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Unschooling the summer: A zine of memories, reflections, and

resistance Year: 2023

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Unschooling the

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#### **EDITORIAL**

Nothing will be complete if there is no memory, and memory is how we call justice.

EZLN, "Mama Piedra"

"Unschooling the Summer: Walking the Line of Environmental Injustice" took place in Lisbon and Alentejo, Portugal from the 16th to the 22nd of July 2023. It was organized by Teresa Meira, Gustavo García-López, Aline Simões, Hestia Delibas, and Roberto Sciarelli—from the Ecology and Society Workshop (ECOSOC) affiliated to the Centre for Social Studies, University of Coimbra, in collaboration with Andreea Bonea (co-founder of Schwa.pt, cultural association, building bridges through conscious movement), Roberta Scatolini (CES) and Ivo Louro (CIUHCT-NOVA SCT). This marked the 2nd edition of the ECOSOC summer schools, with this year centered around processes of accumulation through contamination and dispossession, and the resistances to them. We sought to practice un/learning and becoming-in-common, through deep listening and deliberation, conviviality, experimental methods, and solidarity-weaving. Participants traversed on foot and utilized public transport, covering one of the best-preserved, and most threatened, coastlines in Europe—from Lisbon to Sines. The journey was undertaken in collaboration with social movements dedicated to shaping an agenda of alternatives for eco-social justice.

This zine documents some of the memories, experiences and reflections from this Unschool. It hopes to visibilise the struggles in the region, as well as to illuminate the strength of resistance taking hold here. We hope you are able to engage with the wishes of the unschool during reading:- a desire to do differently, to reclaim joy, and to build resistance, together, in territory.

Teresa. Gustavo and Beth

### Reflections on Unschooling the Summer: Imagination, Play, and Wholeness

by Teresa Meira

From one question, a path was formed: what can a map not show? A sunset in the Guanabara Bay with the Rio de Janeiro mountains in the background, a long-awaited meeting, news of Christmas celebrations from Puerto Rico. During a hot period in the south, the idea of "unschooling the summer" was being drawn in the north.

The philosopher continues to play with us, reminding us of the feeling of hitting the road, of continuing what was started a year ago, no longer fitting in a classroom, references to other journeys, the desire to unlearn and reclaim the joy of action-research, artivism, gatherings, listening, listening, and listening more deeply, but also dancing, cooking, and being together.

"Child-like qualities should be preserved until death as distinctly human qualities—those of imagination rather than of knowledge, of play rather than of work, of wholeness rather than of separation."

Agostinho da Silva

And finally, we scheduled the night of collaborative rice, a group of people who wanted to organize this journey, sleeves rolled up, various unmatched ingredients, refined seasoning, and the result: an unrepeatable dish with no recipe, not even that group could recreate it. And for dessert, a scribbled path, the people we wanted to meet, the struggles we wanted to join.

Environmental conflicts in Portugal have stories of resistance, such as the destruction of a nuclear power plant foundation that gave rise to the "Nuclear, no thanks" movement (Ferrel, 1976), or the nation's outcry that led to the rap song "The engravings can't swim" preventing 10,000 BC rock art from being submerged (Foz Côa, 1994). Yet we see that energy continues to be imported and that this is still the country with the most dams in Europe. This constant oscillation between progress and regression sometimes renders environmental activism in Portugal passive, ineffective, locally protested, but sometimes also standing alongside workers' struggles. Most of the time, however, "this anger we collectively silence grows the hand of the sovereign," as A Garota Não sings in "422".

From Coimbra, we decided to head south, guided by the coastal breeze, toward the Costa Azul, Once a geography of freedom, now a stage for grey realities, cementing dreams, freezing entire lives in the service of a single job, expropriating territorial memory.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "As gravuras não sabem nadar"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "esta raiva que juntos calamos, faz crescer a mão dos soberanos"

On the first day, *the encounter*. On the south bank of Lisbon, we sculpted paper elements representing us, a collective story emerged, the group was formed.

On the second day, the crossing. A tour of Lisbon immersed in real estate funds, lifebuoys: SOS Evictions, SOS Racism, the resistance network, residents seeking help written on walls, "don't let gentrification destroy this city," "no one is safe at home," the great earthquake still resonates after all.

