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**nos estais
haciendo sentir
cada vez mas**



rabia!

! Eviction of *Gezi Parki*, Taksim square, Istanbul, 31st June 2013

Hi fellows,

Welcome to the second issue of the RoR Zine!!! The RoR Zine project was initially started by some members of the Rhythms of Resistance Action Samba Band in Budapest. They wanted to spread out their messages to the people they were playing and dancing in the streets with. It was non-national from the start: written in English, mostly by non-Hungarian natives, and addressing mostly local issues about the political reality of our Budapest community. If you're interested you can download it here: <http://lmv.hu/node/7353>.



After the first number, the project grew wings and flew to other places where the streets and fields roar with pink rage. It's still not based in any nation or native language, it's still do-it-yourself, and now it has stories from all over the world. It's even more awesome, now that many people from everywhere are connected to it. We don't represent anyone beyond ourselves, we don't own the idea "RoR Zine". Our aim is to light more dreams, our hope is to see the dreams turned into actions. So read, enjoy and spread it! And if you feel inspired, let's do the third issue very soon together!



This version you have in your hands was launched on the 5th of June 2013.

the zine turbine collective

• ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to everyone who made this DIY publication possible, writers, illustrators, photographers, translators, editors, and above all comrades. Thanks to you for reading it.

• LANGUAGE STATEMENT

The persons that have contributed to this zine come from different corners of the world and therefore speak and write English differently. What matters for us is that we can understand each other.

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• FEEDBACK

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Analysis of a transnational reality of creative protest by Luisa Conti

Intro

From London to Mexico City: an alternative path.

The next pages will present the young reality and peculiarities of the glocal¹ society we live in. This research focusses on the Batucada band based in Mexico City, member of the transnational network “Rhythms of Resistance“ (RoR). This article is structured as a metaphor of a Batucada performance that is organized in various 'rhythms' and 'breaks'. The text has three Rhythms: the first - 'Node' - is the result of a group interview with four RoR band members; the second - 'Network' - is a presentation of the history of the network and its main features; the third -'Meta'- offers some theoretical perspectives which permit to go beyond the specific analyzed case and discuss this phenomenon as a process of creation and development of glocal cultures.

1 In the word “glocal” the adjectives “local” and “global” melt together, just like in the substantive “glocalisation” “globalisation” and “localisation”. These phenomenons that appear on the one hand in opposition to each other do often complement each other.

1. Rhythm

“Node”

2010. UNAM (National Autonomous University of Mexico). Name: Ocupa Che. An autonomous, self managed work space is created.

It is a woman, Adriana, who decides to share what she had learned through the exchange with some Europeans living in D.F. some time before: Batucada. The word Batucada has an African origin that refers to a popular meeting, normally on the streets, where samba is played with percussion instruments and sometimes also vocals (Schneider, 1991, p.36).¹ Brazilian music includes different kinds of samba, along with other genres, that were developed through a mixture of Portuguese traditional music –influenced previously by the Arabs– along with music from areas such as Nigeria, Benin and Angola.



Break 1: One, two,
three, four

During certain times of upheaval or exploitation, music, which is direct expression of human emotions, came to take different functions, among which “resistance” was a



Break 2: Espacio libre “Ocupa Che”, UNAM, Mexico City

key one. To be loyal to its origin and to revive the abandoned tradition of using music to resist are ideas which brought to the creation and spreading of a transnational network of activists, who chose playing Batucada as their specific form of political expression. As all the information needed to join the network –from its principles and ideals to its rhythms– can be freely accessed on-line, also the students of the UNAM were able to learn the different rhythms² played in RoR and the individual parts for each instrument. “Rhythms of Resistance” could be therefore played in the Ocupa Che of Mexico City, thousands of kilometers away from most other bands in the network.

They had the idea, they had the rhythms, and they had everything you can make up the different noises of the Batucada: tins; water jugs; bottles; sticks; and even a bicycle..

A lack of musical skills, was not – and still isn't – seen as a barrier to join the band, as the network aims to be inclusive for anyone motivated to participate. The fact that new members do not need any prior musical knowledge, nor to own an instrument themselves, shows how the band is set apart from mainstream musical institutions and proposes an alternative to the established art elite, that can sometimes exclude people from seeing themselves as potentially capable in this field.



Break 3: Mexico City's Batucada

“You don't need any knowledge of music or to have an instrument. You can make instruments and music wherever” (Paco) – An art appropriation written by non professional critics that aims to free art from bureaucratic institutions, and promote self-organized collectives and learning through reciprocal and free training: *“[you can learn from] the people that bring you support in different situations of your life [...] becoming yourself more solid and true”* (Paco).

Learning Batucada by observing other players and listening to the rhythm can be described in a sense as revolutionary. By mimicking, the new players can start to reproduce the rhythms, without needing to read sheet music.

“When there is silence, you can still dance with your eyes closed” (Paco). In this way, you have to re-learn how to listen not only to the noises but also to the silences. *“When you go to anywhere in the mountains and you don't make a sound you will realize that you still hear music: because the earth, and it's living creatures are moving all the time. [...] Unfortunately [...] these days music is very devastated. Today more value is given to the musician or the performer than to the music itself. This shows that human beings haven't yet found the way to live together, with the music”* (Paco).

Whilst practicing the Batucada rhythms –on the underground, in your living room, or in the park- it is about allowing the music to fully occupy the space. Furthermore, there are different kinds of rehearsal exercises that help players to feel what the others are doing. *“What we want is the music to be meta-music: to let it go beyond us, so that we can feel it”* (Paco).



Break 4: You can make music from anything

Learning through the senses allows the person to directly link with the instrument in order to enrich and reinforce the learning later by studying the musical scores. Learning has no limit, *“anything you learn is feeding and reinforcing knowledge”* (Paco). Knowledge, used in society as a tool, is to be shared in the group, like the power itself: *“The one that knows the most has the moral duty to pass their knowledge on to others”* (Roger).

It is important that everybody learns how to play all the instruments and also how to conduct. This avoids dependence of the group on specific people, as everyone can be substituted easily and the band can still function in different constellations: *“Where there is an invitation to an artistic or cultural event or we are called for a demonstration, it is announced the day of the rehearsal, then we rehearse, and we announce it again to know how many will come. Lately this has worked very well, despite the fact that the most experienced members couldn't be there, their absence*

was balanced with people that were new in the band, so we didn't feel the absence because there was equal participation" (Paco). The fact that the players all know how to play the different rhythms with more than one instrument and possibly also how to conduct has two advantages: it increases the chances that the band can perform, as there is no instrumental voice missing; and it allows everybody to participate freely with equal influence. "I think that with the Batucada you can dissolve hierarchies among the players as well as among the dancers, because everyone can join it" (Luis). Humility is seen as a key attitude to succeed in creating a balance between the most experienced members and the less experienced ones: "You must be modest and always start from the basics, as you knew nothing. That's why we began today with very simple things. More than anything, there would be a lack of respect from the comrades who just arrived if you imposed yourself through your knowledge" (Paco). Knowledge is something to be transmitted from one person to the other so that it can transcend hierarchy. "We want to share something different, not just to reproduce the structure. [...] [For this reason, it is] necessary to rethink our attitudes and what we are sharing constantly, because – like Sarah said² – we are all part of the society and we all reproduce it" (Luis).

