social networks of mutual help and solidarity.

There exist diverse sorts of commons. They emerge often from struggle against privatization, pollution... With experiment concrete forms of commons : piece of land used as a collective garden, bread oven open to the neighbours, shared cars, the village spring where the water is good and free. Lands with a specific local status which are owned in common by a village or small group of houses.

The direct effect from the struggle for the

commons is a limitation of capitalist accumulation. It helps making exist places or goods which can not be exploited for profit or used for individual interest. It gives a stable and lasting ground for several generations of a community.

In order to create and organize the protection of a « common », we need to bring people together and define ways to take part to the communities and decision making process. Common doesn't mean « open to anyone » but open to people who recognize themselves in a

project, common values or common land, connected people.

That's what we want to think about : which tools bring in common to increase material autonomy : gardens, meadows, oven, mill,... And with who ? All the people from the same village ? A network of people sharing the same values ? It is difficult to create a community only on a land basis, following our experiment. But that basis is essential if we don't want to spend all our time communicating with people far away (transport, internet,...).

FROM MARGINALITY TO AUTONOMY

Discrimination and social or economic exclusion, while present in most societies, are particularly active in the current dominant system. This is because the system is based on individualist competition, social insecurity, fear of others, and on a tribal mentality: social-cultural groups, nationalis, xenophobia, and interreligious conflicts.

Despite social welfare programs and charity organisations which allow people to survive materially, these attitudes and mechanisms keep well-identified people on the margins of society; the homeless, foreigners, poor ghetto youth, people labelled as "welfare cases", "mentally handicapped", "without qualifications", "unemployed", "without papers" ...

These people are forced to choose between two alternatives: fighting for years in the hope of seeing better days, or resigning themselves to the assistance and dependence relationships which deprive an individual of the mastery of her existence and of the sense that she would want to give to her life.

Various groups, some distant and some close to those who are marginalised by the dominant society, attempt to liberate themselves from the system in order to construct their lives based on their communal values and their utopias. Their lifestyles are a break with and are often in opposition to the dominant values,

lifestyles and relationships.

Who takes on such an adventure? Is the possibility to freely choose our path based on the sense that we want our lives to have reserved for those whose social background, education, experiences and reading have facilitated a certain consciousness, the search for alternatives and the capacity to construct with others this "other possible world"?

In the city or in the country, are our "alternative" or "autonomous" experiences shared with people who suffer from social marginalisation rather than choosing it? Can we go beyond the natural groupings of people who are socially or culturally similar to create a common history? With what goal in mind?

Are social struggles and fights for the access to rights of everyone the only possible meeting grounds of solidarity and common action? Are there other exchanges to explore, other actions to carry out together? On which ground? Can a Turkish peasant economically exiled into a European ghetto teach a neo-rural person to grow peppers or how to live with few material goods? Can a rap workshop unite young people dressed in Nikes and anarchist squatters? Can someone who lived on the street find pleasure in building a tent with others in an environmental and human environment that is less aggressive? Can a group of unemployed people create a self-

managed alternative business?

How do we see others? Are we capable of going beyond the labels, or are we also prisoners of social conditioning?

Isn't simply asking these questions a matter of establishing distinctions in order to go beyond them?

In our attitudes, our personal and collective functioning, which behaviors facilitate openness, and which, on the contrary, impose codes, norms, language, judgements that exclude those that don't share the codes from the beginning?

Can people who are in trouble, or who have lost the sense of their life, get a new start in an alternative collective living arrangement, where the welcome, the human relationships, the activities, and the shared sense allow others to find their place, either temporarily or in the long term? Under what conditions?

Where should the compromise be made between rapidly advancing our own projects and spending the time to construct with people

who are very different from us? How can we create balanced relationships that take into account the strengths and weaknesses of all, in order to avoid the welfare aid and paternalism of those who think they know what's good for all?

Can communal life, like many alternative enterprises that under pressure to be productive, reproduce the selection and exclusion that afflict the job market?

Can the search for "another alternative world", through concrete experiments

to live and work together, bring about real social change without taking into consideration the mechanisms of exclusion that keep people from alternative possibilities? Or is it a vain utopia meant to soothe our conscience while we have our communal adventure?

The workshop will attempt to respond to some of these questions (and many others), concentrating on the sharing of the experiences of each person in different contexts and closely linked to our visions of the world and that which we want to change in it.

AUTONOMY IN HEALTH

This topic will be discussed in Bellevue's decentralized event.

Bodies, cares and society : autonomy in health

The following questions can't be bypassed in our search for autonomy, and there are many reasons for that. We're talking about our own health, of course, how do we take care of it ?, What's at stake ? What about its impact ?, what's the link between health and our society's and environment's health ?

That's why this subject will be tackled not only in terms of reflection & self-questioning, but also with practicals and knowledge-exchanging workshops.

General Approach

Making symptoms disappear to improve our health only seemingly reveals the demands of our society : the unlimited cult of the beautiful and the strong to comply performance and rentability demands. These symptoms are those of our dephasing in front of a society with highly pathogenic (not to say cancerogenic) functioning.

Factors which are maintaining us within those mechanisms and participate in altering our physical, psychic and social health : industrialisation, technologic and scientific « progresses », nuclearisation, wage-earning, urbanisation, our ways of life, relation to time,

loosing our life earning it, means of subsistence, moves, insulation (facing daily management, the place of dependant and then non-productive persons in disease, handicap or old age) etc...with all the rupture of social and familial bonds generated, and even a certain disconnection with ourselves, with our natural biologic cycles, with our natural environnement (with Mother Nature as some might say).

Medico-chemico-pharmaceutic assistantship, in addition to secondary effects' limits and the fact that it's not resolving all, discharges us of our responsibilities, dispossesses us. So it's necessary to consider more largely its incidence on societies and environnement. What are pharmaceutical industry and research representing ? We can already evoke the environnemental impact in terms of production and consumption, and the plundering of traditional societies by life patenting.

What kind of relation do we have to health and disease, that one which underlies our relation to life, and death ? Isn't pain an alarm signal too, which informs on what's going wrong, help us to react, live better, decoding our body's messages (why this problem or that function or part of our body) ? It's precisely minding the real origins of a pain that we'll able to cure it.

Following topics will particularly be developped within th workshops :

- Questioning occidental medicine : relation to disease, body, bodies' social control (medical power, food security, risk zero, eternal youth...).
- Autonomy with regard to pharmaceutical industry by constituting alternative pharmacies : savage plants and ancestral remedies, from their picking to their transformation,...
- Autonomy with regard to psychiatric institutions : Where does madness begin ? How can community take care of suffering persons ?
- Re-appropriation of their body by women introduction to various practicals.

LET THE CHILDREN FREE THEMSELVES

I live in a collective farm in Limousin and I have been teaching in various elementary school for five years. Some were traditional, other more original like this one in a poor area, with a collective management and new educational practices. I have also been in the Celestin Freinet movement for five years. I have worked this year in a "medico-educational institute" with kids from 8 to 11 who are said "mentally deficient with behaviour troubles".

I mainly share Sylvie analysis about today school and its function. I like the idea of a society without school because I think that everybody should be concerned by education of children and that we should put an end to specialisation. Do we really need educators to educate, camp councillors to frame kids in summer camps or in social centres ? All these occupations which appeared ten years ago reveal that the aim is to prevent individuals from controlling their lives. These activities which concerned communities as a whole are now the responsibility of a few people.

On the other hand, I would not defend the idea of home schooling or no schooling. I think it makes family the centre of live, which means to replace an institution by another one. One sometimes considers family as an instinctive form of social organisation which guarantees a proper affective and psychological development of children. This is again a well anchored social norm. By living in a collective with a few children, my impression is that love is the only condition for a child to blossom.

To consider the family as a necessary space for a child to blossom is like considering that the couple is the only condition for individuals to blossom. Family is better to reproduce traditional roles and determinations than helping the individual to increase its autonomy. All the more as dominations are hard to question inside the family because there are seen as natural.

I think it is important that children can spend

time in spaces outside the look of adults who usually live with them. Yes, school is not the only place able to propose such space, but I have met many children happy to come to school because it allows them to behave differently from home. I have noticed that many parents would like to know everything about the life of their child. I had to explain them that they should accept that their children have a secret life.

It is important for kids to belong to a collective where they build themselves in relation to others. Children must be able to choose who they want to build collectiveness with. Adults, either they their parents or their teachers, must not decide or try to influence them. In the city, social classes do not really mix at school. It is less true in rural schools. Alternative schools gather children with the same social background. It is quite the same about the unschooled children.

The most important for me is how we consider children. Children are considered for what they will be and not for what they are, they will understand when they are older. As Catherine Baker says, "child is a project, a project of his parents, of people around him, of society". It is seen as natural that adults are superior to children. Children are seen as weak and ignorant beings who must be educated.

Environmental Destruction

CAPITALIST ECOLOGY: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OR PALPABLE APOCALYPSE?

For half a century, the energy resources available on this planet have diminished exponentially because of the more and more energy-consuming human activities aiming at satisfying the so-called "well-being" and "comfort" of humanity. Since 1970, the world energetic setting is mutating and is facing a wide-ranging crisis.

Children's words must be re-considered. Children should be the first to make decisions about what concerns their lives. Their words are often considered as moving or exceptional whereas it is their way to intervene on their life.

What is to be done today then ? I have no hope to change the educational system from inside. In my utopia, school would not exist anymore. As a teacher, I have lived very nice and moving moments among a team who was working together with families, in a school where children's words were taken in account, a school integrated in the neighbourhood life... I have also felt isolated in other places, disgusted by the absence of respect towards children and I several times surprised myself by having behaviour I hate.

I am now in a small village. Teachers are not only teachers but also inhabitant, as the parents, the children and all the others. Classes mix few children of different ages and from various social backgrounds. It is consequently the same for the parents whoever they are : old locals, new inhabitants come from cities, etc. So maybe, there is something to do at school in such a context...

Annega

Humanity is exploiting the resources massively instead of controlling the tools and means of production of these resources. This result in an inequity of access to these resources: 20% of humanity is consuming 80% of the natural resources. It would take the equivalent of four planets if everyone adopted this consumption pattern. Furthermore, some energy resources are becoming more and more expensive and difficult to extract.

The concept of "sustainable development" was invented a few years ago. This economist ideology (which will burn, we hope, as fast as oil) aim at maintaining an excessive consumption of energy, the financial interest remaining the only goal of the industrialized belligerents/politicians, while allowing, using different tools (teaching and spreading of the notion of eco-citizenship; delocalization and decentralization of the production; financing of scientific research to manage the pollution created) a planning of their activities. Through this notion of sustainable development, we are encouraged to "save the environment of our planet for our children" and urged to become conscious eco-citizens so that "Total" and company can continue their "sustainable exploitation" as long as possible.