On the third day, the awakening. The landscape and comrades from Setubal welcomed us to the Gâmbia Camparound, we used the pots and stove for the first time. Eyes on the next bank, the ferry crossing the estuary revealed a torn landscape, massive towers on a peninsula, luxury condos, Madonna's house-how do people get here? How did this become like this? Roads open along the coast, a new roundabout now features piles of sand in its center, resembling a dune cord, a memorial to a foreseen catastrophe. Emotions were mapped in Comporta, the light blue sea cools the heat of indignation, reignited as soon as we reach the next meeting point; the road leading to Aberta-Nova. Even Google doesn't hide that they don't want us there, wrong location—redirecting—how do you get to the beach? First, cut off access, no more coming and going, then a sign indicating a golf course, a vein opened in the middle of the consolidated dune. The fence, the security guards, the recycling bin, the gate to what they call a "playground for adults." Golf circuits compress the sand, sprinklers endlessly water the green grass, while the tap at home has already run dry. Dunas Livres (Free Dunes), we didn't find them, only a dry throat, watery eyes, and facing destruction head-on, a tractor spins next to us, the ignition key flies far away.

On the fourth day, *listening*. Waking up facing the Santo André lagoon, a soundscape presents itself, when did we forget how to listen to it? The cacophony creates connections, question-answer, a set of notes, beats, shakes, is anyone there? Maybe it was a ghost, or maybe it was the local wine

talking to us.

On the fifth day, contamination. The hot asphalt, metal melting onto the beach rocks, the port, an abandoned city. The plans and strategies that depersonalised resistance, undermined trust, emptied the squares, in the distance only pipes, chimneys, containers, iron roofs. Does Prometheus live in Sines now?

On the sixth day, sentir-pensar. And the things the map doesn't show no longer fit in our notebooks, our bodies also took notes. We are the map now, in the morning with theater and in the afternoon with collaborative writing, we create collective images, sounds, paths through the dunes, through the green gas pipelines, a mental scheme connects keywords, ideas, there is still so much to explore. On the island of Pessegueiro, the sun sets, and the music rises, we celebrate with a playlist that tastes like that collaborative rice, rhythms unexpectedly match, laughter is free, seeds have been spread.

And on the seventh day, *see you soon*. And the certainty that we want to keep walking, that we want to return, that we want to fight. And with the strength of solidarity, we shout: *we are here*. The encounter, the crossing, the awakening, the listening, the contamination, the feeling-thinking, the see you

soon.

COLLECTIVE STORY – ELEMENT OF CULTURE >>On the banks of the Tagus River and under the golden hues of its sunset, streaming through the glass window of the Almada Youth Hostel, people from different territories, speaking diverse languages, initiated a collective experience. Roberta Scatolini, invited the group to share a significant piece of their stories, condensed into the creation of an element from their culture presented in the form of a three-dimensional paper fold. Each one offered a testimony of their lives, embraced by a process of empathetic listening and learning. Subsequently, they freely stitched together all the shared elements, reinterpreting them from alternative perspectives, and inaugurated the following story that became dynamic and collective:

In the hills of Tejo, the climate justice caravan found the ancient olive tree, which was over 2000 years old.

As participants approached the tree, the olives appeared

peculiar, resembling avocados.

They went to the seaside for contemplation.

Suddenly, a missile plunged into the sea.

At that moment, the population sought refuge in a small barn.

A massive wave emerged, destroying their dwelling.

Spotting a raft, they repurposed it as a new shelter.

A melancholic song was played.

It dawned on them that a new island had formed.

To commemorate the occasion, they now ring a bell annually.

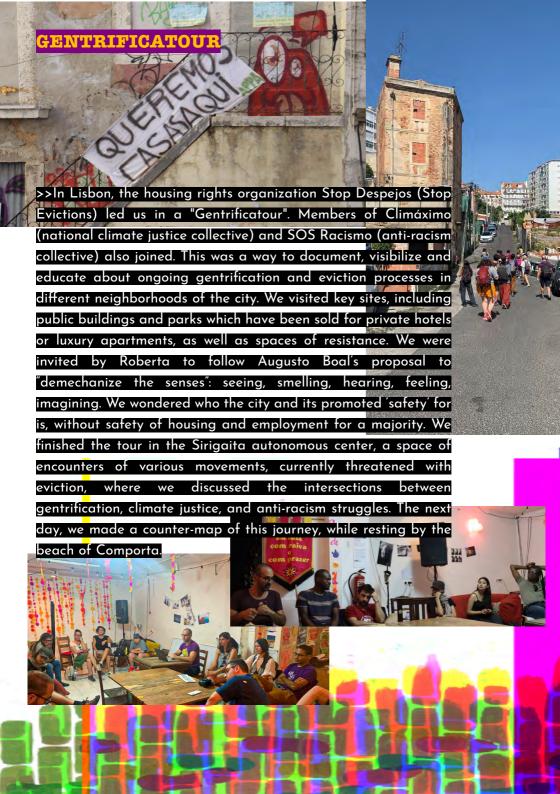
During the celebratory event, they drank a lot, noticing an