Gender roles, along with issues such as sexism and chauvinism, are particularly important to the young RoR Mexican activists, especially in relation to overcoming hierarchies. "For me, overcoming gender divisions is one of the most important topics of the struggle" (Kabán). Within the group this means to take care that power imbalance is not reproduced, and there is active participation of both men and women. This is highlighted through clear visual codes that challenge the typical parameters of social division between genders. Men wearing skirts is an example of counter-current action that this group tries to practice during performances, thereby



Break 5: Collective knowledge transfer

appropriating femininity whilst also questioning it.

This permits on one side to break with the sharp gender division which justifies strong inequalities in the society, and on the other side

2 Sarah is a young woman, member of one of the German bands belonging to the Rhythms of Resistance network. She took part of the meeting between the Mexico City band and some members of another German band in which the Mexican players were interviewed.

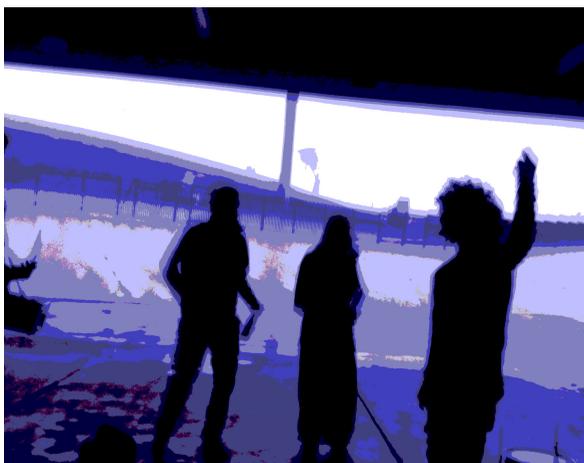
transform sensuality –represented by the skirt– into a human construct, no longer limited to the group of people (women) which is –furthermore– imposed. In the same way, the dancing of the Batucada rhythms, usually performed by thin, half naked, female samba dancers, is practiced in this group free from social limits by anybody who wants .

By the choice of colors worn at artistic shows, for example in the circus, clothing can also symbolise a different world that the show wants to represent, such as a world without racism, or a world where, like the Beatles sang: *“all the people living life in peace [...] sharing all the world.”*³. In the band you can wear whatever color you want: *“In fact we realised that if the problem is color or 'race' –white or black... We are an exaggeration of all what is unwanted, noise and multi colors: exaggeration! When it comes to political things, we are a bit more discrete so that all the attention is mainly drawn from the pure vibe of the drum”* (Paco).

From this statement it becomes clear that even if the band supports cultural and artistic events, it recognises the political struggle as center of its being. *“Let's not forget that we are political beings. Even if we don't like it, we have to [...] take a position, so our position will always be critical, [...] and the drum is a form of resistance in Latin America and in other parts of the world. [...] Experimenting with sound, all these matters call to our attention, and are forged together by principles of art, humanity and resistance.”* (Paco).

The Batucada of Mexico City was formed through the network “Rhythms of Resistance”. It is a group, mainly of young students, that is open to people of any social class, competence and age. The group is aware of its political power, and provides an alternative dimension to the tendencies imposed or favored by the current capitalist system, by creating a social experience defined by an atmosphere of free access and participation, and through the positive energy of music and dance:

“For me what makes Batucada special –and for me



Break 6: Music and dancing for all

3 Original text from the song “Imagine” (1971).

also very political– is that you don't tell people how they must behave, think or fight. You simply deliver what you can –that in this case is playing drums, and sharing the vibration and amplification of the drums with others. I think this makes it more political. For me personally the struggle is not so much about whether we fight or not for fair struggles, because they can be fair for us but not for others, I think the most important thing is to share this experience with the people and to enjoy it together, without worrying so much about people liking it or not, or whether they are with or against your struggle, because [what matters is] [...] to make a difference” (Luis).

These musical events, independently whether they happen under the frame of a cultural event or they are explicitly political –like a demo–, take their strength from the primal power of drums that creates an atmosphere of openness and unity. The universal language of music plays a central role, as a medium which can connect people without any mediation. Furthermore: *“There comes a point in which it is possible to create another language through music, beyond the conscious and the subconscious [...]”* (Luis).

The power of music resides in the fact that it is rooted in human nature, and allows emotions to be limitless, whilst uniting people through shared experience. *“Then the music fortunately is an important foundation of humanism and that's why it attracts people, and that's why you will never feel alone on a demonstration”* (Paco). During political demonstrations, the music counteracts the atmosphere created by batons or police shields and proposes a different fight to the one the media often choose to publish. Through music it is possible to surprise and involve people that normally base their information on the biased, censored, and controlled news from mass media. The news that appears in newspapers or on TV normally portrays activists as violent, while in reality they are fighting for a world of justice and solidarity.

Bands like the one founded in the “Ocupa Che”, Mexico City, still represent a novelty, despite the fact that *“in Latin America drums have previously been very linked to the resistance, for instance during the Haiti rebellion. There is a text, for example, written by Alejo Carpentier⁴ that describes how the first call to rebellion was given with a drum: [...] Macandal who was like a wizard, and a shaman, calls to the black enslaved people with drums”* (Luis).

4 The work Luis refers to is Alejo Carpentier's “El reino de este mundo” (1949)

2. Rhythm

“Network”

The first band of the network Rhythms of Resistance was founded in 2000 in London by a group of students together with a Brazilian musician. Their goal was supporting Reclaim The Streets actions, which were at that moment heavily repressed by police. Reclaim the Streets is a movement which uses occupation by surprise of heavily trafficked streets as a tactic to symbolically take back public spaces to the people. This is achieved practically by blocking the roads and transforming them into place of celebration; The political aim is raising awareness about the dehumanising use of the streets, main arteries of urban life, but also sharing public space in general. This critic began from the historical consciousness that cars have monopolized the functions of the streets that were once the lively epicenter of community life (Engwicht, 1999). The stain of noise and colors inserted through the samba band in this kind of demonstrations has not only helped to realise the idea of celebration, but also has made police repression more difficult, since it is more difficult to impose violence against a group of dancers and musicians: a situation that the police had never faced before. The London Batucada has origins from Brazilian experiences –such as the Olodum⁵– which have been using the power of music, and other artistic expressions, against racism and to promote afro-brazilian rights, social justice and equal opportunities, since the 70s.