In the current model of society, we become more and more trapped in a system of thought and practices defined by the hallmarks of the unregulated capitalist market, whose motto is liberalization but whose actual consequence is only destruction. The environment is not an exception to this rule; the will of the human race to dominate its environment knows no limits. Indeed: the so-called accidental or "natural" environmental disasters are more and more widespread and violent: Union Carbide "toxic cloud" in Bhopal (1982), the explosion of a nuclear reactor in Chernobyl (1986), the oil slick of the Erika in Pen Marc'h (1999), the explosion of the AZF factory in Toulouse (2001), the Hurricane Katrina in the east of the United-States (2005)...

If the rebellion of the "street" can be sometimes limited, "nature" doesn't know any limitation in its apocalyptical destruction of humanity. The apocalypse could take different forms, one that seems credible and close to us would be nuclear. We are told about new "revolutionary" nuclear plants where the atoms will fuse, a "revolution" that could lead to the scission of humanity.

To survive, humanity is facing two alternatives:

- The re-appropriation of the means and tools of our energy resources and consumption.
- The mutation into "cyber-humans" alienated by technological progress, who will have the significant ability to absorb and resist all terrestrial ecological pollution as well as all social and emotional relations.

Those meetings will allow us to discuss, debate, and analyze how our capitalism consumption pattern influence at every level the means of production and the use of energy.

We will consider the ecological impacts ("footprint") of all the elements related to this way of life: alimentation, transport, material comfort... in relation to their production and their energy consumption. We will try as well to understand the key role of the development of meaningful and conscious alternatives to become autonomous in our productions and "deconstruct" the false needs imposed by the market. It will be interesting to understand the stakes of those practices in our quest for material and political independence from Capitalism and the State; while keeping in mind that we all have more or less important relationships with the polluting industrial technological tools (cell phones, computers...) that we are criticizing or even disparaging.

What are the limits that we are setting between our vital needs, our comfort and our ecological consciousness?

As we think that our quest for autonomy depends as well on the transmission and exchange patterns that we choose to develop between us; it seems important to us to share our knowledge and experiences, without financial aspect but not without interest, during workshops conducted by individuals who are not "specialized" but who know about environmental-friendly auto-construction practices (solar boiler, vegetal oil powered automotive engine, phytoremediation...)

To read, see, criticize and complete...

Text

You can tell to iann (at) no-log.org if you need

•"Funny Weather we're having at the moment isn't it dear?" (English)

•Other text on:

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

Film

<http://climatecrisis.org/>

Organisation

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

NON VIOLENT COMMUNICATION

Learning how to talk about oneself, listenning to oneself to be able to hear and understand. Two workshops will be proposed (these being craftman's and in working process) through exercises, small games, [MISES EN SITUATION], sharings, etc...

realize what are our projections and jugements in the aim of passing beyond them (and not being « polluted » by them or « polluting » the

others with them).

understand our emotions, what they mean are reveal, to be conscious of our needs and take care of them.

Not to talk about the other (you...,you...), but more about oneself to share better one's own actual experiences, one's feelings and then understand each other.

Training for empathetic listenning, benevolently, either for the others or for oneself.

SOCIAL CONTROL AND SECURITY POLICIES

Social control is quite complex as it strikes at many different levels in society. Control is mainly used by institutions (such as national education, families, work, jails, police, or work agencies) for enhanced monitoring, harsher punishment and education so that individuals may know "good manners" and behave themselves to become one day "honest citizens". Those institutions have many tools for repression (justice), stabilization (with any kind of mediation, space planning...), brainwashing (TV), monitoring (electronic surveillance, microchips). They aim at maintaining people passive. Every impulse of anger must be repressed. When anger is individual, the victim is locked into a psychiatric clinic, when it's collective - in case of social movements for example - people are gassed by riot police. Our lives are so controlled, we wonder which strategy would be the most effective: should we skip social normalization, or should we rather destroy it?

We are eager to discuss the issue of different security policies in August. It is important for us to define and understand where the problem lies, and to find all together what we can do to work the system to our advantage, or to destroy it.

And this is not that easy- there are many different balances of power, many different contexts according to the organization, the different parts people involved play, notwithstanding the strategies they try to implement... all that stuff must be taken into account. That's why State can not be regarded as the only responsible for social control; things are not so simple. This is a Manichean approach which focuses on a system considered as a whole. Such consideration leads to thinking that the system is extern, which is wrong, we are parts of it, we've grown up into it and we have even complied with its norms, when gender-oriented attitudes, sexism, racism, our relationship with our body, social heritage come into play.

Here follows a list of suggestions for the discussions to come (feel free to add some!)

- The different technologies used by the state for

presentation du lieu:

La friche RVI est une très grande usine désaffectée : 3,5 ha de hangars industriels réinvestis par une joyeuse bande d'artistes, de militantEs, de riverainEs, et se targuant d'"alternatives". Toutes les disciplines, tous les arts s'y confrontent, cohabitent, dans un maelström permettant l'émergence de nouvelles formes, lieux, arts, rencontres...

Elle représente une expérience innovante, qui insiste sur le fonctionnement autogestionnaire comme expérience artistique et humaine ; autogestion plus ou moins bien assumée collectivement et individuellement.

Cet univers hostile et dur, où l'on baigne dans un espace froid métallique et bétonné, devient une zone fort sympathique, mêlant toutes sortes d'architectures-constructions : une sorte de village dans la ville. Cette énorme structure permet la "communalisation" de quelques outils comme un atelier de sérigraphie, un hacklab, des espaces d'exposition, de lieux de vie, etc ; le partage de connaissances et matériels pour le travail du bois, du métal, la couture, l'expression corporelle...

better monitoring and control. (Biometry: the body as a way of individualization and control / Normalizations through moves and bodies)

- The new forms of urban architectures for a better management of human movements (public places more and more clean, stainless, with no life possible, only meant for people to come and go)

- Psycho-pharmaceutics as a tool for normalization, and pacification. (Psychiatric clinics, the last report issued by INSERM -the National Institute for Health and Medical Research- on children with hyperactivity disorder...)

- The Medias and their propagandas on security (threats, insecurity sentiment, some Sarkozy's laws...)

- Institutions and normalization (dropping out from the regular school system, destroying prisons...)



Post-Colonialism

MIGRATION POLICIES, RACISM AND NEO-COLONIALISM

According to us, the four issues that follow are linked together despite their diversity. You can not deal with one without dealing with the others. They are hotly debated issues because they put at stake individual or collective situations, which are often controversial. We often wonder about them, without really linking them to our lives and our struggles. That's why we are eager to discuss them earnestly- they are of the most importance.

Moreover, we would be glad to take a glance at the implementation of European and Extra-European migration policies, how they have got tougher, how dangerous they can be for some people, what we can already do to re-act and resist... and so on, in order to strengthen resistance, to enhance reaction, and to encourage solidarities.

Racism (or racisms?) is still prevailing in our

societies, on institutional as well as inter-individual basis. How can we face it, and resist it? In a word, how can we react against racism/s?

In the French context, people often explain the position of some individuals or social groups –according to their situation into the country, or their relations towards the State itself, or comparing to society – by the prevalence or resurgence of colonialist attitudes... What about those analyses? How can we fight? How come people are so much "colonialist" in their relations to their country, nationally speaking, but as well in their relations to "us", and "our networks"?

And last but not least, we should mention the riots and the other demonstrations of violence that mostly occurred in suburbs and poor areas of France, in November 2005, as well as the old struggles that regularly make us march. Those struggles are linked to the three topics we mentioned lately, i.e. migration policies,

racism, neo-colonialist attitudes and policies (notwithstanding the police's behavior, social and economical discriminations, urbanism...). Most of us felt enthusiast when the riots occurred, but actually it seems there is a great discrepancy, in France, between most anarchists, libertarians, anti-capitalists, and revolted whatsoever and the people themselves who revolted in suburbs and poor areas. That's why we should focus on the nature of those movements. How can we use them to meet, strengthen links, solidarities and projects between the most of revolted people? Besides, we should as well question the riots: what did we get, in terms of meeting, enthusiasm, and questionings... How can we fill the gap, and feel empathy ...behind the words? You, people outside of France, most of you may be interested in discussing those matters.. What can you add to that, how did you see, how did you live those events? Did they inspire you, or question you... in which way?

Antipatriarchy

WHY A FOCUS ON QUEER FEMINISM?

Since 2002 Leiden Conference, there have always been attempts to discuss gender-oriented issues, male domination and heterosexism at AGP's meetings in Europe. In Belgrade, in 2004, the discussion was fiercely resisted, but

aroused also desire and enthusiasm among participants. That's why the organizers of the conference agreed to implement "a focus on the fight against patriarchy and heterosexism" in one of the cities which will serve as platforms during the decentralized part. On the one hand, we wanted to add a focus, but on the other one, we wanted as well this issue to be part of the whole thematic.



CESEDA, Y'A BON ?

We are really decided to insist: this topic can not be ignored.

According to us, who prepared the focus, this is not a subject we have to take "apart", only meant for specialists. On the contrary, this subject concerns everybody, eager to live in completely different world.

If we tackle seriously feminist and queer criticisms, the definition of "politics" will be greatly changed, and its perspectives will be broadened. We always come out with classical, patriarchal definitions which used to de-politicize and to de-historicize subjects, like the body, the relational, the emotional, housework and sexuality..

Actually, we think no real antiCapitalism and no real antiState can be possible if we don't radically criticize gender relations and sexuality in the first place.

At the conference that will be held in Lyon, we would like to create a space meant for thinking crossgenders, sexualities, racisms, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, capitalism, the State and the nation...