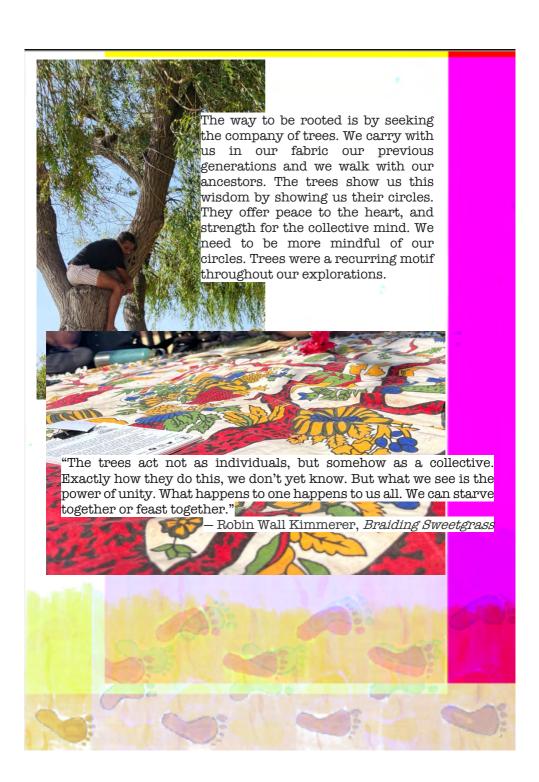
unusual avocado-like taste in the wine.

Involving the children, they constructed soplamocos

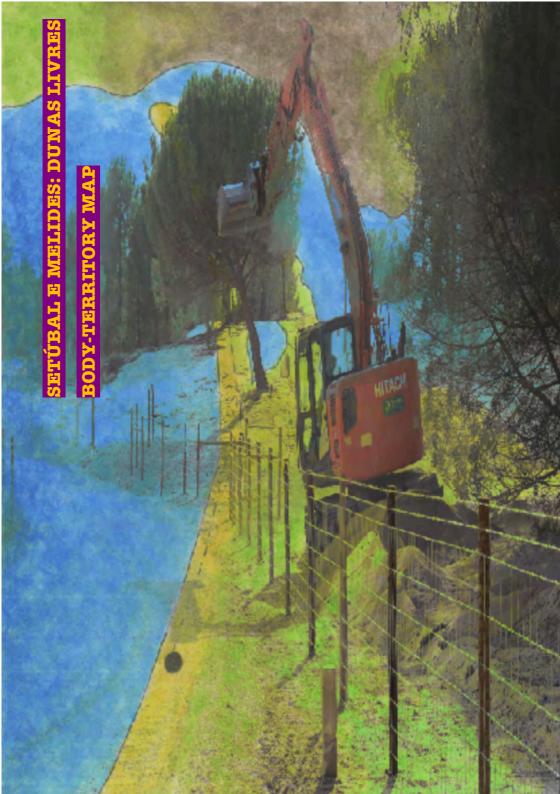
deciding they were all prepared to join the upcoming climate justice caravan.