The creative force of this kind of band is not limited to the development of an alternative form of struggle: it also influences the musical sphere with related samba styles, such as samba-reggae (Stokland, 2009).

The party atmosphere in the context of street protest, thanks to the Batucada, is enriched by the London bands use of super-kitsch costumes that contradict social norms and dress codes. This contribution of counter-trend is clearly intentional but also part of “tactical frivolity”, a strategy to contradict violent militancy or resigned pacifism, but also to humanise protesters for the police, and the media (Starr, 2005, p.239).

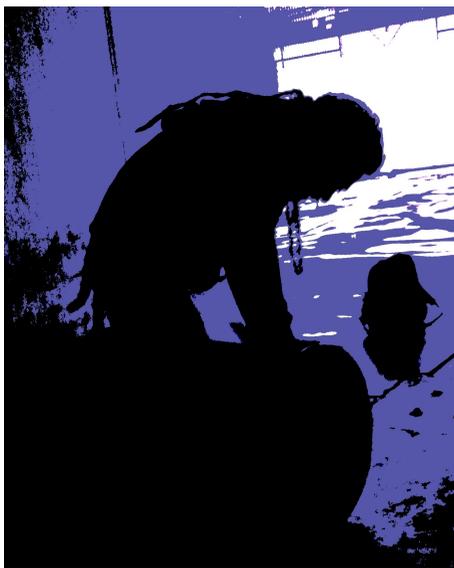
This tactical frivolity can be expressed in different ways: for example the

5 www.olodum.com.br [5th of November 2012]

Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army are a network of activists who bring satire and irony to the demos by acting like clowns (McClish, 2007, pp.106-108). To bring irony, fun and happiness to protests isn't necessarily something new: in '68 it was used by the French Situationists in opposition to the “homo economicus”, and the “homo ludens” that live in everyone (Debord, 1967).

The peculiarity of the groups that act in this post-globalisation period is the participative response under the frame of the depressing effects of the Society of the Spectacle. They try to create a space of –at least temporal– equality, in which they question everyday conventions and try to minimise hierarchies. This is highlighted in the logic of the carnival, a rare moment, as described by Mikhail Bakhtin (1984), in which people unite: a carnival against capitalism is a joyful form of resistance in which everyone should and can participate (Scholl & Duyvendak, 2012, pp.9-10).

This form of protest brings music to the most sterile of political discourse. In the same year of its foundation –2000–, it was experimented at the international protest against the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund held in Prague. Here activists from different countries gathered at the meeting place of the representatives of these corporations and the politicians from the most influential countries in the world who were planning to discuss the neo-liberal status quo.



Break 7: The beat of the drum

50 people joined the Batucada. And by using tactical frivolity decided to dress and decorate themselves in pink and silver. These colors have been used from the 90s by mainly feminist groups that, in the framework of the campaigns against economical globalisation, adopted tactical frivolity as a strategy of critical expression (Starr, 2005, p.239; Kolářová, 2004). Together with several other demonstrators that also dressed in pink and silver, formed a powerful carnivalesque block, that managed to bring the controversial meeting to a stand still (Bogad, 2011, p.186).

Through tactical frivolity and creativity, the Batucada reached and still reaches activists from cities all over the world: after the successful protest in Prague in 2000,

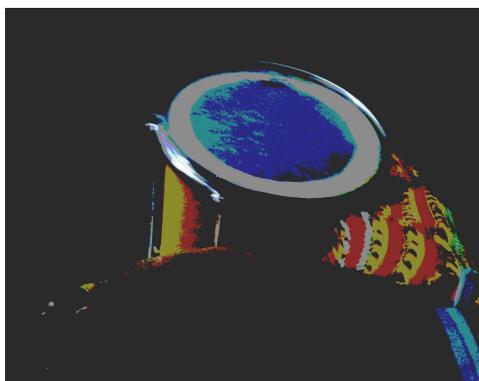
many bands were formed and still new bands continue to expand the Rhythms of Resistance network. All the bands (now more than 60⁶) that form the network play the same rhythms and use the same signs to direct: this means that all single members can play together creating an extremely powerful audiovisual presence. Another common characteristic of the network 'nodes' is the decision making process: human diversity is respected in the group and the participation of all members encouraged, as democracy is not built on the majority rule but on consensus. This means a solution is worked out until everybody –and not just the majority– are satisfied.

Each group, although unique, identify themselves with the following principles:

- "We are a transnational, anti-hierarchical, anti-capitalist, anti-sexist and anti-racist network fighting for social and ecological justice.
- We are activists using samba as a form of political action.
- We use tactical frivolity, inspired by carnival to confront and criticize any system of domination.
- We also directly support everybody experiencing or struggling against exploitation, discrimination and oppression, without compromising our principles.
- We reject any false opposition between militancy and creative forms of resistance. Even if we are different bands operating in a decentralized fashion, we aim to maximise participation in our collective process.
- We are an open network to any people who share our principles." (RoR 2013)

As you can read on the website, anyone who shares the principles inspired by the Peoples Global Action platform⁷ can feel and be part of it.

All the necessary information to build instruments, conduct and play the rhythms, just like the techniques to create and maintain a system without hierarchies, are uploaded to the digital space⁸ in many languages. You will also find written on the site: "Come with us! We have everything to play for!"



Break 8: There are drums for everybody

6 Update: May 2013; Source: ROR [[5th of November 2012](#)]

7 <http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/es/> [[5th of November 2012](#)]

8 <http://rhythms-of-resistance.org/>;

3. Rhythm

“Meta”

Mexico City, Ocupa Che, October 9th 2012: The woman who conceived the Batucada workshop in 2010, based on her personal contact with some members of the Network “Rhythms of Resistance” and on the digital information she could get in its homepage and in other sites, isn’t nowadays a constant member of the band. Most of the current members never met her and the story about the group origins is being forgotten: *“We don’t know that much about the international network, we don’t have the contact, but I feel part of a global resistance using sound to resist”* (Kabán). The Mexico City Batucada knows the rhythms, the signs and also, through the documentary “Tactical Frivolity + Rhythms of Resistance” (Vila & Expósito, 2008), knows about the well-known use of subversive and creative structures. Through the interview, hold after the rehearsal of the 9th of October 2012 in a room of the Ocupa Che, is obvious that they share the basic principles of the network, as fighting through music against dehumanizing and destructive capitalism, and trying to keep themselves as a non hierarchic structure. The fascination by being part of global movement, made by exchange and solidarity networks, carries them away: *“People separated by geographical distance and language can meet each other and share the fight with*

sound, with rhythm. This sonic resistance looks beautiful to me, because it isn’t only about saying let’s go to this demonstration, we have to organise ourselves, it’s about sharing our lives, sharing our rhythms, sharing our flavours, sharing our joy and fight starting from that. And this makes possible that people like us can meet each other and can relate from drums. And this is awesome.” (Luis). Being in contact with the network members and feeling part of it in a more or less