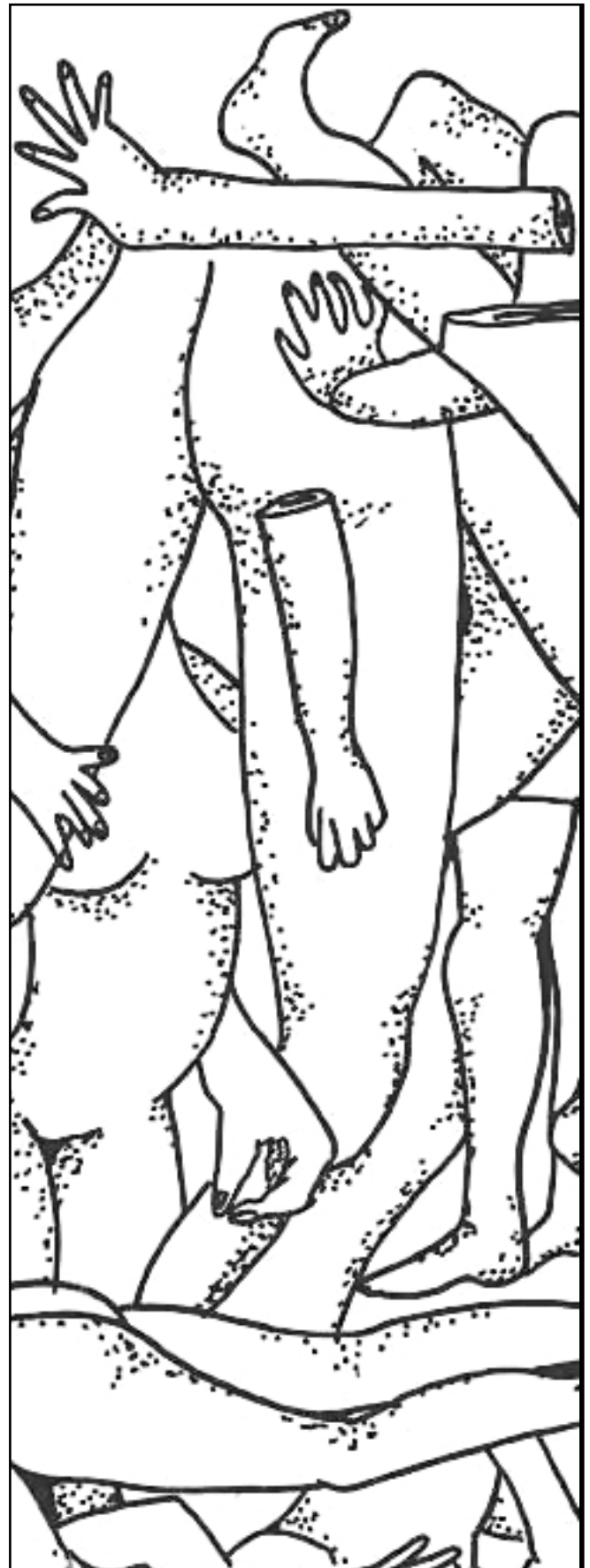
What (Pro) Feminisms?

We want to focus on the approaches which take into account feminist and queer criticisms on identity. This is not only the problem that everybody reasons in terms of stereotypes and gender-oriented distributions of parts, but as well that some groups dominate on other groups, with the same and acute mechanisms. We won't fall into the trap: we won't talk about people "oppressed", people "victims" of their own compliance to the domination system. They are not passive, powerless victims, we won't hush they have a relative autonomy. WE aim at creating a space for people who feel concerned, giving everybody the possibility to jeopardize our own social position, often regarded as "leading" (as we are activists) and our complex network of contradictory relations of domination. First, we have

to understand who we are before examining the projections (positive or negative) we perceive in unknown people.

- The Feminism and its Links to the Industrial Society

- ▶ "The New Technologies: Emancipation... or Oppression and Control? Lately, the feminist approaches have often been criticized, on a harsh anti-industrial basis. Their approaches were seen as secondary, even harmful because they jeopardized an order seen as "natural" and therefore salutary... comparing to the on going disaster. We think it could be interesting discuss issues such as: why there is a craze for neo-antifeminism, without forgetting the emancipation dimension (true or not) the new technologies contribute to, and criticisms as well of what the new technologies represent today, and the impacts they have on the society which produces them. Different cultural approaches are welcome! It has as



well been suggested that people interested should gather documents on the subject.

- Feminism and Racism

- ▶ Projection of the movie entitled "un

racisme à peine voilé” by Jerome Host. Actually, it could be interesting, if we could find and put together cross gender or women’s groups from not western cultures – may they only exist, or have played important parts for years. Precise propositions have already been made for this subject. Since a few years, the feminist movement appeared divided on that subject, that’s why it would be better to work on that, and not only between western activists.

►Work towards linking different topics together. For example, the implementation of machismo and homophobia against “the others” just to secure racist discourse.

- Self-defense workshops for people, members of a community often subjected to violence (women, lesbians, cross gender people)

- Contact-improvisation workshops: towards an alternative body practice?

- Space for speaking about mono-normativity, hetero-normativity, gender-normativity...

- Feminist info kiosk

- Tune in the radio Programs “DégénéréE-l’émission pour déranger”...

This is only a small part of the whole content of the conference. Here follows a list of topics suggested (the list, of course, is not exhaustive).

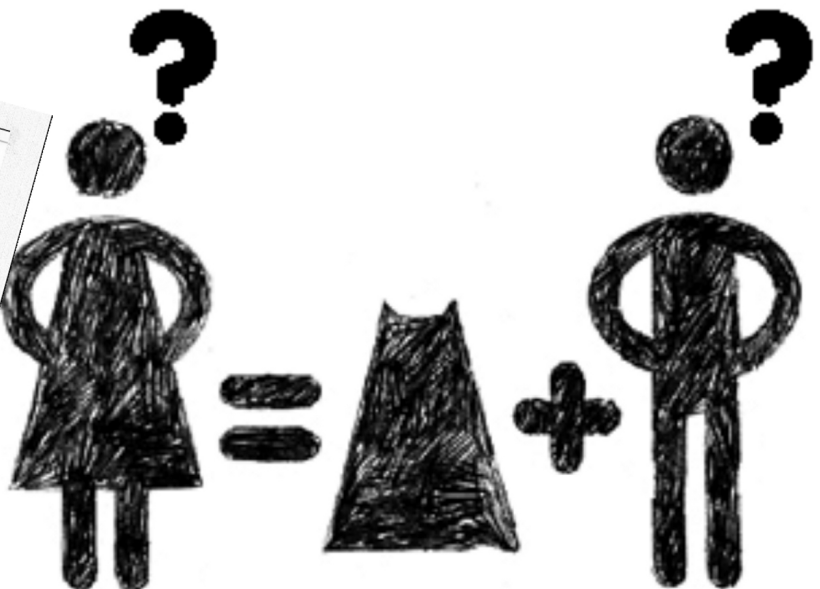
- Gender, precarity, migration
- Racism, westernism, sexism
- Feminist movements and history
- Learning from “Black” or “third world” feminisms

- Solidarity behind checkpoints
- Economical/ emotional/ sexual work, exchange and exploitation
- Genders and love, sex and emotional relationships

- Cross gender policy
- The genesis of identities, queer think
- Anti-Semitism and gender
- Feminisms and ways of life
- Criticism on the idea of nature
- Body-related norms, the body and politics

This meeting will be based on the propositions and the experiences every body can bring. Do not hesitate to pop in.

Contact the group responsible for the organization at: stamp-



RETHINKING OUR RELATIONSHIPS TO CHILDHOOD, TO AGE, TO SCHOOL, TO KNOWLEDGE...

We plan to seriously devote some time to questions of childhood, knowledge, education and relationships between people of different ages. For us, if the PGA defines itself as a platform for struggles against various forms of domination and discrimination (gender, power, work, racism...), then it seems to us that more consideration needs to be given to "children" and how people of different ages relate to and participate in our processes. When this topic has been raised, in Belgrade for example, it was limited to parents discussing their own children. Just as racism isn't just a concern of black people, and gender issues aren't just for girls, these questions seem to us to be general, cross-topic and theoretical as well as practical.

Here, therefore are the starting-points for this gathering which can be modified and enriched. We propose to:

- reflect on concepts such as childhood, adulthood, the legal status of minors, protection, parenthood...
- observe and criticise: the domination of children by adults, the control exerted on them from the youngest ages onwards (the need to get results in school, focus on the control of truancy, construction of penitentiary institutions for minors), the repression that parents receive when they do not conform to laws around education and social control, the requirement for state employees and social workers to report behaviour that falls outside the law, the generalisation of a conception of childhood where imprisonment, repression and medication become normalised (new laws on delinquency in France inspired by the INSERM and Benisti reports, recourse to psychiatrists and psychiatric medication, creating myths of a genetic basis for deviance). Faced with such social control, how can we go about constructing a resistance to it? Collectively,

presentation du lieu: frayssinous est un hameau collectif en milieu rural habité depuis 1971 et organisé en association depuis 1988. les personnes qui vivent sur le lieu partagent la vie quotidienne et se retrouvent autour de diverses activités qui tendent à l'autonomie tout en se donnant à d'autres plus personnelles autour de la création (musique, vidéo, son...), bricolage et artisanat en tout genre.

how can we build different relationships?

- invite young people who participated in social movements that took place this spring to go back over what happened, and tell us how it will continue...

•criticise school and the schooling of society. How should we build and transfer knowledge? How can the native curiosity of children and their creativity be taken into account and respected? Is there a role for "pedagogies"

- rethink how we approach parenthood, our choice of education, our lifestyles, our rhythms... We will organise little by little the outlines of this topic, always leaving the maximum space possible so that each collective or individual can come and share their own reflections, practices or struggles.

The gathering can easily become an interesting and pleasant occasion for children if we make it in such a way that we:

- look for and organise a place together with the children where they can relax and play. A calm place, in the middle of everything that's going on, where they can live their lives.
- bring together the necessary material for various relevant activities for kids (theatre, puppets, wood-carving, making a playground)
- make discussions accessible, and build a common dynamic of reflection together with

children. Use creative forms of interaction (theatre forum, puppets, games, radio shows, texts)

- make special workshops to explain the topics and share some of our activities with the children.

- find and promote the tools of self-organisation and to allow the children the opportunity to participate in the organisation of the gathering if they want to (meetings, cooking, construction, communication...

We also want to facilitate the access to women who arrive on their own with children, so that they can have some free time, knowing that they often face specific difficulties in being able to participate fully.

Finally, the organisation of this gathering cannot just be the work of a few people. Come and join in with this adventure!

Some contributions and easy to find info (if you can read French)

About deschooling:

- website about deschooling in France
- Catherine Baker's book "Insoumission à l'école obligatoire", here with complements and also a link to an interview with the author, an audio file from the radio program "offensive" on Radio Libertaire
- A series of pamphlets about "education / the schooling system" on infokiosques.net. Notably the test "on voudrait nous apprendre à marcher en nous

coupant les pieds"

- An article on paris.indymedia.org "boycottons le système scolaire ou si le système scolaire était conçu pour enseigner quelque chose à quelqu'un ça se saurait"

- and more generally about the rejection of ideas around teaching and education, you can type in key words especially "unschooling" and "france" into www.google.fr

Around social control and the imprisonment of minors:

- the delerious report of INSERM on the prevention of delinquency.

- Struggles of the last months against the construction of the EPM (penitentiary establishments for minors) "Pas de prisons pour mineurs, pas de mineurs en prison, ni à Laval, ni ailleurs" and an indymedia article about the occupation of the construction site of a prison for minors, nantes, february 2006

- the topic of social control will also be dealt with in the decentralised gathering in Lyon.