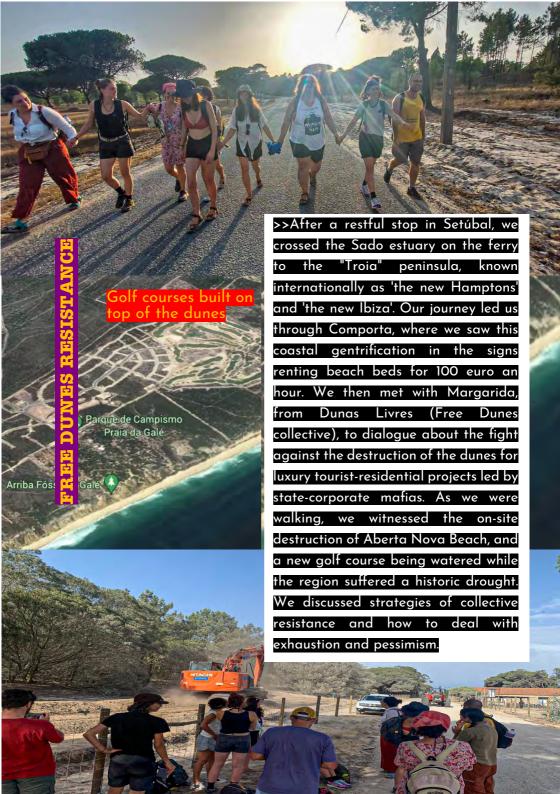












#### **BODY-TERRITORY CARTOGRAPHY**

>>Following the concepts and methods of Latin American feminist scholaractivists working with communities (particularly women) in resistances against extractivism, we made a body-territory cartography of our journey. The bodyterritory mapping seeks to centre embodied knowledges, practices and visions of exploited and silenced peoples-territories. It enunciates and visualizes the intrinsic connections the between material and affective, the "feeling" and the "thinking", what happens in the territories and in our bodies, through a collectively drawn body. Gustavo García-López learned it from Delmy Tania Cruz, Mexican feminist and anthropologist, one of the founders of the Colectivo Miradas Críticas al Territorio desde el Feminismo, a collective of women from different parts of Abya Yala (www.territorioyfeminismos.org). We began by drawing the contours of the body-territory: *How does it look* like? What does it have (its main parts)? We then asked: What is this body feeling? What are the violences and struggles that mark it and inspire it? Our map shows the joys and sorrows of collectively witnessing the destruction and feeling it in our bodies (the truck in our lungs, the dunes on our shoulders), while creating spaces of resistance nurtured by our voice and deep listening, music (the maracas), fruits and flowers, looking into ourselves (the mirror), the fire in our hands, the inter-connectedness with our environment.



#### **BODY-TERRITORY MAP**



Body-territory map made by the participants



#### LISTENING, REMEMBERING AND SOUNDING

>>Acoustic environments are ripe with relationality, drawing out the shape and materials of the physical and social spaces. Through the soundscape you can listen to the weaving of culture with aesthetic joy, emplacement, the vibrancy of the non-human, but also the tones and undertones of power, dispossession, and exploitation. During the caravan, we activated space-times of generative collaboration and understanding through adhoc activities such as soundwalks, collective sound improvisations, construction of long string aeolian harps, and listening to sounds on the edge or beyond the perceptible. In the Lagoa de Santo André, a group sound improvisation open to anyone without music training opened our ear for the sounds we make and how they are placed in an environmental, how the environments responds and how we respond to sounds from there and from the other improvisers. Co-active sound making and listening inspired us.

Throughout the trip, places, peoples and beings were recorded using different types of recorders and microphones, in order to map the journey sonically. The result will be a sonic journal composed by Ivo Louro and released as an album of six tracks each with 12 minutes. The first track, named "Gentrification In Lisbon And First Camp Site", is now available on the following SoundCloud playlist (please scan the QR code to listen).



FOR APPROX. 15 PEOPLE

RECIPE FROM PUERTO RICO (P FKM R)



# COMID

#### **HABICHUELAS**

400g of pre-cooked beans (80g for every 3 people. If you want to use dried beans, you must soak them in water the night before and boil them for about 2 hours in a pressure cooker. If they are canned, wash them well) Prepare the *Sofrito*. A lot of cilantro (a whole bunch), onion (1-2), garlic (a garlic bulb), red pepper (1-2), tomato (1-2), all chopped very very small (or crushed in a *pilón* if available)

# POLÍ

When the broth thickens well and the potatoes are cooked, it is ready. Taste beforehand to make sure it is tasty.

You can accompany the work with this tasty 80s merengue hit, "Menéalo" ("Stir It"): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YG JnTNnQLQc)

- Chop half a pumpkin (the kind with green-orange rind) into large pieces.
   Also 8-10 small potatoes
- 2. In a large pot, 'sauté' the mixture in oil over medium-low heat, approx. 10-15 minutes until caramelized
- 3. Add the beans and handfuls of salt, oregano, cumin (a lot), and curry (optional/to taste), and sauté for about 10 more minutes, stirring to mix.
- 4. Add the pumpkins and potatoes and let them fry a little, stirring
- Pour about 5-6 cups of water and put over medium-low heat.
  - 6. Shake it with some frequency. Add another bunch of cilantro.