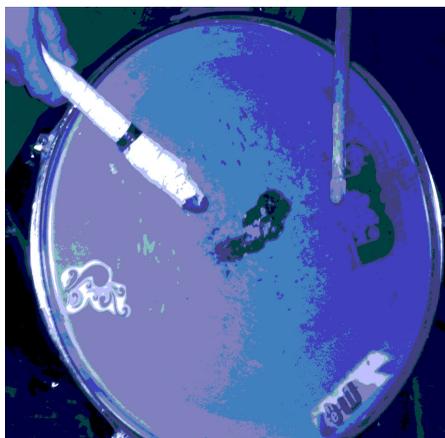


Break 9: Share and create

http://lamandragora.ourproject.org/wiki/Todo_el_manual [5th of November 2012]

direct and conscious way underline the role of this network as a promoter of an innovative and modern way of fighting. A way deeply connected with the traditional resistance of the people in Latin America: “[...] I find it beautiful that you come here to leave something from you and see this Batucada growing, while we –in the future– can leave it to someone else. In this way the feeling transcends and this expression never dies. We give life to it and pass it on” (Roger).

From London, passing by Mexico City and with unknown destination: the Network “Rhythms of Resistance” created its own culture, made from practices and codes transmitted through direct and indirect communication, physical and digital, giving shape to a collective memory in continuous development.⁹ The space of the Batucada became for its members a space where they can behave according to the routine, because they know what to expect from the others in certain situations and they understand the others behaviour inside of it. These reflections evidence the fact that the “world of life” (Schütz, 1974) of everyone, so the sum of the contexts we are part of, is composed by different environments –more or less interwoven with each other– with their cultural specificities. This means that all members for example of the Mexico City Batucada know cultural codes specific for their own band, family, university and discipline, hometown, nation and all the other social groups that they belong or belonged in the past. All these codes melt through a creative process in themselves. Cultural practices of these different groups are the dynamic result of the communicative action of the hybrid subjects that in a direct or indirect way influence them. Therefore, the specific culture for the Mexico City Batucada analyzed in this article is a result of the different influxes brought, transmitted or left by their members. The initial cultural elements from the network “Rhythms of Resistance” interpreted and created by the woman who promoted the foundation of the band have been mixed and enriched by the ones brought by the other members, adapted to the national and social specific environment. The meeting between some of the members of the Mexico City Batucada and the German RoR bands from Berlin and Bremen represents a moment of communication where new cultural



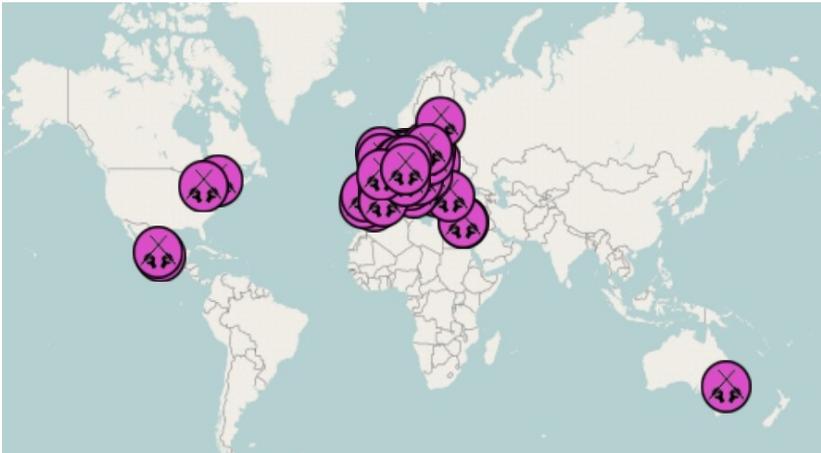
Break 10: Language without borders

⁹ The proposal of recognising in the network “Rhythms of Resistance” a group with a common culture is based on the definition of culture by Aleida and Jan Assman (1994): culture as a historically mutable product of communication, media and collective memory.

elements are transmitted in both directions.

This allows the realisation and possible harmonisation of the different elements and the strengthen of the common elements. It is evident that this Network represents a typical case of glocalisation: On one side global common elements are spread on a global level, on the other side these same elements are always interpreted by the single individuals within their specific group in their unique way and adapted to the local situation. Thanks to communication, direct or indirect, physical or digital, knowledge is exchanged and direct actions are shared. Consequently this globalising and localising processes coordinate between themselves and keep the cultural dynamic alive. The international diffusion of the RoR network indicates that society aspects often criticised are happening beyond national boundaries, even if the way they are expressed locally can be more or less similar. This is because neoliberal capitalism has homogenising effects, and reproduces the same critical situations that set the common base for the protests. In a context of “global citizenship” (McIntyre-Mills, 2000) the free movement of knowledge and practices allows the development of glocal actions that, together, can make possible changes which go beyond the local context.

As Appadurai (1996) theorized, there are transversal fluxes to the geopolitical boundaries, as the financial (finanscape), mediathic (mediascape), technological (technoscape), ideological (ideoscape) and the ones connected to human beings (ethnoscape). The creation of the activist’s band in Mexico City can be described as the result of the ideological fluxes (ideoscape) that could be put into practice in the Mexican capital city thanks to the Internet immersion of the starter (technoscape),



Break 11: Map of the Network Rhythms of Resistance.
November 2012.

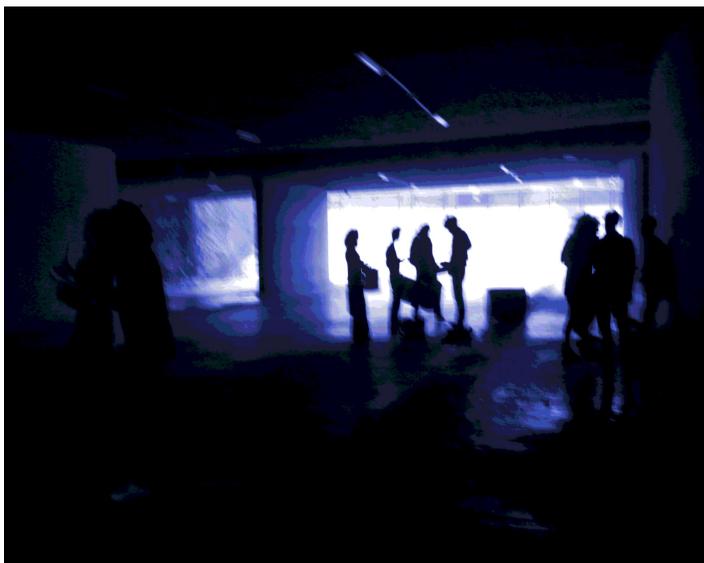
strengthened by the meeting with people from the same ideological current coming from around the world (ethnoscape) in a context of global oligarchy of mass media (mediascape) and eccentric arrogance by the economic and financial powers (finanscape).