Some groups in struggle:

- Collective of kids who fight for the equality of young people and adults in Germany : Kraetzke (KinderRÄchtZÄnker)

- Asfar (Americans for a Society Free from Age Restrictions)

- ACS (Association for Children Suffrage)

- Youthspeak

And more...

- rights for the young in Wikipedia

- An interview with Christing Delphy on the construction of gender, where she deals with the status of minors.

- On ambiguities : "Autour de l'affaire Cohn-Bendit, libérer et protéger l'enfance" and "Pudeur et Débauche montent un bateau"

the internet links are on the web page:

http://pgaconference.org/en/2006/kids_and_ageism



CALL FOR A GATHERING ABOUT STRUGGLES AGAINST INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM AND THE TECHNO-SCIENTIFIC MAELSTROM.

Over the last decades, the struggles against nuclear industry, GMOs, chips in animals, biometry or nanotechnology have spread and political responses have been developed that break with simple counter-expertise. The rejection of industrial capitalism, of technocracy, of the rapid growth of new technologies, of the scientific ideology, is also the rejection of the world that goes with it: modes of living alienated from consumption and work, the omnipotence of experts, ultra-security, destruction of the social and natural environment... This universe is founded on a belief in the neutrality of technologies and knowledge (they are "neutral" because they can be used for good or evil), and also a belief in progress, notions which are also taken on (paradoxically) by many revolutionary thinkers.

Counter-information, acts of sabotage, the refusal to participate in activities of research, production and consumption linked to techno-industry... all aspects of a struggle which, due to the intensification of control, the artificialisation of life and the degradation of our collective and personal autonomy, becomes ever more urgent.

Nevertheless, we are continually coming up against the same limits. The alarms we raise just end up with results to which we are radically opposed: a legislative framework which establishes the transformations which are occurring rather than blocking them, fatalistic conclusions which push us towards complicity rather than revolt, calls for individual responsibility and initiatives so we can "manage" the catastrophe together, an ecology that is completely depoliticised, that removes environmental questions from the political

stakes and transforms them into a marketing opportunity for a "made-over" capitalism, a confinement of the radical critique to very restricted scenes.

Evaluate / Consider our strategies of action

We wish to reconsider that which helps us go further in our struggles, we wish to give names to the energies from which we draw our support. We wish to speak about our strategies against the techno-industrial world. What are our aims, our action forms, our targets? Which forms of struggle to use to neither let the scene be defined by the "citizens' movement" and the media confusion nor to fall into a ghetto culture, with an elitist critique creating an activist and elitist ghetto.

We propose that this gathering should be, first of all, an opportunity to recount our respective experiences, the movements, initiatives and moments of struggle in which we have taken part and to highlight the following questions: "what do we want?", "what means do we make use of?", "what exchanges or discoveries have we made happen", "in which history are our struggles recorded", "how have the connections with other people been thought about?", "how have relations between people who knew each other before been transformed?" "where do we look for support when we start looking to extend our struggles (class struggles, local communities, broadening of the struggle...)?".

We wait for your contributions, be they written, oral, or in any other form!

Industrial agriculture / farmers' struggles /

struggles for subsistence

At a global scale, the peasantry- which constitutes the majority of the population - is jeopardised by the aggressive transnational agronomic industry, destroying the local vital economies for millions of people. Under the pressure of control, of technologisation and of persistent productivism, peasant agriculture has nearly disappeared in the West.

In this way all the meaning of such activity is lost, and simultaneously a way of life is imposed that is removed from the soil, in which time as well as space ceases to exist, in which the countryside becomes nothing more than a landscape park or a desert poisoned by pesticides, in which animals are nothing other than merchandise. This gives the struggles against GMOs, RFID chips or informatisation a character that to a large extent goes beyond that of corporatism: they stand for the refusal to accept this world that threatens each one of us. How should we maintain and invent anti-industrial or anti-capitalist rural practices? How do we deal with the difficulties caused when these practices fall outside what is legal?

Open-mindedness in our reflections and in our actions / Concrete practices.

Within the name "People's Global Action" there are people. This word resounds with echos of popular struggles: from the Luddite workers of the 19th century, to the anti-nuclear demonstrations in Malville in 1977, moving onwards to the harvesting of GM crops in the last few years or the recent mobilisation against Minatec in Grenoble. But how could a "popular resistance" to today's industrialised world be thought about? How could it be put in place? What would it mean in terms of changes to our current practices? Who are we struggling with? Is a movement without women, children, proletarians or immigrants a popular movement?

By discussing together in the same place the problems linked to childhood and industrial capitalism, we would like to question the idea of "hierarchy of struggles", the tendency to compartmentalise our struggles or make them

impenetrable, and elitism. Above all we would like to explore "practically" how it is possible to take into account other people and ways of questioning than those to which we are accustomed. To note also that many of the practices of autonomous /DIY culture have a definite connection with anti-industrial critiques, although the two respective milieux do not meet. What space do we give to the reappropriation of certain practices or the rejection of certain technologies within our struggles? Are these just diversions or could they even strengthen us?

In Frayssinous, we want to explore these questions, not only through discussion, but also by what we put into practice during our daily life together and the many activities which take place (workshop to "free yourself from machinery", carpentry workshop, construction projects.

Your suggestions are welcome!

Some contributions and infos easy to find

- A series of booklets "sciences and technology" and "ecology" on infokiosques.net
- Notes et Morceaux Choisis, bulletin critique des sciences, des technologies et de la société industrielle, where you will find "Technologie contre Civilisation"
- Text about "The idea of progress"
- "La société de l'avenir, l'âge de l'ersatz, ou en sommes-nous?" and others texts of William Morris
- "La raison malmenée, de l'origine des idées reçues en biologie moderne" of Gérard Nissim Amzallag

Some NGO...

- GRAIN, in particular writer of (in french)"Grippe aviaire : une réponse mondiale imposée d'en haut"
- ETC group (action group on Erosion, Technology en Concentration), in particular writer The big Down : Atomtech - Technologies Converging at the Nano-scale

And on the side of Grenoble...

- Site d'enquête critique sur le capitalisme industriel des technologies de pointe et son monde, dans la régions transalpine : "pièces et main d'oeuvre (PMO)"
- OGN (Opposition Grenobloise aux Nécrotechnologies), contre l'inauguration de Minatec et de la technindustrie
- indymedia-grenoble
- Une semaine contre Minatec et son monde
- Les argumentocs des nécrotechnologies
- Luttes contre la technopole
- Biométrie : au doigt et à l'oeil...
- Le TGV Lyon-Turin pris en embuscades

the could find the links on the web page:

http://pgaconference.org/en/2006/anti-industrial_struggles

ANTI-INDUS NEVER MIND THE BOLLOCKS

One of many ways to approach the anti-industrial topic would be to try and investigate how the so-called industrial society or else the society of progress affects us concretely in our lives (speaking in terms of society of progress might sound more appropriate than the more reducing industrial concept. That's why I don't like so much the anti-industrial position even if it helps locating wherefrom people are speaking, it seems too simplistic.) The idea is not to put a concept into words in order to demonise it, making it an outer enemy beyond which we would stand but on the contrary the purpose is to look for the ways in which we're linked to such a society and question, in a systematic criticism indeed, these bonds. This text doesn't intend to describe objectively reality as I perceive it, it rather tries to personify a position all but neutral towards "reality".

First axis : Outer constraints- Progressist Perspectives

There's a terrifying multitude of research and associated application programs aiming at establishing, from above, all kinds of behaviour norms, even with eugenic characteristics, and also propaganda, physical and mental manipulation as well as repression gears to reach the norms. Technology is used to concretise overwhelming security deliriums tending to restrain our individual and collective potential, perspectives and powers (freedoms?).

Such a system evolution seems very stupidly indissociable of a power quest. A control quest. A domination quest. Some sort of a worldwide scale game. A poisonous game whose roots are in the capitalist system foundations. Without going into details, it seems important to remind that some of the foundations were described by some XIXth century bearded man : Saint Karl. I specifically refer to what's known as commodity, its production and fetishism. Readers may as well turn to his bible. As far as what perspectives this opens, well ... If one

would want to hang over hollow concepts- in which no one would feel more responsible than anyone else -that brave new world we're promised would be a mega-structure totally controlling all the existing, where logically nothing could have a grip on the system. Everything would be in its place, in its frames, functional, in the depth of their being depending upon structures, laws and representations created by humans to enslave themselves, to protect them from themselves, from others and their surroundings, some sort of humans'victory on humans. Just as if the human being were afraid of its defects and imperfections and that it were essential to remedy them in only one way : becoming predictable, regulated as a clock, smooth and uniform as a tombstone, astute and creative as a palymobil, true to what one struggles with to represent to oneself, part of the set one thrives to produce.

All means are worthy in achieving this absolute power utopia : eliminations, manipulations, locking-ups, physical and mental isolations. Differences are but very slight between dictatorship and democracy concepts. Their operating process remains differentiated : dictatorship prevents you from expressing what you think while democracy prevents you from thinking what you may express. But the goals of both could strictly be the same, their utopian totality result is achieved when none of its subjects is able to think beyond their frames. Thus putting in perspective what shrinks and models one's capacity to think for what it really is : a tremendous tool for power, we might easily imagine democracies far more totalitarian than dictatorships.

A wholesome quest for absolute power and control is taking place under cover of progressist, evolutionnist, universalist, civilizing, good, rational ideologies. These oxygen-lacking brains' ideals contain in themselves destructive and frightening collective utopias. Whatever quest for the absolute corrupts absolutely. They're perfect in their folding screen role : they're already hiding and almost invariably justifying individual avidity, even more they work for acceptance and camouflage to not only the

worst to be expected of undergone researches but also to their collateral damages, already out of control, lightly or not even assessed even knowingly silenced as far as their endlessly growing control devices enable them to.

Second axis : Environmental impact and us

There's no place in an industrialised country or close to it (which means on the entire planet) that is absolutely safe from any kind of contamination and even lesser safe from any catastrophe. Perspectives of future evolutions let us forebode industrial society extension along with its harmful effects on all the existing even if some places might still be in a relative preservative condition- unless some unconceivable all-so-smooth collapse in the structures would happen. Earth destruction potentials already exist concretely under varied recepies but undergoing research programs are still making them more efficient, more original, funnier, more stupid. Watch out for the leakage.

Industrial catastrophies, course accidents, labs "oops-sorry-blame-it-on-human-failure" and other threat potentials- without meaning to underestimate their frightful aspect already out of reach from rational human representation capacities- have a tendency to make us look away from the constant or even exponential increase in the diffuse poisoning reality. Even if the latter is hardly perceivable on an individual or collective scale, it remains serious and leads to a soft progressive degradation of us and what surrounds us.

One might want to investigate the means to seize these shiftings.