#### **RICE**

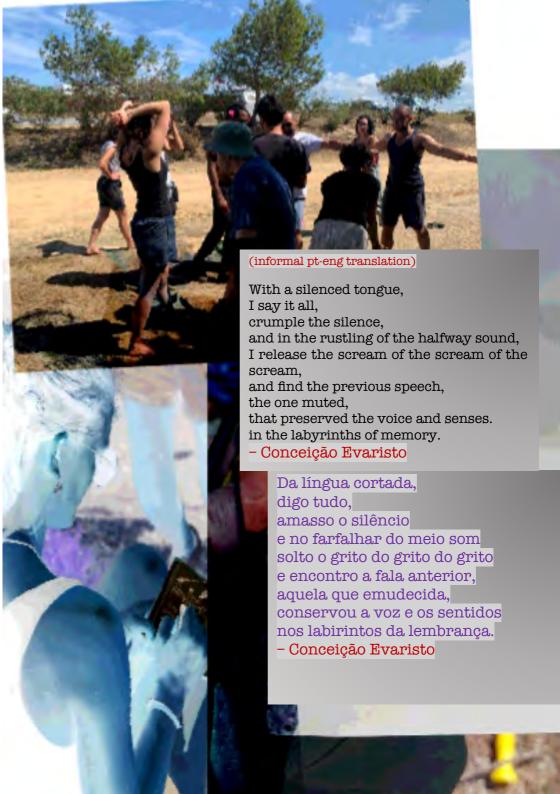
- 1. 3 cups of rice (ratio of 1.5 cup of water for each cup of rice)
- 2. Wash the rice well (voice of our grandmothers)
- 3. Boil the water with a handful of salt and oil, and the rice, and mix everything together.
- 4. Let the water boil until small holes begin to form in the rice, at which point put the heat on low and cover, leave for 20 minutes and check.
- 5. When the rice is already drier, you can mix it. (If it's obviously wet, don't shake it because it 'clumps up'. In that case, wait a little longer.)
- 6. Do not scrape the bottom when shaking it, so that the "pegao" (the most toasted rice on the bottom delicious!) is cooked well.
- 7. Once mixed, leave it for another 15 minutes.



receiving

>> After a lovely Boricua lunch, we digested the habichuelas while engaging in an "icebreaker" from Political Ecology Theatre exercises, guided by Teresa Meira. We divided the group into pairs, and each pair choose a quiet place to talk about a memory they wanted to share with the other person. The person telling the story closes their eyes, while the listener applies hand lotion to their hands and gives a hand massage. Then, they switch roles. In the end, everyone gathers in a circle and is invited to share their thoughts on the experience.

This is a crucial moment to recognize the responsibility involved in sharing someone else's life story—how to do it respectfully and honorably. It underscores the idea that when you are listening, you are giving, and when you are telling, you are receiving. In Political Ecology Theatre, we address real-life struggles affected by power imbalances, emphasizing the importance of recognizing the impact that narratives can have on conflicts.