The Rhythms of Resistance ideoscape keeps on growing: the network managed to cross some continental limits, as the Atlantic, so that now in Mexico City Rhythms of Resistance vibrate.

Who knows, when and how quickly other nodes of the network will grow in other Mexican cities and how quickly, if happens, the network will cross towards the south, because North America –United States and Canada– are already conquered.

Thanks to:

I thank all the members of the Mexico City Batucada for the hours of music spent together. Specially to Kabán, Luis, Paco and Roger for their availability to be interviewed and for the immensely enriching exchange.



Break 12: End

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How to be horizontal in vertical spaces

Or how we survive the Juan 23 by **Ando Pensando**

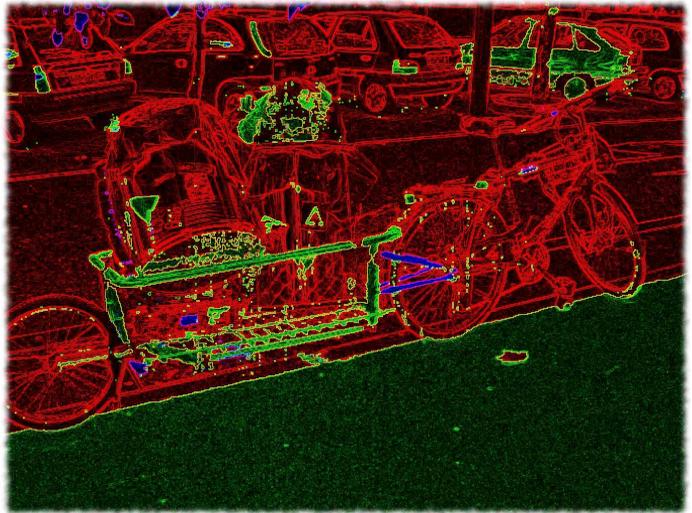
A few days ago, two months after having decided to stop being an (active) member of RoR Córdoba (Spanish State), I read an email on our mailing list which said that the next rehearsal was going to be at the banks of the Guadalquivir, under the Miraflores bridge. I couldn't resist taking up the role of the old grandfather and I replied going over old times: RoR Córdoba's first rehearsal ever, in 2008, was held exactly at the same spot.

A few weeks later we started rehearsing in the Juan 23. This intriguing space emerged from the leftist base democratic christian-catholic movements in 1963 as a circle of intellectuals, after an encyclical of pope Juan XXIII (hence the name "Cultural Circle Juan 23", in short Juan 23). The Juan 23 took up a vital role in the struggle against Franco's regime and when they lost their head office in the 90s, they occupied an abandoned municipal building. By then the circle had changed significantly. Those were good times for the squatting movement in Spain. We even found a video that was preserved from that time in which people talk about horizontality and base democracy.

The last character in our story is called PCE-r (spanish acronym for Reconstituted Communist Party of Spain), a split off of the PCE (spanish acronym for Spanish Communist Party), that was at that time generally considered as the political arm of GRAPO (spanish acronym for Antifascists Resistance Groups First of October). Many of its militants were repressed with personal torture, torture to relatives in their presence (even to newborn babies), long imprisonments with vexatious treatments, etc. Some of them were active in Córdoba, and after getting out of jail years later, they went back to the womb of their struggle: the Juan 23.

A few days ago a friend told me, talking about torture, that its objective isn't to kill the persons who undergo it, but to keep them alive and let them go back to their revolutionary movements, in order to destroy those from within. It was only then that I understood with what we had confronted ourselves at that time, when we transformed the Juan 23 more than we realised and less than we would have liked to (though from its side, the CC Juan 23 also changed us).

RoR Córdoba was a strange cocktail of sambistas who already knew how to play well and had some political interest; activists from the “No to war



against Iraq” movement and local anti-globalization struggles; other activists who brought the central european idea of activism with them, as well as the concept of the horizontal movements which arose from the Zapatista uprising in 1994 and from the WTC protests in Seattle in 2000; and finally some people who were just curious or who wanted to be 'cool', or maybe both. We felt the need of finding a place where we could rehearse, keep the instruments and hold meetings, but we didn't want to eat from the hands of the local government of Córdoba, which was traditionally leftist at that time. When we arrived at the Juan 23, we found a battle on two fronts: on the one hand there were the people who had kicked the front door open and who had occupied the new head office. Having their roots in the squatter's movements and counter culture, these people's ideas were based on horizontality and consensus. The

other front was made up of the repressed and tortured communist militants we talked about before, who were fed by the logics of hierarchy, old political dogmas and in many occasions also of vanguard politics.



It didn't take long before we began to involve ourselves in the decision making processes of the Juan 23. The "counter culture" groups saw us as a natural relieve in the struggle against what they called "the black side": the repressed communists. But we went farther than that and broke the dichotomy between art and politics. Making counter art or counter culture in a way is already doing politics, but we wanted to go one step further: we were more political than artistic, only that our banners and megaphones were musical instruments instead. Were we artists or activists? (they would have called us militants). We were activists: we occupied a border zone within a dichotomous reality, and that always is - as it was also this time - highly subversive.

Another of our strengths was the fact that we were pre-figurative. The persons within the Juan 23 with a counter culture background believed in horizontality, but when confronted with violence they entered the conflict with the same arms. This converted the assemblies in a patriarchal and little democratic space in which only those who were able to shout, talk disorderedly and insult, got the chance to speak, while the rest stayed at the background. In the end, the repressed used to win by the force. While some run the activities others took the decisions, thus creating a curious

small scale reproduction of the false democracies of the welfare state. But we applied our own dynamics: rather than refuting their arguments, we fought their methods: ignoring speaking turns, monopolizing them with repetitive discourses, shouting... we didn't want to defeat the violence with violence, we preferred to transform the violent climate into one that would be accessible to as many people as possible.

Today I understand that we performed care work by acting like we did: we participated in and energized the working groups, we gathered and prepared the agenda for the meetings and timed it, we facilitated...but at the end of the day, it got the worst out of us too. If you want to make a vertical space horizontal, you have to learn to go into confrontation, to support high levels of violence and to win a place and respect in the logics of hierarchy. You have to play, reproducing the logics of hierarchy.