Directly, individually or collectively, one may be able to distinguish and measure some signs, indications, informations, local evolutions in one's environment but that demands upgrading all at once one's will and sense in observing and a solid confidence in one's senses.

Indirectly one could imagine the extent of the disaster practicing disbelief towards existing

media lies and after all, juggle with a shapeless self-contradictory heap of specialists' measures, statistics, conclusions and anticipations each of them more objective than the other. It's already difficult to understand the meaning of any indication that would draw our attention in this shapeless ocean of make-believe informations, and that is, of course, if one still desires living haunted by these representations reality. And more, that information reflection just potentially embodies one pixel in an out-of-focus picture of the iceberg visible part. Finally, how many other icebergs do exist out of frame?

These mediatic means which enable us to only grope our way into our living conditions degradation are power structures tools used according to their needs; they can- on a collective scale -dictate us whatever reality reflection suits them best if not those we might prefer : mediatic counter-fires, ad hoc entertainments, suffocations, reductions, distortions, concepts transpositions. May there be inquiries about research programs legitimacy, ongoing experiments and their impacts questions will be quickly drowned in a mediatic circus, in com'department conceptual tilt completely foreseen and separated, the real stake, the reality they point at shall never in the world be questionned. One does not stop progress.

We're intinsically linked to the fate of industrial society. It is not, in that sense, some sort of seperated theoretical concept, nor separable from its reality nor an Evil, a Goodness neither any outer Thing.

Indeed, it imposes constraints upon us and tends to reduce our potential.

Indeed a death threat is becoming more and more concrete as well as the degradation of our environment.

Indeed it makes us stupid, assisted and dependant upon it.

Indeed we don't even have space nor potential to refuse it.

But what I particularly want to point at is that

we only take responsibility as active, passive, conscious and unconscious component of the industrial human caste. This society is us. It also is us.

Third axis : Well-being-equivalent-constraints

Whereever might our theoretical questioning of the industrialo-honk-honk society stand, the mass reality which surrounds us is shaped, modeled, dictated by these infrastructures upon which we do not exercise any power whatsoever, not even that of refusing it. Potential of escaping it is not only limited and partial, but also tending to reduce.

All the more we criticize this society, more or less radically, we're soaking in well-being produced gadgets and applications. Nuclear power, pesticides, GMO's, industrial artefacts, computers, USB keys, cars, cops, killing and contaminating but that doesn't stop us from gobbling, using them willingly and from being doublemore happy that way. So-called scientific research produced technological gadgets- and the confort they allow – are both usefull as legitimacy masks for far worse and less mediatic applications, legitimize collateral damages but also contribute in themselves to conscious and practical enslavement of the individuals to a society, to means and infrastructures upon which they have less and less grip potential or even practical questioning. Believing that the average bloke has any overview right, any power on the infrastructures which he or she uses and depends upon, willing or not, conscious or not, is altogether illusive.

Sorting out beneficial, negative or unexpected effects in technological researches potential seems more and more useless. Carots, sticks, intangible emanations aren't separated nor separable, they embody only one and single thing.

One of the most efficient carots in this society of progress is bragging about the opportunity to extend individual lives, promoting and making believe in life without death. Indeed Yummy! Nevertheless, that ever-so-shiny

vegetable is filled with pesticides; without lingering over too much, I could list a few like that.

The idea that industrial society bites its own tail proclaiming itself guide for humanity : it justifies its existence and legitimises even more control through research programs against diseases, alienations, catastrophies of all kinds of which it is responsible for in an exemplary model of straight-forward flight. So-called science saves us but what guards us from science? Oh yes, politicians do! If you can, don't forget to vote at the next election in favor of a reasonable 100% equitable progress, easy to know how for the ballot is printed on recycled paper.

Also the idea that these improvements are oriented, financed and controled by a few authorities which are first in collecting and sorting out their employment. They benefit primarily and globally to certain dominating castes and often at others' costs. Our neighbours are massively killed, enslaved and pressured not even in the name of survival but for the sake of well-being and living standards or even solely in order to maintain, ensure, develop force and domination, hot air in fact. For may centuries, now, the screens used to justify slaughter, domination, havoc and exactions haven't become less ridiculous. The means at stake and their scale though never were as effective and massive.

The idea that progress is only mastered on lab com'departement propaganda. That we may on the contrary suppose that the experiments reel effects escape constantly more from the so-called scientists who, by the way, couldn't care less about that fact. That their dealings are more and more disconnected from the reel entirety of their acts, their heads being unceasingly more burried in their agendas and pragmatistical objectives-equivalent-dollar to be achieved.

Let's say that the carrot only lies in the analysis of one's immediate self interest; that individual would consider the condition of the society as an immutable aspect, impossible to be questioned, leaving no other option. An

analysis on a collective scale in a broader space-time dimension would probably show that it is a lose-lose situation.

In spite of the fact that the individual concept is a build up representation, it seems hard for me to be able to weigh up one's existence in regards to one's neighbours', to conceive oneself as part of a greater process and foresee the potential of one's death which won't be the whole's death. In all cases, it doesn't prevent from trying and even succeeding partially. To live only in one's own separated and specialised present time, reinforcing and perpetuating that separation, undermines any collective future potential and helps building the wall onto which one runs. Ta da!

I don't even have to consider anything sacred to expose such things, on the contrary, I'm consecrating the act of making unholy by destabilising the concept of individual, the self-centeredness in human beings and its implied omnipotence. I'm trying to learn how to aim in a universe full of orwellian concepts.

So what's next?

" I try to be coherent, I stress that I'm only trying and it's no piece of cake given the violence and the doubts assaulting you at awaking. I watch for the slightest power traces within my brains but I think there's a lot of work ahead since we're forced to crush our peers to possess a tiny piece of land, to grow a shitty life on it only to get locked on it and die on a long term." (Ape-)

The pseudo-radical criticism of power and its absoluteness contains, as a reflection, its own perspectives, which, according to me, need not necessarily be put into theories rather than approached with feelings, at least not conceived through the same dominant scheme of thoughts and values.

One type of absolute is not to be replaced by another one, it's no use hopelessly preaching truths and universalistic patterns bound to be each structurally more stupid and reformist than the other both in their effects and



DIJON, ÉSPACE AUTOGÉRÉ DES TANNERIES

STRUGGLE IS OFTEN MADE POSSIBLE IN THE FIRST PLACE BY COLLECTIVE APPROPRIATION OF AN « AUTONOMOUS SPACE »

presentation de host place:

L'Espace Autogéré des Tanneries is a squatted autonomous social centre, hosting subversive, political and social activities in a post-industrial environment. It was opened in 1998, and has reached a certain degree of stability, thanks to

Access to rural and urban liberated spaces, where we can put self-organisation into practice, produce things, plan actions and offensives, is crucial to us, both in the perspective of a radical social change movement, and on a much more individual scale.

These various spaces especially allow us to:

- have a place to live, in a world that denies us access to suitable housing, or to any kind of housing at all, and to question the accumulation of goods and the sacred concept of « private property »;
- share and exchange skills, objects and tools on a non-profit basis;
- experiment communal living and ways of organising, towards autonomy in regard to the state, to wage work and capitalist society - which allows us to break the division between work, private life, hobbies and activism... and to show that it is possible;
- create texts, broadcasting tools and independent media;
- do a lot of « Do It Yourself » stuff: recycling, construction, agriculture, energy producing, handcrafts...
- create and spread subversive « cultures » and lifestyles;

These spaces, islands of uncontrolled freedom, are therefore targeted in priority by the

established powers. In some European countries, determined state offensives have already strongly jeopardized the existence of such collective living & political activity spaces.

Right now in France, these places are endangered. The state wants to establish an even more repressive legal setting, and the authorities seem to be reacting more and more swiftly to squats, against those inhabited by people in a particularly precarious situation or by illegal immigrants, and against the recent outbreak of « political » squats in many towns. For instance, deadly fires in buildings occupied by illegal immigrants last summer have been used to increase the number of deportations and to take strong repressive measures against squats.

In the countryside, access to land is getting harder and harder, and rural communities find themselves facing unreachable hygiene and security standards, while struggling with touristic and upper-class colonisation.

In France, despite the fact that many links exist between various collectives, formal structures allowing skill-sharing and solidarity are poorly developed. It seems necessary to us to get strong enough to face states and owners when it comes to such topics as access to land and space. Therefore, we should ask ourselves how we could create networks, alliances and collective strategies.

Despite a certain will and some practices, « political » squats often remain stuck in « marginal ghettos » and don't really connect with other kinds of squats, like the ones inhabited by the very-poor or by illegal immigrants. Seldom do they connect with people's struggles in some neighbourhoods

against gentrification, for easier access to housing.

For all these reasons, we wish this AMP/PGA conference to:

- be an opportunity to address such questions as: what do we mean by autonomous spaces »? What could/should their role be within a strategy of radical social change, in between « alternatives » and « offensives »? What about the links between these spaces and social movements and struggles?

- inform people about our practices within these spaces, talk about what we actually do and create, and see how we could increase all kinds of exchanges, especially between the countryside and cities...

- be a space where we can share our experiences, which would allow us to learn from one another in terms of communal living, activities, economy...

- deal with the various ways of keeping or getting land and buildings, to collectivize them or to build them: squats, wagenburgh, negotiation, co-op buying, special loans and leases... and take into account the positive/negative aspects and the compromises each solution might imply.

- allow us to build tools for solidarity between different types of spaces: activity spaces, inhabited buildings, illegal immigrants' squats, co-ops, farms, etc.

- give us the opportunity to think about what divides us into distinct categories, illegal immigrants' and extremely poor people's squats, « nomads », « urbans », « rurals », about what marginalizes us and separates us from one another.

- deal with what makes it possible for these spaces to last, either by taking the advice of older people who live in such spaces or by examining the case of spaces that have lasted throughout the years.

- allow us to talk about resistance strategies we have in common when it comes to repression, evictions and standards the state wants to force upon us.

- talk about what decisions are taken (or not) within these spaces so as to question and change patriarchal, racist and heterosexist norms.

We'd love to see friendships, projects, actions & common plans as possible outcome of this conference.

We'd like people to come and introduce their spaces, we'd like to talk seriously, and not so seriously, to tell each other stories about barricades and walls made out of straw, about dumpstering and gardening, about infoshops and hacklabs, chaotic shows and collective readings, about relating to each other, about blending roles, gender and queer-theories, about sharing tasks with or without using a taskboard, about neighbourhoods and welcoming, about money and autonomy, caravans and old factories, riots, formalism & passion, heaps of clothes and psycho-geography, about douchebags and crazy friendships... About feasting at 3 a.m. and bread-ovens, about lazy breakfasts and hyperactive-days, about extravagant people and identity norms, about living off nothing with a bit of everything but not always with the things we want, about meetings that end up in disco-parties and

work-parties that end up in games, about secret plots and being able to yell whenever we feel like it, about water-heaters turned into stoves and stoves turned into engines, about proudly-painted facades and hidden refuges, about crazy constructions, leaking pipes, magnificent wrecks that only work half the time, about the distress of having to move one more time and about the sheer daily beauty of building our lives with our very best friends and new ones that have just arrived... and more, definitely.

