

Theatricalize!

In the past few weeks we've seen how the police has been treating anyone who protests. Rounded up, blocked, beaten and chased on horseback. They aim at the quenching of protest, at beating you down mentally as well as physically so you feel that there is no point to protesting when the message isn't heard anyway and the baton still crashes against your skull.

We are policed relentlessly. It is 'normal' that we are nannied for actually voicing an opinion. If you gather publicly, en masse, you are subject to demeaning scrutiny, almost an army presence - as if those who protest don't have a single constructive thought in their heads. But the way they treat you just reveals a stereotypical imagination of what a protester is like. The police are unnerved by crowds. but more than that, the police are confused by imaginations. **So we need to give them more and more imaginative crowds.**

We should normalize protest. We should make it something that doesn't happen once in a blue moon with people holding up a couple of banners and a couple of recycled slogans, whining at the government not to do this or that (which they will do regardless).

Take back protest as something active rather than defensive.

We need to break through the current apathy, but not on terms set out by past models of protest. We need more actions. We need different actions. We need a ripe overkill of actions. And we need legal actions too. We need masses of people, actual (different sized, colored and shaped) bodies to come and protest against the insanity of Holland's current course. Activists of the left need to give more thought how to ally with Muslim activists; we're all in the same boat as pariahs.

I advocate playful but unrelenting forms of protest, which make it as obvious as possible that if violence occurs it has been instigated by the police. Signing online petitions does not help; only the physical presence of a mass of people who want their voices heard sends a shiver down the spine of the people in power. A mass of people is saying: I do not agree with your ruling me. A repeated mass turnout will say: I will not stop until you've toppled.

But the news cameras will always be there to show the brick in your hand instead of the baton in the hand of the robocop. They will write about it by relying on "official sources" such as police reports. But it has been your story too, so how can you let your opposition narrate it exclusively?

Most importantly, let us not become the usual suspects.

Let us not choose already done forms. Rather protest against the "little" wrongs. Turn all your annoyances about the kind of society this is becoming into a form of protest. Invert your own assumptions, and protest like you're rooting for your opposition because it mocks the kind of ordering of life that they want to impose on someone like you.

Examples:

- a protest against the violence of the police at demos
- a protest against Wilders becoming a martyr for free speech (why should he have the right to free speech since there is no free speech in Holland?)
- a protest for more housing speculation in Holland

But I trust that you've got better ideas than I...

We got to take our imagination to the streets, or the only imagination that will rule the streets will be those of a government you cannot agree with. It is most annoying for them if we refuse to sit at home (do you still have one?). Since they're about to cut cultural subsidies (except for maybe advertising firms which produce "popular forms of art" as these make lots of money, right?), theatricalize protest.

Take your "elitist" = marginal art forms to the street.

Do not let them turn your opinions into violence and blame you for it.