The repressive establishments had set a trap for us, in an authentic demonstration of “torture engineering”. They built a wall so strong, that the only way for us to demolish it was to turn ourselves into stone and become another wall. Without realising we were doing so, we stopped frequenting those spaces. Being from stone in public and regenerating emotionally in the private sphere, consumes a lot of energy. Maybe it was feminism that made us question ourselves, in the end our emotional work won, and almost naturally we began to abandon the Juan 23 and build our own reality somewhere else. In the end, the projects aren't the buildings in which they live, furthermore they aren't the social change. Buildings and projects rise and fall, but the catalysed changes stay inside of us.

Nevertheless, we cracked the wall: today the repressed communists help cooking in the popular kitchens, and they have overcome this aversion they had to everything which contained the word horizontality, something they used to connect immediately with the counter culture collectives. Or the word consensus, which they associated



with the treacherous pacts of the spanish transition (time of political reforms after Fraco's dead, often presented as a model of peaceful transit to democracy). Moreover, they stopped thinking of the word republic as the only way of canalizing the antifascist struggle, they now see it as just another option. They even begin to internalize agroecology, social ecology and even feminisms as struggles which are part of a bigger whole.



But we also learned something. We saw that change doesn't happen when we want to and try to provoke it, but afterwards. The wall didn't crack when we banged our heads against it, but way after that. Changes only happen when the time and the conditions are right for it. We also saw how the logics of capitalist and patriarchal society were reproduced on a small scale right in front of our eyes, which somehow served as a mirror that made us look inside ourselves and see when we were reproducing those logics. And when we saw that, we realised that the violence wasn't in the persons who exercised it against us, but that it was structural. And finally, we found that sometimes the liberated spaces are what

they are, and it requires less energy to create a new space at your own taste, which can add to the already created ones, than to transform one which already exists (don't wait for an eviction to start squatting again). Trying to mould spaces to your image and likeness is also a form of vanguardism. And, to say it in the words of Galeano, relating with the repressed communists from other spaces, made us see that they weren't extraordinary monsters, but great persons, whose badness didn't go further than being forced civil servants of a structural violence of which they also were and still are the main victims. Actually, that's what we all somehow embody, both the civil servants and the victims.

Fiction interviews to imaginary RoR bands

by **Jonka Buli**

"...and the noisy bastards really got far and their message and rituals spread over space, time and other possible parallel dimensions." RoR Bible

Through these interviews you are about to read, we are bringing you news from two radical batucadas you might have never heard about before. We are aware these can be shocking news, but they are as real as you and us.

- BLACK AND SILVER -

For security reasons the letter font of the person interviewed has been modified

Q. How long have you being playing in the band?

A. I started when i was 3 years old, with the low surdo.

Q. How many band members there are in your band?

A. 20 on a regular rehearsal, 60 if you count the undercover cops.

Q. What is the main challenge for your band?

A. In actions its hard to keep the rhythm when police charges, cause half of the band starts drumming on the cops instead of on the instruments, and its confusing for the maestre. We are having some discussions to find a solution for this like having a sign so everyone plays on the police for 4, 8, 12 or 16 times, then back to the instruments. Others propose to campaign for a better sounding riot police gear.

Q. Can you tell us about an action that was particularly relevant for your band?

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Q. Tell us a wish for the future.

A. Metal ear plugs, dynamite repi skins,

tamb grenades, telescopic sticks and agoguns.

- POLE BAND -

This interview was rescued from Roald Engelbregt Gravning Amundsen personal notebook. It was kept in the dark through the years till today.

Q. Tell us something about your rehearsals

A. In winter we play during the day light hours. In summer we rehearse on an iceberg. We always start with some warm up games, its good to break the ice, but when that

happens we have to move to another iceberg.

Q. How many band members are there?

A. We are 1 person, 1 fish, 1 penguin and 1 polar bear.

Q. What is the main challenge for your band?

A. The biggest challenge is the consensus decision making, but we think its because of the diversity of backgrounds of the band members, its difficult to meet everyones needs. Its specially hard to make buddies. Recently we heard an orc and a seal want to enter the band, and because we believe new members bring new ideas, we will soon move forward.

Q. Can you tell us about an action that was particularly relevant for your band?

A. There was this degrowth action we did ones to protest against big luxurious cruises, it was the year 1912, in April. There was this huge boat, i cant remember the name now, but I remember they also had a band and we both played until the end. I think they made movies afterwards about the whole thing, but im afraid we didnt get our message across.

Q. Tell us a wish for the future.

A. Global warming!



Possibilities and perspectives of samba as political protest

by **Sophie Abbe**

I would perceive myself as politically active since around 16 years. I started to organize political work in a women/lesbian group and engaged with feminist and anti-racist topics. Later on I would locate myself more in the so called antifascist movement in Germany.

Well I remember the discussion about useful forms for political actions. What is the aim we want to reach and which means are useful to reach it. So in line with the anti-globalisation movement, practices of political protest have come up, which differ from past, classical strategies in their carnivalesque and very much body-centered forms. Most of all, the so called pink and silver block, appearing 1999 in Seattle for the first time, then in Prague (September 2000), Gothenburg (June 2001) and Genoa (July 2001).

And my engagement with topics like performance art and performative street protest in context of my study the last years brought me back to the topic of political samba bands. The influence of subversive kind of art in new kind of political protest started in the 1950th. In this mixed people use, for example, practices for political

intervention, which work with theatrical and performative means. And particularly samba drummers and radical cheerleaders represent the elements of theater and artistic-activist forms of expression in demo blocks. And also political samba baterias use different strategies, which are based on different concepts of emancipatory protest.

Engaged with this topic I was interested why actually people decide to use this kind of protest and what does it mean for them? Are there political strategies connected with personal feelings and emotions and if yes in which way? What does it mean for individual person to act for example with costume? And which roll plays the music? With all those ideas and questions i decided that I



wanted to make a movie, because this medium is supposed to show the dynamics, motions and music of this kind of protest.

The performative action of pink-and-silver-dressing and the music act on different levels which condition each other, outwards, into the group/block and upon the individual itself. I want to explain shortly what does it mean for me with the help of

some authors. Towards the outside, this form of protest distances itself consciously from classical, rather offensive and confrontative forms of action. Pink and silver consciously uses the technique of irritation. Bordieu describes strategic action as one, which is appropriate to the situation and refers to the habitus, that is on



its part pre-adapted to the corresponding field (here field of protest). Regarding the habitus of protest, this pre-adaptation means not to be adapted but to undermine expected behaviors and forms of appearance. With the performing element, a play with patterns of thought and stereotypes embedded in society starts as they are consciously used for a staging of protest. Police, media and the audience are confronted with pictures they are not able to classify.