SOME WORDS ON THE MOVEMENT OF THE “POLITICAL” SQUATS IN FRANCE

For a couple of years now, there's been a growing movement of social and political squatted spaces, where collective life experiences and various public political

activities often take place.

These spaces quite often host the organisation of anti-capitalist and anti-authoritarian events and activities, « free zones » where goods can be exchanged freely, squatted vegetable-gardens, internet cafés and cyber-activism, free software use & development, independent media, information spreading and book/zine publishing within infoshop structures, work and skill-share spaces for alternative medecines, bikes, mechanics, metal/wood-working, silk-screening, self-construction, vegetable oil recycling for vehicles, action organising, seed-sharing, women's spaces, feminist, queer and transgender practices, neighbourhood pic-nics, as well as spaces for restaurants, bars, shows, discussions, video projections or theater.

These spaces distinguish themselves from another movement called « artists' squats » (which can be found especially around Paris), by the fact that they refuse to collaborate with authorities and wish to act within a strategy of struggle against private property, the state, relationships based on power and profit, trying to build autonomous zones linked to various other social movements.

This is just a very partial and vague introduction, the situation being far more complex. It would be wrong to try to standardize various experiences that each have their own ideas and activities, and which don't necessarily see themselves as part of a larger movement.

Therefore, several intersquat meetings have taken place throughout the past 3 years. Furthermore, local intersquat associations meet quite often and a lot of sharing has been happening accross the country, thanks to specific projects and actions, friendships, and networks squatters are involved with, such as « sans titre » (which rural communities are also involved with), the infokiosk network, Indymedia, resistance festivals, the anti-prison network, as well as nomadic projects such as « La caravane permanente ». Existing links have already rendered possible collective offensives such as the one that took place on

the 25th of February 2005, during which several town-halls and offices belonging to the socialist party in 17 different cities were the scene of « surprise » actions protesting evictions.

Despite the increasing repression coming from french authorities against these political squats - for instance, the government tried to turn the illegal occupation of a building into a misdemeanor within it's set of « homeland security » laws (Lois sur la Sécurité Intérieure) two years ago -, it's usually still possible to squat a building in France without risking imprisonment. Even if the law, which usually is on the side of the owners, orders an eviction, most of the time the actual eviction can be postponed for months (even years) in case squatters decide to struggle legally, and especially if they do so on a political and public ground. A large number of evictions also create an opportunity for acts of resistance, which can make re-openings quicker and easier.

Over the last years, several squats have even managed to block eviction threats and to be granted a certain stability after long struggles, sometimes after negotiating with the owners (which itself caused many disputes). That's the case for l'Espace autogéré des Tanneries in Dijon, for the Clandé in Toulouse, or the 102 in Grenoble, which have all existed for over 8 years now. On the other hand, many of the most active squats throughout the last years, such as les 400 couverts in Grenoble, Les Diables Bleus in Nice, or l'Ekluserie in Rennes have all been evicted last year. In the meantime, in Paris, the socialist mayor doesn't even seem to care anymore about legal proceedings to evict people, especially since last years' fires in buildings squatted by illegal immigrants. Therefore it seems necessary for the movement to build up enough strength on a nation-wide scale, as well as to carry on making alliances and cooperating outside of the squat scene.

INDYMEDIA & THE MOVEMENT - DEFENSE OF ACTIVIST SERVERS & AUTONOMOUS COMMUNICATION STRUCTURES - DIGITAL RESISTANCES (P2P, FREE SOFTWARE, ETC.).

Contents

Alternative Servers vs. New Repressions

How can we collectively face new laws enforcing data retention on the internet, to prevent our communication structures from becoming the weak points in our activism? How can we build strong user communities around alternative servers, to allow awareness and solidarity in case of problems (since right now, most activists using our services don't realise it's important and won't easily mobilise to defend it)? Possible legal attacks, individual & collective responsibility, resistance tactics, etc.

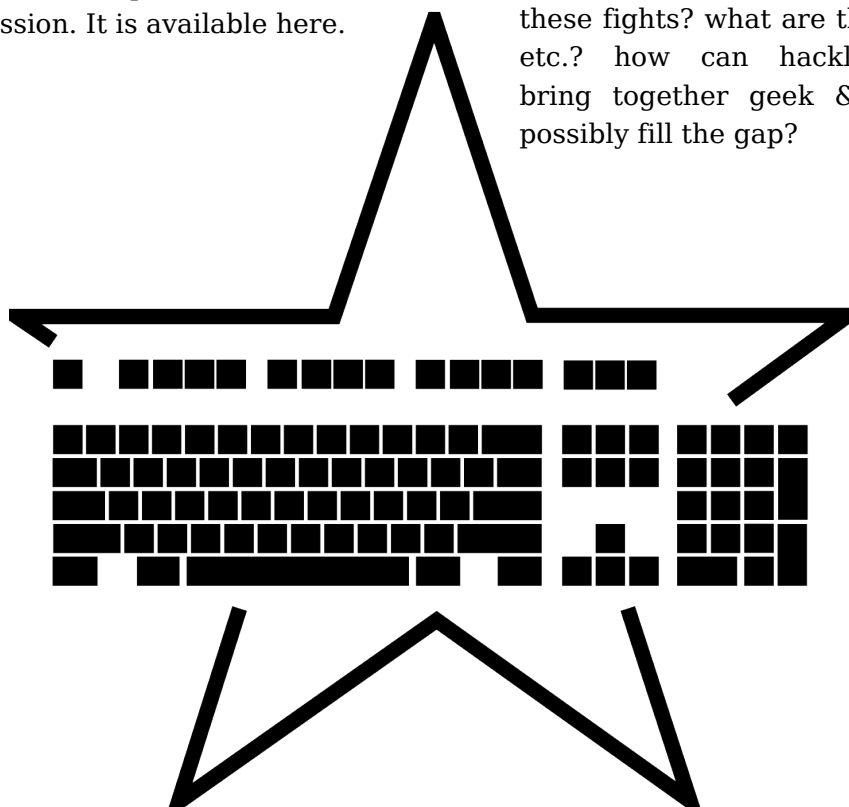
See the more in-depth invitation for this specific discussion. It is available [here](#).

Indymedia & the Movement, Mediactivism, etc.

There's a co-dependency between indymedia & grass-roots, anti-authoritarian & anti-capitalist movements it emerged from; but a new mediactivist « trend » is popping up around indymedia - dangers? perspectives? how can we rebuild/ensure closer interaction in between indymedia & radical social movements, etc.?

New Digital Struggles, Geek Fights

Software patents, repression of peer to peer, IP & data retention laws are attacking digital freedom daily; some geeks try to defend their territory, and some new struggles emerge with difficulty - how can we interact with, extend these fights? what are the perspectives, tactics, etc.? how can hacklabs/open-access space bring together geek & activist cultures and possibly fill the gap?



AUTONOMOUS SERVERS

Call for a meeting to defend our autonomous servers

Introduction

What follows is an invitation to participate in a discussion on the defense of autonomous servers and alternative communication structures. It is planned as part of a « digital struggles » focus, during the European People's Global Action (PGA) conference, that is to happen around France from August 19th to September 3rd. More information on PGA and the conference itself can be found at the end of this message, and by following its links.

This invitation is sent to the following servers' administrators: squat.net, inventati.org, ecn.org, sindominio.net, nadir.org, so36.net, domainepublic.net, nodo50.org, boum.org, poivron.org, moviments.net, no-log.org, samizdat.net, tuxic.nl, altern.org, aktivix.org, riseup.net, resist.ca, and a few others. The realisation of this discussion space and its extent highly depend on feedback this call generates. Please tell if/how you're (not) interested, wanna contribute something, can or cannot participate, etc.

In short, this moment intends to bring us admins together to discuss the current situation, share experiences, envision strategies, and possibly organise. It also aims at facilitating an encounter in between those who provide these online services and their users, namely the activist community, in order to confront incoming repressions altogether. This would happen in between the 19th & the 28th of August 2006, at the autonomous space « Les Tanneries », in Dijon, France. A more in depth explanation follows.

Context

Over the last few years, the Internet has become a main tool for radical activism. Decentralized action organizing, broader

networking & communication, Indymedia, web-radios & various counter-information initiatives, content dissemination & movement visibility, collaborative writing & knowledge sharing, among others... have been facilitated, extended, or sometimes even allowed by activist appropriation of computing, with a number of initiatives now being dependent upon the Internet as a result.

As radical techies, anar(cho)geeks, hacklab members, keyboard squatters, tech-aware activists, autonomous administrators... we've often directly participated in that evolution, advocating subversive uses of new technologies, hacking free software & sharing knowledge with passion, running servers for revolution. We've seen (most of) our friends leave hotmail behind, https eventually becoming trendy, and more and more people & groups, projects & campaigns, hosted on our machines, rather than feeding some company.

Problem

Internet has long been a relatively safe place to be, exempt from harsh government policy. But times have changed, and are changing even more rapidly: with information society comes data retention, which translates to compulsory user tracability and administrator responsibility. All over Europe, countries are adjusting their legal frameworks to enforce police access to logs, and sweep away Internet privacy. Server seizures & intrusions by officials, be they legal or not, have increased lately, and, among others, have targetted Indymedia & Inventati.

As users, we face the risk of our digital intimacy being revealed to authorities; but as administrators, we face direct repression if we refuse to comply, to log, to denounce - to become police assistants as we're

expected to - now, sooner or later. Because our tech activism involves spreading voices so that they can't be shut by authorities, because providing alternative communication structures for our movements implies helping ourselves, as activists, to stay safe in the cyberworld, we can only refuse the emergence of such securitarian policy, nor can we ignore the risks we face acting accordingly.

There has yet been little mobilisation against those measures, and though all could directly be affected, most activists aren't aware of the situation, hence not ready to react if something bad happens. While independent servers have become crucial & sensitive hubs of our communication, there seems to be very little awareness of their importance, of the need for their defense & preservation. While we will easily mobilize to defend a common resource such as a social centre threatened with eviction, how many will we be to fight a legal aggression against our digital structures of communication?

Reaction?

Isn't it time to address this underlying problem? How can we stress the importance of our structures of communication, raise awareness about their potential vulnerability, and, most

When Streets Are Burning.

importantly, build solidarity? The « digital struggles » focus within the PGA could be one such space for addressing these issues; it could allow us all - admins and users - to meet, share and build perspectives around our digital services & communities.