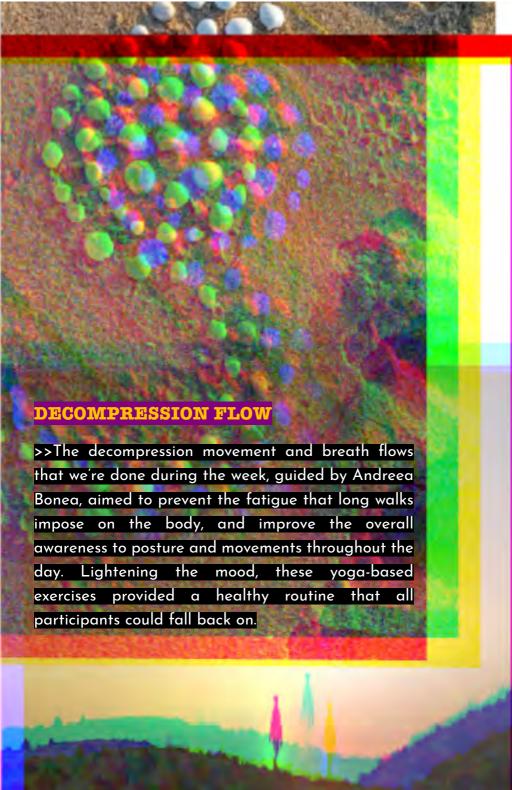


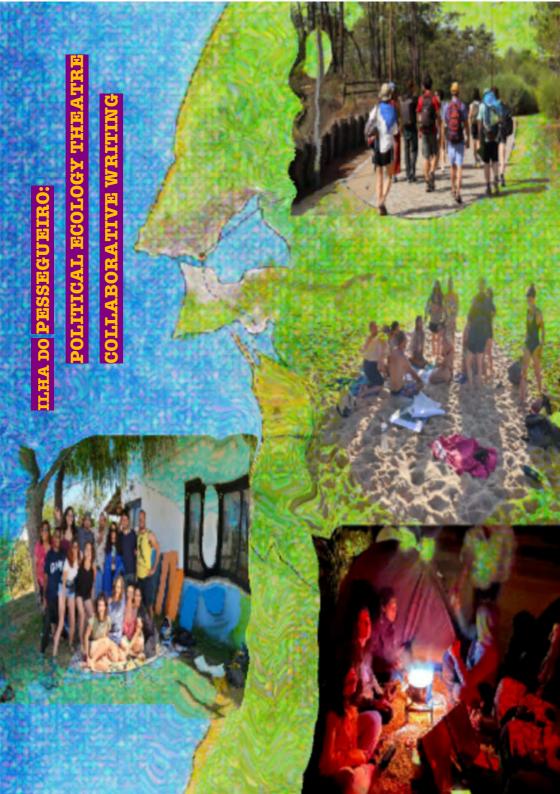


#### TOXIC TOUR

>>Environmental justice activist-scholars use toxic tours to document, witness, and educate about environmental injustices while walking through the territory. It's a way to develop embodied, sensory, mobile forms of knowing, doing research and engaging with social movements. Guided by Bruno, a local activist from the Empregos Pelo Clima (Jobs for the Climate) movement, and worker at Sines' petrochemical refinery, we traversed the toxic industries that make Sines the center of Portugal's fossil fuel infrastructures: the refinery, the methane gas storage tanks and pipelines which take the gas to all of Portugal and then to Spain, and the coal-burning energy plant, privatized and then closed without any support or plan for the local workers. We reflected on the impacts of these infrastructures on the territory, the government and corporations' fake proposals for a green(washing) transition, the movement's vision of a just transition based on democratic production of renewables for local needs, and the difficulty of organizing for







#### POLITICAL ECOLOGY THEATRE ENCOUNTERS

#### & THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED

>>These encounters prompted, guided by Teresa Meira and Roberta Scatolini, a reflection on the conflicts observed during the walks, triggering the ability to transcend disciplinary contexts and challenge taken-for-granted roles. By engaging with the performativity of environmental injustice, we aimed to experience a plurality of positions in affective ways beyond the constraints of dominant written and oral forms. We also sought to critically reflect on embodiment in contexts of political resistance.



Gustavo, Aline, Ronay, Lorenzo, Roberto and Irene on Greenwashing the Gas



Erik, Andreea, Ivo, Lucía and Beth on Free Dunes

>>Among other games/exercises, we engaged in Image Theatre - static images were employed to explore abstract concepts such as relationships and emotions, as well as realistic situations witnessed during the caravan. This technique was developed by Brazilian playwright Augusto Boal (1931-2009), the creator of the Theatre of the Oppressed, and is fully described in his book "The Rainbow of Desire."

Participants created physical images in response to two given themes: "Greenwashing the gas" and "free dunes," without preconceived notions. These tableaus were then brought to life through thought tracking (current status of the conflict - the situation we want - how can we get from the current to the situation we want). We also experimented with the scenes in movement and by adding sound. The method is often used to explore internal or external oppression, unconscious thoughts, and feelings. Through these exercises, we invited participants to learn with their whole bodies, demechanizing their senses and exercising the creation of new possibilities for intervention in scenes, so that they could later be experienced in life.