The group acts as one body of protest with offensive, colorful happiness and music. The chosen dresses and rituals of protest create a different social climate with the group/block. Actionism and firmness base on non-hierarchical structures and without a prescribed dresscode. The performative action of the group deconstructs prevailing gender norms and ideal pictures of bodies, so that the alternative seems to be existing already within the form protest. The common staging of this form of protest already changes the social interaction within the group towards more equality and solidarity.

For the individual, this can be a form of emancipation. According to Robert Foltin, the performative element of political protest offers the possibility to re-acquire one's own corporeality, which is underlying the access of capitalist exploration. Being eccentric, trying out oneself, pushing own strengths, being brave, acting commonly, finding the oneself beyond social or societal patterns of behavior or judgment. This space can be opened by the performative approach towards protest and by that, alternatives can be lived – as a complement to the formulated criticism of societal mechanisms of exploration and exclusion. This area of tension of performative action and political protest was my first access to the concept “Samba“. And wanted to picture it in the movie project while also focusing on the self-conception (principles), political reference points and experiences (this of course interacts).

In the first place, the movie is based on interviews with people who wanted to talk about their contexts within their groups and also individual experiences in the process described above. Thereby, I wanted rather not to focus on structures and organization aspects but on possibilities and perspectives of this form of protest and also on borders and borderline experiences of activist with and within this concept.

The movie eventually more or less only pictures a German point of view, because four of the six interviews are with German activists. I´m quite sure that the perspective differs to other political contexts. Also the pink and silver dressing becomes a really big part in the whole story, but I know there are a lot of bands who don´t practice this dressing up. So eventually the movie picture just a small extract and show in which way people can think about their decision for political activism.

But still it was a great experience which brought me together with a lot of

interesting people and started wider discussions as the movie can show. I´m grateful for the possibility to made this project with all those nice people. Thanks a lot.

Some references

- Robert Foltin: <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0902/foltin/en>
- Gini Müller: *Possen des Performativen, Theater, Aktivismus und queere Politiken*, republicart, Bd. 7Wien: Turia + Kant 2008.
- Pierre Bourdieu: *Sozialer Sinn. Kritik der theoretischen Vernunft*. Frankfurt (M): Suhrkamp 1999.



RoR language and dialects

by **Naomi Sad**

Intro

Rhythms of Resistance is a decentralized network of action samba bands. In theory all the bands share some common principles, music and methodology. In practice each individual and each band has a different connection with RoR, and this connection changes according to different situations and evolves with time.

When certain bird species fly together in swarms, there isn't a leader or a vanguard showing the way, instead the itinerary is a result of many factors involving each of the birds in different ways and levels and the interaction with the others. Some scientists call it emerging intelligence.

Whether our network is a beautiful swarm or a disorganized mess (or both) is one of the questions behind



this text you are about to read.

Some people call them dialects within the RoR language, I think they refer to small differences in breaks, grooves or signs. There are plenty of examples. Most of the times is hard to figure out where do they come from. Some of them were already there when I joined the network, I got to know them but never got to understand how they originated. It remains a mystery for me.

However I can recall some situations in different bands I played with. Once upon a time in my RoR band one of those days when we didn't have the tunes booklet with us, but we were trying to play that new tune, XXX. No one remembered exactly how it was, but some of us remembered parts of it, and we all wanted to give it a go, so we played it.



The following weeks none of us took the effort of checking with the written tunes if we were signing and playing it as it was described in the booklet. The new version settled as the only one. Voila, a dialect was born.

The new comers learned the dialect, without knowing it was a dialect, and the old members who might have known both versions, left the band or never actually realized of the situation.

After some time a RoR member (lets call it Kiki) came from another band to play with us. During the rehearsal we happened to play the tune XXX again. Looked at us ojiplatic, then looked to the tune sheet, then to us, then back to the sheet, then to us,...and eventually shouted, "that's wrong, you should not play it like that!"

A discussion started. The local sambistas, who were not there when the new version came to life, were in a very weird position, "that is the way we learned it". Kiki, swearing on the almighty tunes booklet, defended the purity of our musical language. The locals felt their identity questioned and refused to give up without resistance. Finally, someone comes to the solution "Its a dialect!". End of the story.

Do you want another example? Mistranslations: when writing the tunes on the computer, a small mistake is made, and catcha bum, another beautiful dialect is born, of course, its the awesomeness of our diversity.

Come on people! that is too easy. "Its a dialect!" bullshit. "There are different ways of understanding the tunes and signs" bullshit. "We like it more our way!" That I believe, but we are musicians part of the same network, we need a common language, and we need to take care of it. Once you are home, play it the way you want, when we are together, or we are synchronized or we fail.

Part of our power lays on our music. Of course there must be room for mistakes, improvisation and creativity on the music and on the signs. But thats not our main goal, I hope you agree. Shall the tunes stay always the same? No way!, only death music stays the same, but positive change comes from a conscious collective process.

There are things RoR can learn from other batukadas, but often we are too proud of our politics to accept that there are plenty of examples of samba bands that have more respect and commitment for what they do than us. We have the potential and we have the tools, if we all put a little more into this, the radical change will be irresistible.

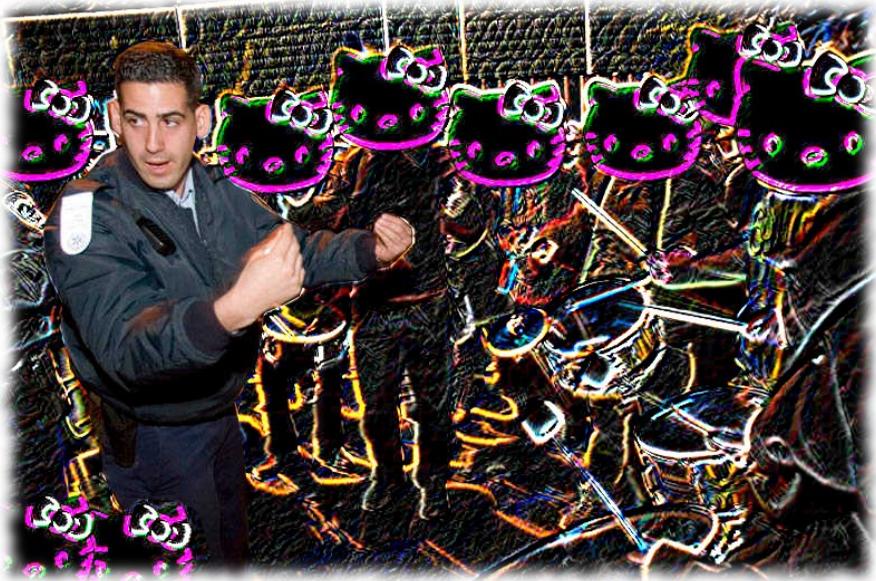
Naomi Sad

THE END

Post scriptum. Do you want to help us? Please check this out. Compare the way you play these breaks and tunes with the audio files and the latest version of the tunes booklet from our website (www.rhythms-of-resistance.org).