Furthermore, this could be a space for inter-server coordination, collective thought and experience-sharing around our technical developments & practices. Traditionnally, admin work is carried by a single techie, and it's hard to participate for anyone who's not an expert already; do we manage to organise differently? Lately, some collectives have implemented and tried out methods for administrating computer ressources collectively; how can we merge political concerns in our way of doing things and the practical need of keeping a machine running? Etc.

So much for proposals. As of now, a few individuals from squat.net, poivron.org, no-log.org, boum.org, indymedia.org have announced their participation, a presentation of metche is expected (metche is a program designed to ease team work on a server, developped by the boum.org collective), as well as a tor workshop. The rest depends on further contributions & answers to this invitation. Please send reactions to stamp-ds@pgaconference.org !

CALL FOR MEETINGS ABOUT RECENT POPULAR UPRISINGS IN FRANCE AND ELSEWHERE...

After massive outbreaks of rioting and rebellion in the suburbs last autumn following the death of two young boys chased by the police, this spring in France there was a long and widespread social and radical movement with mass support.

In January 2006, Dominique de Villepin presented a bill called the 'Equal Opportunities Act' in particular as a response to the autumn riots : this involved removing family allowances for the families of truant children, the possibility to fire workers without any justification, bringing back

apprenticeships from the age of 14 etc.

After several months of across-the-board university occupation, street riots, direct action and economic disruption, the French government withdrew its plans, for the first time in years, in a context like this (remember 1995)

Apart from the withdrawal of planned legislation aimed at making employment even more insecure, which unfortunately makes very little difference to capitalist oppression, the movement strengthened peoples' determination, and opened a major breach through its collective modes of action and living.

One of the most encouraging and stimulating sides of the anti-CPE 'movement' was the echo of widely shared radical criticism of the structures of the State and the economy, of salaried employment as the norm, of patterns of consumption, of economic growth and liberal individualism.

Most universities and a large number of upper secondary schools were shut down for two months or longer. Protest action spread like wildfire from one town to another, with roads, postal sorting offices, airports, railway stations, building sites blocked; occupations took place in town halls, regional council headquarters, employment offices; there were acts of sabotage, with temporary employment agencies and political party offices taken to the movers, organised rioting and action by affinity groups, to redecorate and demolish during demonstrations, there were self-applied price cuts in shops; railway lines were cut, buildings damaged, political rallies were disrupted, and politicians' suits were a target....It was a long time since we witnessed so much support from the population; bonds of solidarity were tied with other groups, like undocumented foreigners, people on welfare, unemployed women and men, workers in the entertainment industry (les intermittents), and employees who went

beyond the grudging support of the main trade unions. In many towns, each day there were spontaneous demonstrations, nighttime demonstrations, some of which regularly ended in riots.

While the prime minister ranted on like a scratched LP repeating daily on television his refusal to withdraw the bill, people became angrier and angrier, and thousands of people in general meetings decided to call for the destruction of capitalism, an amnesty for the November rioters, abolition of borders, making stewards at demonstrations into direct action groups, and planting vegetable gardens in the grounds of universities. The French police were at a loss, and one of the main police trade unions even begged the government to give way and announced in public that it was afraid that 'massive hatred of the police could spread amongst young people' and that the situation could become uncontrollable.

As the facts show, in comparison with other protests over the past few years, what is striking is just how far there was widespread agreement that struggles will only succeed through a diversity of direct actions, and to feel to what extent people recognised the need for a kind of 'illegalism'. It was unthinkable just to carry on going to classes and to express quietly and 'democratically' our mass disagreement on the streets, in authorised marches, and other occasions where we were kindly allowed to display the freedom to disagree. In spite of pressure from all quarters, it was clear that, for the movement to continue, daily life had to stop, universities and high schools had to be blocked, redecorated, and turned upside down. It was precisely this stoppage of daily life which brought about genuine change for a few months in our lives and which overturned many of the ways in which we relate to each other; it was the spice of the struggle; it made space and time for other alternatives to dismal enrolment in exploitation as wage-earners and consumers.

This has all left behind many tracks and new energies....

To see what to do next, we would like to invite to Dijon committed people and collectives to share experiences and to think about how to follow up the alliances and practices that have sprung up. We would also like to share with other European activist, specially from Germany and Greece, who have in recent months been at the heart of the same kind up social upheavals.

There will be talks, films, debates and exhibitions, and in addition, here are some topics we would like input on for debates and workshops:

- the legacy of the movements of the unemployed at the end of the 90's, of the undocumented foreigners, the way in which the high school movement in 2005 triggered an uncompromising approach, or how people were struck by November's riots and their direct assault against the State.

- inventiveness in the choice of actions, and how the decision to block the economy focused energies and made us stronger. For the future, we must think about how we can maintain, pass on and multiply these types of action.

- the long-term struggles borne by part of the movement refusing not only the CPE but also salaried employment, and the logic of economic growth and education-consumption.

- the way in which several months of occupation of universities gave the opportunity to develop self-organised collective living experiences. The importance of reclaiming spaces for the struggle....and the special kind of experiences and what happened in those spaces.

- the tools for organisation, assembly, and decision making that people in struggle in different towns created... national coordinations, messy or very formalistic meetings, affinity groups,

assemblies in struggle, the importance of the myth of majority voting to legitimise the struggle....

- the strength and autonomy of the movement, as well as its persistent fragility in the face of trade union manipulation, media propaganda, or the 'end' decreed with some success by the government by the withdrawal of part of the bill.

- relations with the media and how the movement acted without them, boycotted them or even targeted them, by being strong enough to avoid relying on them for visibility, and by showing up the media's role as a guardian of the social order and the liberal discourse.

- by contrast, how important it was to massively use tools like Indymedia to arrange meetings, communicate about actions, and debate....

- analysis of the links between the movement in the spring and the 'suburbs'; the very low level of involvement of activist circles in the November riots and the links of solidarity which did, however, manage to emerge sometimes. Alliances and conflicts during the movement between 'suburb youth' and 'students'; facing the reality of these divisions and how they are seldom overcome in the course of the struggle.

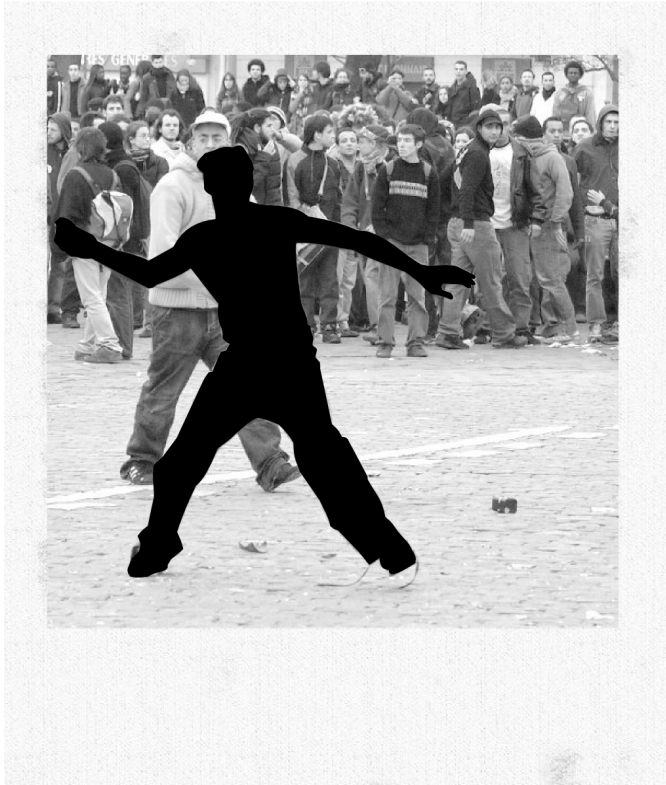
- how this kind of social movement can break down the walls around the 'radicals'. Many activists were amazed to see how very marginal practices and ideas can suddenly find mass acceptance in a context of social crisis and struggle.

- how some established activist groups either made a decisive contribution to the whirlwind or found themselves sidelined.

- prospects for the time after the movement; how to create a lasting struggle and continue to coordinate, exchange practices and either prepare for or fan the flames of the next revolt.

- support for the victims of repression.

Those are some ideas, and it's up to you to bring in new ones, and proposals for workshops.....in advance, if possible, so we can prepare and start drawing up a



programme.

Some links towards texts resulting from the fights against the CPE and its world:

- **Le CPE, une goutte d'eau dans un lac de rage - Quelques remarques sur la violence, l'illégalité et l'orientation des luttes sociales (Grenoble, avril 2006), translation: - english - german**
- **CPE - « Le Monde se referme-t-il ? » follow by « Pousser le monde qui s'écroule » & « l'Appel**

de Raspail » + Bonus

<http://infokiosques.net/spip.php?article=332>

• **« Réflexions sur le soulèvement en France » (bureau of public secrets 22 mai 2006)**

french:

<http://www.bopsecrets.org/French/france2006.htm>

english:

<http://www.bopsecrets.org/recent/france2006.htm>

japanes:

<http://www.bopsecrets.org/japanese/france2006.htm>

Radical Ghetto

THE RADICAL GHETTO AND WAYS OF OPENING UP TO OTHERS...

Two remarks with regard to the 'ghetto':

- **Marginalisation of the activist tendency: how to leave the ghetto without possible conflicts of interest through involvement with NGO's etc, in other words, reformists?**
- **Destruction of militantism and the development of a way of life without conflicts between: private life/political activities/work life.**

And other common activist ills. Is there a more satisfactory way of going about things?

These two questions are slightly different, but both deal with the same problem: how to keep

and develop our political identity without being isolated from other people - or from certain aspects of our lives?

The « ghetto », its identifying group and its militant practices, permit us to get together, resist, exist in the face of pressure of society's norms and dominant practices. Its probably impossible for a social group to differentiate itself from others without developing its own customs, values, language, even musical tastes, ways of dressing (black clothes!) etc. This gives us strength. We like it. Its all good.

The problem is that our actions and values are aimed at changing the outside world. Not just at creating a cozy hermetically sealed little alternative world for ourselves. We will only succeed if we link up with and make ourselves understood by others who are also people disgusted by this society! At its worst radicalism becomes a sort of inverse elite of anti-capitalists, anarchists, etc. who consider themselves more evolved, purer, and braver. They believe they know everything, and therefore stick to each other because others cannot understand... great for the ego but not very efficient. And often, in fact, this leads slowly but surely towards a corporate way of acting. Each person fights primarily for their own interests and, while this can be good, if, at the end of the day, we are only interested in defending our own way of life (i.e.: squats) what is the difference between ourselves and the corporate unions that we criticise (unions, in their turn, believe that squatters just want a free place to live)? Worse, with time, this attitude could end up drifting towards a kind of alternative cocoon or towards right-wing cynicism.

