

Summary

This dissertation is interested in what kind of self and techniques of resistance are acquired in order to be a revolutionary in the contemporary West. While I was conducting an ethnographic research between 2008 – 2015 following young activists from Germany in urban spaces of demonstrations, riots, direct actions, jails, the Internet, universities, housing projects, parent's homes in Germany as well as during solidarity trips to Mexico, Argentina, Israel/Palestine, Denmark or Italy, it was discovered that a concept of political versatility may be helpful here. Young revolutionaries are what I call revolutionary amoebas.

Revolutionary amoebas acquire capacities to discuss at universities or public debates, write texts, talk, but they manage to argue beyond the discourse by throwing stones or burning cars in riots, organizing direct actions, smashing corporate properties, beating neo-nazis, attacking ultra-nationalists, or actively defending themselves against the police. As citizens of advanced liberal democracy, they enter public discussions of contested opinions, persuade people with their critical arguments and a few of them even vote, but they as well explore the political terrain considered illegal. Many of them know how to get funded from the state, The EU, and civic foundations, but use these resources to fight sometimes the very same institutions. They are anti-capitalist, but at the same time very productive, reorienting the disciplinary and neoliberal imperative of productivity towards fights against capitalism. Revolutionary amoebas manage to distribute the self through an extensive range of techniques, capacities, actions and human-nonhuman relations in order to be politically active in versatile ways.

Amoebas move forward by changing their shape. Revolutionary amoebas move forward by changing their political shape. It is precisely the crucial connection between moving and changing shape why the contemporary revolutionary youth in Germany acquire versatile, amoebic self.