- FUNK. Groove. Surdo and agogo line, 2nd hit.
- JAMES BROWN/PACOTORREAR. Groove. Low surdo, when to use the whipy stick and when the surdo stick.
- DRUM'N'BASS. Groove. Low surdo. 3rd hit.
- SAMBA REGGAE.DANCING BREAK.
- KALASHNIKOV. BREAK II AND II INVERTED. The call and response part.

CAN YOU PLAY



THIS RHYTHM?



Solidarity message with the students movement

by **RoR Budapest**

Original text published in Hungarian and English on the RoR Budapest website
(<http://lmv.hu/node/7745>), 14th February 2013

Intro

Last winter, the students of Budapest universities rebelled. They took over the streets, they occupied the main squares of the city, then they blocked the bridges over the Danube. Afterwards, they occupied the university, and sat to discuss and create alternatives to the system that pissed them off. We were on the streets with them from the beginning. However, we felt sometimes that we were not taken seriously as a political group. People were expecting us to play our drums, and shut up when the national anthem was being sung to the crowds, or when the megaphone speakers were only male. So we rebelled as well. It was a rebellion in solidarity. After some discussions among our group, we wrote this text as a message of this solidarity with a

student movement, a solidarity that does not conceal our rage for some things we didn't like. The text is a collective work of RoR Budapest, and it may seem trivial for other RoR people – like preaching to the choir. But for us it was a way to reach out and explain our beliefs to people who were not necessarily into the same kind of politics as we are. It is a situation that happens all the time to RoR bands, right?

[A RoR Budapest sambactivist, May 2013]

* * *

We are the kids you see playing drums, shouting and dancing in your protests, and in other actions in Budapest. We want to tell you that we admire and appreciate your work and we are in solidarity with you and your movement. But we would like you to know us better, to know who we are and what are we fighting for.

We are called 'rhythms of resistance budapest', and we are not hungarian, american, british, brazilian or any other nationality. We don't really like nations, or states, or any form of identity that has anything to do with borders between people. We only use english language because it's a convenient way to communicate with each other and with people from other places. None of us uses her or his 'native' language. So if you ask us where are we from, we'll just say 'budapest'.

We dress in pink and silver and other loud colours because we want to be flashy and ridiculous. We want people to laugh at us, to have fun with us. But we are serious about our goals. We use our music, colours and dances to express our political ideas



and to take action against the oppressions that happen in our lives and in our friends' lives. We bring the idea of carnival to stiff and gloomy demonstrations, and with our rhythms we spread the musical wibes in order to attract the attention of passers-by. We channel the rage against the system into rhythms and resistance!

We stand for horizontality, and we don't really like any forms of authority. That's why we believe in consensus, mutual support and solidarity. We do not have any leaders. We believe in non-violent BUT confrontational direct action. We use creativity in our actions, and we strongly believe in do-it-yourself principles. That's why we have no 'sponsors' or stuff like that. And we don't play for any political party.

It is very important for us that our politics is feminist. We strongly reject any influence of patriarchal structures on our actions. This includes what we already said – nationality, hierarchy and authority. It also includes any ideas about gender roles and divisions, about gender binaries, or about marginalizing someone on the base of their gender. This is why we are strongly against any form of sexism, homophobia, transphobia and misogyny. Step aside, let women comrades speak!



We don't pretend to be who we're not, and we recognize our privileges – citizenship, income, class position, social capital, education and race. We fight against what bothers us personally, but we do understand that we cannot walk in anybody else's shoes. That is why we are in solidarity with the struggles of homeless people, Roma people, illegal immigrants and asylum seekers who live in budapest.

The situation of these groups in Hungary is desperate. The institutions of the state make it to be a crime to be anything else than 'pure' Hungarian. We rise up against this purity! We shout out against any far right, Nazi or fascist idea that comes from political parties, institutions of the state, or just people on the street.

Our politics is a fight against any forms of exploitation. Budapest is one of the most policed cities in this region. The aim of the police is not to serve us, but to serve the state. The aim of the police is to control us. It is to put people in prisons: people who are poor, who do not have the right skin colour or the right 'social' behaviour. We are in solidarity with all these people!

We recognize that we are also privileged to be humans. In our society, to be anything else than human means to be treated as an object; to have no possibility of getting any rights and decent treatment, to be used as a commodity. We stand against the mis-treatment of our non-human friends! Animals, plants and nature are part of our lives, and the same system that destroys them will destroy us, if we don't fight back.

So in the end we want to make it clear that we are not a samba music band. Music is just a tool for our political ideas. We are a political group, and we have our own ideas and agendas. With our rhythms we strive to stir up and revive any protest/demo we participate in, and be loud about what we stand for. We know that the organizers of the current student movement are similarly opposed to utilizing nationalist and/or male chauvinist rhetoric; we want to call for an increased awareness of how problematic speeches and methods can be avoided within future demonstrations and occupations. We are in solidarity with you!

See you on the streets! We have everything to play for!



iNo pāsārāñ! Dresden Anti-nazi blockade 2013

by Herr Flik

13th of February, a mourning march was called by the german extreme right to happen in Dresden, at the anniversary of the Allies bombing of the city. It was snowing. About 20 sambistas from Kiel, Hamburg, Leipzig, Heilbronn, Vienna, Berlin and Dresden came out to the streets to take direct action against the Nazi exhibitionism.

The white snow met the white nazis, sometimes on their face, as they were blocked for more than 5 hours, surrounded by more than 3000 people shouting, dancing and making new snow balls to throw at them. And we played, oh yes we played. Wherever there is a Nazi mourning there will be a sambaband to play the break 1 of Drum'n'bass.



When the day was over we went back to our daily lives where we rehearse, work, struggle, love, discuss, dance and build the drum sticks that we use every year in Dresden to hammer the Nazis out of their bald heads.



"I rather use the luxury of protest in this country to emphasis who I am, and to emphasis that I am a human being"

From the movie *Tactical Frivolity + Rhythms of Resistance*, 2007

IN SOLIDARITY WITH THOSE WHO DON'T HAVE THE LUXURY OF PROTEST



On the 17th of August 2012 Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, Maria Alyokhina and Yekaterina Samutsevich, members of the Punk band Pussy Riot were sentenced to 2 years of prison, the first two were still in prison when this zine was finished.