



They want capitalism without democracy, we want democracy without capitalism

Blockupy 2013 – we experienced intense and powerful days of collective action and common resistance. On Friday, more than 3000 activists blockaded the entrance to the European Central Bank, making good on our announcement to carry our resistance deep into the heart of the European crisis regime.

Afterwards, a multitude of disobedient actions highlighted the many ways in which the crisis-driven politics of immiseration intrude deeply into our lives and into those of millions of people around the world: through the exploitation and the deadly working conditions in the global textile industry; through the dirty deals that Deutsche Bank makes in the arms industry, through land-grabbing or speculation on foodstuffs; through the displacement of care- and reproductive labour into the private sphere and the resulting sharpening of gendered inequalities; through the displacement of people from their homes (by way of forced evictions, luxury renovations and the privatisation of public housing); or through the EU's merciless and deadly migration and deportation policies.

We came together in a great camp that was more than simply a place to sleep: for activists from Germany and Italy, from Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and Spain, from Greece and Austria and many other countries it was a place for encounters and exchanges as well for planning actions.

The police's assault on our international demonstration – with more than 20.000 activists – on Saturday was obviously intended to erase our successes from the previous days, and to split the coalition that had achieved them. Those responsible for the attack – especially the interior minister of the state of Hesse, Frankfurt's senator for law and order, both from Angela Merkel's conservative party – could not bear an international demonstration walking right past the ECB. In the run-up to the march, they tried to prohibit the march taking that route, but the courts cashiered their edict. In response, they simply went ahead and ignored the court's ruling, thus highlighting just how little their talk of democracy and rule of law is worth. The danger that the spotless façade of the ECB might be tainted by a few splashes of paint was apparently reason enough to suspend freedom of assembly, and injure – sometimes seriously - more than 300 people through punches and kicks, through tear gas and pepper spray.

The attack on our demonstration was meant to demoralise and split the movement. They really thought that they could just 'kettle' 1000 activists from the anticapitalist block at the head of the demonstration, and that the other blocks would simply continue walking on the route that the police had always intended for us. Obviously, they seriously underestimated the resolve of and solidarity among the coalition and among the activists. An attack on one part of the demonstration is an attack on all of us.

Nobody took them up on their absurd offer to leave behind those in the kettle. Thousands stayed until late in the evening and bravely confronted the police until the very end. It is this common experience of courage and solidarity in the face of police violence that forged even closer bonds amongst our coalition and within the movement.

Blockupy has achieved an important political victory. The attack on our demonstration has turned into a political disaster for the interior ministry and the representatives of the authoritarian politics of crisis 'resolution'. We are determined to continue preparing further actions at the European Central Bank, this raw nerve of the European crisis regime, where protest is so obviously effective and thus clearly undesirable.

There is no need to debunk the lies and justifications uttered by the police and the ministry one by one – many in the press and the public sphere are already doing this job. All of those who were on the streets on the 1st of June know: the behaviour of the demonstrators in no way justifies the police's assault. The order to stop the demonstration was given from on high. There was never a desire to let our demonstration march on the route that the court had cleared for us.

Repression and police brutality were meant to demonstrate strength and resolve, but in truth they do little but uncover the weakness and nervousness behind the reigning crisis politics, which they find ever harder to legitimate democratically, and which has to be enforced in ever more authoritarian ways. Because of this intertwining of authoritarianism and neoliberal crisis politics, the resistance against the social effects of these politics, against immiseration and the hopelessness into which millions of people are plunged, *and* the resistance against the curtailing of democratic rights also necessarily belong together. They want capitalism without democracy, we want democracy without capitalism.

We send greetings to all activists everywhere who took and are still taking to the streets. In particular, we stand in solidarity with our brave friends in Turkey. Your struggle is ours, too.

During the Blockupy 2013 days of action we took a major step towards our goal of becoming part of a large, common European and global movement. We will continue on this path, and will continue and intensify our discussions and common actions with our international friends.

BLOCKUPY promises to keep alive the protest in the heart of the European crisis regime in Germany. That our actions in Frankfurt will continue. We will soon send out invitations for a common meeting to begin a major international and participatory preparatory process for the mobilisation against the planned opening of the new ECB headquarters in 2014.

Blockupy coordinating committee, 5.6.2013

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