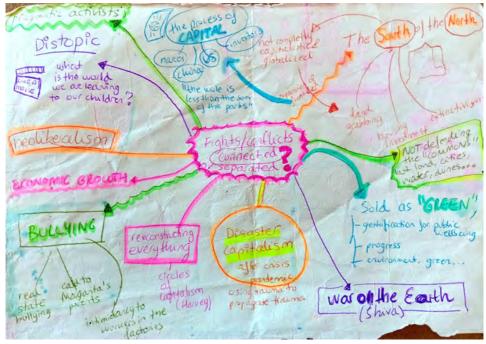


1) One of the main lessons concerned the issues of direct action and mass mobilization. At a glance, the culture of direct action may seem lacking in Portugal. Looking much deeper we determined that the over-criminalization, repression and police brutality, particularly of marginalized peoples, puts those fighting for socio-environmental justice causes at risk. We also reflected on the need to rethink what is direct action: apart from overtly confrontational actions, community building, ecological restoration, or other less visible actions, fundamental and necessary for sustaining movements.



We concluded that in Portugal there are many environmental struggles, but much less visible at a European level, perhaps due to the country's highly greenwashed image in recent years. As a collective, we were impressed with the deep knowledge, radical proposals, and intersectional approaches we encountered. We saw as one of their biggest challenges the ability to mobilise large masses of people. At the same time, there seems to be a great mistrust in the judicial system and its efficacy, as it proves to be both expensive and hard to access for average citizens.

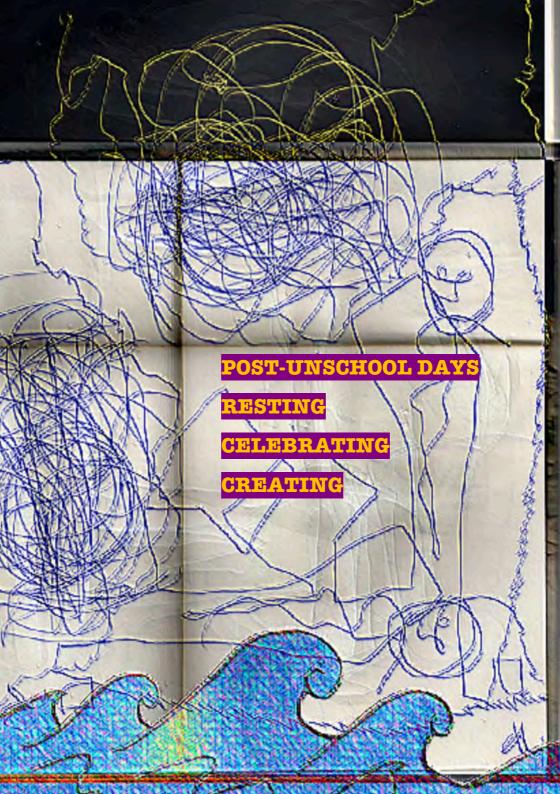
2) In our journey, we could see how all socio-environmental conflicts are connected, through the expansion of capital and the privatization of the commons: from fiancialisation of housing in Lisbon to the destruction of the dunes for exclusive golf course resorts in Aberta Nova (Melides). Portugal, as a semi-periphery of the Global North, appears to be a new frontier of accumulation. These observations challenge some popular narratives about how the country supposedly reverted austerity policies and promoted "sustainability". We reflected on theoretical concepts that may unite these struggles: "disaster capitalism" (Naomi Klein), which shows how capital reproduces through disasters; "capitalism's war on Earth" (Vandana Shiva), which shows the shared violence; and "the second circuit of capital" (David Harvey), which points to the capitalist logic of shifting investments from the first circuit (productive sector, i.e. agriculture and industry) toward the second (urbanization and associated infrastructures); and degrowth as all the acts of aggression are justified by economic growth, the materialization of capitalist accumulation.

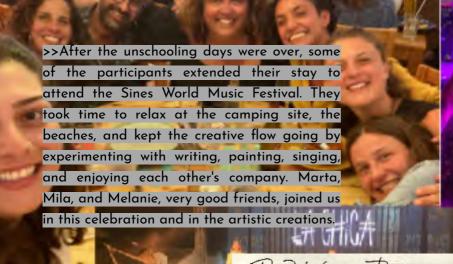


Despite these common grounds of struggle, there seems to be little networking between movements, nor a unifying narrative. Even though all of them defend and reclaim the "commons", they seem to not frame their struggles in such terms. Rather, they appear to be more focused on their localised struggles. This is understandable, as focusing at a local level helps in grounding the alternative vision. Yet a shared conceptual frame among activists could help gather more people in fighting a common cause. This raises the question of how to connect academia and movements, as part of weaving different processes of knowledge production and application.