Its not that we are doing it on purpose! But how to break down divisions and media-created stereotypes? In our society we aren't that used to talking directly with people. Its via TV that we know whats going on. Our posters, leaflets, demonstrations are somewhat efficient in regrouping our 'band' (such that it is) but what effect on passers-by, our fellow city dwellers? Its got to the point that often there is nobody who will try to distribute leaflets or chat to people because ultimately they don't know how. In reality, demonstrations truly exist only if covered by the media. Therefore its the

media that formulates (or reformulates more to the point) our message! At the European PGA conference at Leiden there was a guy from Attac (a French organisation fighting for distribution of stock exchange profits) who came. It was incredibly interesting to see the difficulty we had in explaining to him our criticisms of his organisation. It was as if we simply weren't used to interacting with someone with a differing political viewpoint. Our attitude is a little schizophrenic because most of us are not full time activists (happily!). In our 'full-time' existence, in our work lives and private lives, we are naturally obliged to live by more conventional rules.

There are obviously plenty of people who both dream of and put into practice an overall life goal; who avoid compartmentalisation by organising their entire life (private life, work etc) in a way that is consistent with their political ideas. Cool if you can manage that, but obviously that once again poses the question of ghettoisation and relations with the outside world.

Seeking escape from this impasse, however, there are interesting experiments: autonomous social spaces (Geneva), theatre happenings, different street (or shop) events, stories such as the first person to start « Precarias la deriva »(a Madrid organisation fighting for women without job security: <http://www.sindominio.net/karakola/precarias.htm>).

And each one of us, at work, for example, do we not talk about politics? Yes, there's lots to talk about ...and act upon!

QUELQUE PART À TOULOUSE

TO GET BACK ONE'S FEET ON THE GROUND.

In 1800, 85% of French population fed itself and fed the 15% left. Today, agriculture represents 3.6% of active population. In 20 years, it will represent 2%. This activity – totally subject to chemical industry's, food industry's and department stores' distribution's interests – poisons grounds and impoverishes biodiversity ; it hugely consumes greenhouse effect energy, uses up water reserves and endangers a great number of vegetal and animal species (including ours) in the third world or here. GMO and nanotechnologies (chipping animals is only the beginning) will increase the power of a small number of multinational companies on living.

Nearly everything in our environment, education, culture and consumption pushes us back from concrete and practical knowledge of these fundamental gestures that consist in feeding ourselves, dressing ourselves, loving ourselves, building our own homes, entertaining... Work has been divided, life atomized, artificialized and we have become an out-soiled population in a huge store where everything is under control, with some Disneyland sectors we still name earth.

In front of such a situation, we can hide our face, trust "Science", not look at yet irreparable damage on our planet, not tell ourselves that the announced end of petrol will lead to – in addition to an explosion of wars that have already begun in the Middle-East and elsewhere - disasters in series in an agriculture totally dependent on this energy and Market. We can also complain, as we often do, in front of mortifying and lightning progress in our daily life... we can not stop progress! Moreover it's so convenient ...

We can also start reacting, trying to get our feet and hands back on this earth. Some young (or not) people are attending to settle on it to

présentation du lieu:

Un terrain en ville, très grand, entouré d'espaces verts et directement en lien avec les pratiques frauduleuses de spéculation des institutions.

become farmers. Buyers' networks, direct exchanges are built. Collective vegetable gardens are starting to grow. City people are trying to take back –at least partially- this vital issue of food. The reason is that in front of speculation on the price of earth, the change of our farms in cottages for wealthy eastern European citizens, to react has become an emergency.

Collective answers to this crucial issue of access to earth are organizing (such as the GFA in Martres de Bel in Penne, in the Tarn County or this of La Ruche). Other initiatives are on, such as the buying back of earth in the Lot County. Some "tontines" (free interest loans from person to person) have been set. They match the attempts in cities for free access to housing to counteract speculation on buildings. The right to have a home versus private property, autonomy, respect and justice versus dependence, irresponsibility and submission are the values claimed in these movements.

To let people know about these adventures, a relay group has been built in Toulouse. It aims at sensibilizing people around by showing films, organizing lectures, meetings and debates and allowing interested people, groups or associations to get involved (actively we mean) in these projects.

It is certainly just the beginning...



URBANISATION : SETTING UP A PLACE TO LIVE IN, A STEP FORWARD AGAINST THE SOCIAL PARTITION INSTOURED BY POLITICS.

This last topic refers to an answer to politics aiming at social separation and partition. A striking example is offered by urban measures in the french suburbs : great one-way streets allowing easy and quick isolation by the police, and a will to break down gangway communications between buidlings. These measures will help repress the suburb population following new legal orders, for example in France The LSI measures, or projects for penitentiary establishments for under age delinquents. The new arrangements in the center of town clearly aim to restrain street life, a symbol of counter-power in a state where the police is very strong. All these urban arrangements arround people's homes come with official decisions aiming more and more to bend people's lifestyle in this authoritative direction .

One of the topics discussed at Toulouse during PGA conference will be about urban arrangements. We will try to think about an urban dwelling allowing a real social thread to build and survive. All this thinking must come along with examples of new urban constructions based on solidarity between inhabitants, faced with the state policy aiming to isolate people from each other, and prevent different urban areas from communicating. A few crtitical thoughts about a social dwelling policy in Toulouse : Garden townships pulled down for the benefit of a more « secure » and profitable dwelling, at short term The example of the garden townships in toulouse during the last 10 years clearly shows that a short term security is preferred to an organisation in favor of social bonds between inhabitants. The fact that so called social organisations, such as the OPAC, come up with such policies is even more shocking. These individual houses surrounded by a garden are slowly giving place to small houses or blocks of flats without any space or garden, and designed to be

seperated from each other. The changes of urban landscape with the elimination of the gardens generated space for yet more buildings, more expensive because of security and watching gadgets (cameras, closed parcs...)What are the losses in terms of social bonds ? Short term, these policies will be accepted as long as needed to expell a certain population. Long term, one would rather see areas where people are attached to their area by tough bonds. Alas, this does not please the estate agents, even hidden behind the « social » tag .

Suburbs partitioned and displaced following economic growth In suburbs like « la reynerie », urbanisation has a visible goal, which is to control the inhabitants. Great one way streets to come and go from the area is a good example. The town ship is secure in a few minutes, owing to police busses at both sides of the area, controlling every by comer, for months on end. This situation was visible during 2005.

In order to prevent mettings and restrain organisation, the gangways and corridors are to be distroyed, because of the strategic shelter they could offer in case of a police intrusion. This implies breaking a third of a building, separating it in two distinc and therefore isolate blocks. Urbanism is the management of public and shared spaces : the collecting of dustbins and the general salubrity of the area are essential for ideal living conditions. The Mayor's area is cleaned tow times a day by 3 different dust trucks. These town ships will slowly loose their inhabitants,, because of the GPV (Great town project). This implies creating communicating streets, breaking down old buildings, to allow the technological aura to show at the exteme edge of town. The building of new

Urban areas will isolate the townships. During the riots of November 2005, it was impossible to reach « la reynerie » after 4 in the afternoon by bus or underground, and by car it took an hour and a half from the center of town.

for control : no meetings out of festive conditions, squares rebuilt to prevent meetings, whole areas remodeled because of their subversive population, replaced by richer consumers. But if the inhabitants choose to use that space as they want, the police interferes,



Town centers, commercial window for the inhabitants, when the attitude towards urban space gets commercial

The center of town is turned into a gigantic sales window, nice places to stop are becoming expositions, there are many ideas still to find.

Adapting dwelling to the surroundings

Self constructing means arrangements around living spaces are not only for specialists, but for those who want to imagine their living space. It also means adapting to the environment the building materials (locally used, or in town, picked up from old building sites). During the meeting in Toulouse, we will study the proposition of building a house made of free and disposable materials (earth, sand, wood, metal fences...) commercial : one has no more choice but to stop at the terrace of a café. Douste Blazy, the mayor of Toulouse, promised the shopkeepers of the center of town never to turn it into a pedestrian area, in fear of « marginal » visitors in the center of town. Street behaviour is ordered by security laws

such as the « fête de la musique » 2005, where people realised that they couldn't walk freely in Toulouse. In Barcelona, people are not allowed to walk without a goal after nightfall. A critical view of today's urbanism implies a global reflection, not individual to each township.

A few ideas for an alternative use of our space : communicating cells, the notion of private property and use property

Autonomous townships does not mean to shut in populations, turning them into communities, but rather to allow them an independence concerning a space. « La reynerie » is an example of non autonomous cells in terms of public services (garbage collection, postal service, cultural and social activities). To the contrary, the center of town has an opposite relation, as it centralises the activities of the suburbs.

These autonomous cells must have access to communication networks (public transport,

absence of high speed streets going through the township, who prevent access to pedestrians, green parks between 2 cells allowing meetings away from the oppressive commercial atmosphere)

This autonomous cell principle shows a simple idea : the free choice of any inhabitant to his choice of a dwelling, and the way one chooses to use and make the most of it. This also concerns a group of dwellings, in the way they communicate, and share bonds and solidarity. In Toulouse , this is difficult for the inhabitants of « la reynerie », and those of the garden townships, as well as those of the center of town : the squares nearby are becoming less welcoming.

One must keep in mind that we differentiate private property, and use property. When talking of free choice of urban design and arrangements, this right prevails for use property, as private property cannot be decisive in the choice of arrangement of a space. The confusion between both properties led the OPAC to decide new urban policies for the inhabitants of the Garden townships : the owner is allowed to decide how the inhabitants will have to live in their area . We must judge alone the incoherent consequences of such policies.

Collective access to earth, to confront an oppressive urban policy

The benefit of a collective access to earth is not only financial : the squatter is not concerned by this particular aspect. Building and setting up a collective space is building an autonomy strong enough to keep the dwelling as one intended it to be, while respecting the urban policy. If alone, the built up space slowly gets invaded by the outside urbanism, becomes less autonomous, and gets squashed by the urban pressure. Access to earth already exists, new ones can be invented ! (see text on access to earth) Space belongs to those who use it. Nothing can stop us from squatting, except a violent repression. We must show the right to use property. An old man from Ariege said : « the earth belongs to those who use and

work on it ». This can be understood as « space belongs to those who arrange it for a living ». This implies arranging the house, but also the neighbouring public spaces, because we meet other people there. This is a subversive act facing an oppressive power, which is afraid of people's organisation : during the riots in November 2005, pacific marches were repressed as hard as violent riots. Public actions aiming to rearrange public spaces for a short while show other ways of using the space to bypassers, expropriated by urban policies. Meals, free dances, night protests, non formal