connection with control pertugat and making Saleboar Crimary Re-ignite passion Infinite graditude shot of hape, Storks Apreciation of the bungs bugan-or buman-on A weaving methoddogy pringsport reconnect with the unschoeung freedom of sharing heavy boyether Seing humble (What do we take from ) C. and mess Dudond ui James Reconnect mind Home, family and bruse Knowing the land and even imagine I take Hapeleuness with Take what I can't memory Curiosity and Linkertion SHENGTH Sanger As printer Being prisent have People Thomas need to perform Absence of the Beauty

The to work to the state of the Connect Auggles as well as having Ideas Deel open Permitted work E Blooming leaung to the knibing Jeeng from a different POWER IN PRIMS OF in which we are sobolded are Soing and bour yourd of the bound of the bound of the bour yours perspective" RINGHONS Building connection didn't even know that what do we leave Reeling was the way - Carrie to know and we Sould have sinds and and Transfer to other we don't know Possibilities that Tenderness Inspire Tryng some pringer Building and Skepening relations Bringing more questions Committment to Centinuation of how we leave to the territory Courage and SHEMILL Trace my MICH





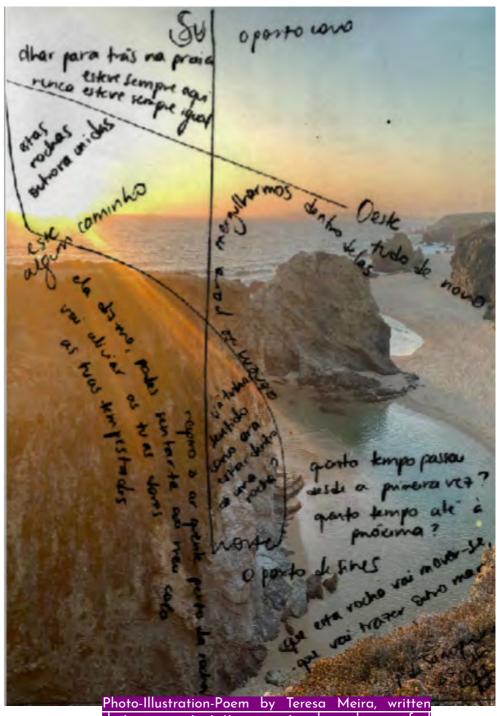
A song we wrote at Ilha do Pessegueiro beach

De Porto Coro a Preste Rico
Traemos el flow que nos bendijo
Las maracas del mar que
que non llevan a nas egar
Peragar Devagar
Other Devagar
que nos de mas bienestar

#### The exquisite corpse exercise:

>>One person writes a sentence on one side of the page, covers it by folding the paper, and writes again the last word used in that sentence. The next person receives the folded paper and can only see the last word written and has to start the next sentence with that word. This process is repeated until the paper is completely folded. Afterward, one person reads the exquisite corpse poem aloud. In the next page is the first one we wrote.

I next year I will not close the windows windows show me what I didn't know I could see see how they run towards an end that's Not an end end all prontiers and keep walking walking is the motion that allows my trought to How flow like a breath through a long, until escaping Excabind from wheelt my self and where I am in him moment is something my self and where I having the strength to feel. Feel, every atom of the wind, of your skin, of your fear. fear and pleasure and a bridge bon'tges own were built in connecting the survive with the survet Smiet was the moment the thoughts became brightest. Brightest the light, smorger the inchantment enchant ment in the breathe, enchantment in the sound, enchantment in the touch feeling, enchantment all at you me



during an orientation exercise: how do you feel North, South, East and West of where you are, in this case, we were at her favorite beach - Samouqueira

## (We transform)

Through trust,
thoughts are born.
Through trust,
bodies transform.
Through trust,
I live with you.
Through trust,

We are guided anew

Through willingness,

We know ways to engage.

Through withingness,

we are mobilised through rage.

Through withingness,

Relations are built in place.

I feel hope in the rejections a your face

Through connection,

Through connection

we fly with the storks as they swarm

Through willingness,

Through connection,

meaning is regarned in what we do.

Through connection.

Our sound, teach and feelings align in view,

we dance, we want, we fight, we talk,
we hope, we play, we weave, we rage.
we transform





