

COLOSSAL  
ANALYST  
ZUC  
100%

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## *Introduction*

### **Why?**

A publication filled with anarchist thought and discourse is nothing but one more in a long list of subversive tools at our disposal in the social war that keeps intensifying all around us. What does this intensification look like? It looks like a litre of olive oil for 12 quid (if you're lucky and it's on clubcard price), or nappies behind locked doors in the shop. It looks like fewer buses - none if you need to use them at night! - but more ticket inspectors on them. It looks like a homeless person lying under the "Army - Be the Best" ad. It looks like neo-nazis creeping out of their nests and trying to re-establish themselves as a legitimate force, while the political class in Holyrood and Westminster turn more and more towards reactionary policy. However, there are always at least a couple sides to a conflict, and god knows we like ours better. The Kenmure St deportation defence, a flourishing Food not Bombs scene, the successful autonomous actions and arms blockades from below in solidarity with Palestine, including those at the Thales plant in nearby Govan; antifascists defending the Honour Oak pub in London, a dodgy petrol bomb at the May Day riot in Paris, a well-aimed rock downing an IDF drone in the West Bank. We'd like to think that this zine can help make sense of some of the things mentioned above, and contribute to

undermining the depoliticisation of social movements, for the construction of a broad, coherent critique of state and capital, intimately linked to real struggles.

### **What have we written about?**

We decided to dedicate much of this issue to the matter of self-organised social centres. This is motivated by our collective identification of the lack of physical movement spaces as a key issue for the anarchist milieu in and around Glasgow. Physical spaces were significant to our own trajectory, Clydeside Anarchist Noise being born in the COP26 Baile Hoose squat, and taking form in the Glasgow Autonomous Space, in its previous iteration in G5; the lack of an equivalent, politicised space at the moment has been noticeable. While we welcome recent efforts to reestablish social centres in the city, we call on all those involved to avoid constructing more political spaces 'from above', which do little to contribute to the sense of isolation and individualisation felt by many. "Please help! A guide for surviving: Squats, social spaces, occupations" is a powerful, intimate call for the liberation of physical spaces from the claws of state and capital, for their opening and alternative use for our individual and collective needs and desires. "Taking over the city: anti-authoritarian movements and social centres in South Europe" traces the history and trajectory

of social centres in Italy and Greece, from the *autonomia creativa* of the '70s to the *Tute Bianche* in the global movement against capitalist globalisation, and from *Villa Amalias* and antifascism in Athens to the recent squat (re)occupations under New Democracy governance. Finally, 'We're having a GAS' is an informative text about the efforts to re-establish the Glasgow Autonomous Space a year after the loss of the original space, and a call for participation in its open procedures.

"Fighting Border Violence in the Wake of the Rwanda Bill" explains how 'the violence of the border does not stop in the channel, mapping the asylum-industrial complex, the 'hostile environment' and its murderous effects across the UK. Direct action is presented as a key method of resistance, given successful past deportation defences, as well as a practical negation of the border regime and efforts to erect barriers between communities. "The Aestheticisation of Student Activism" argues that student activism, in the context of the neoliberal university, is part of the 'student experience' parcel and career paths of some (bourgeois!) students, and a tool for the assimilation and demobilisation of radical struggles. Two articles discuss the Scottish Government cutting the funding of *Bòrd na Gàidhlig*, the effects of this move on communities of Gaelic speakers in the Islands, and the

resulting uproar from various Gaelic organisations across Scotland; the first of these is a brief introduction in Beurla for those likely to be less familiar with the situation, while the second is a longer discussion in Gàidhlig. "Bodies in motion" is about the false sense of personal determination that capitalism gives us over our bodies and futures, and how the tools handed down to us for self-defence, in the context of gendered and sexual violence, are made redundant - how the castles meant to protect us are made of nothing but sand. Finally, "The Manarchist Revisited" does what it says on the box; almost a decade after the publication of the Ray Filar article in **Strike! #14** and its dissemination among local and international milieus, our author reflects: now that everyone knows of the **Manarchist**, that hours upon hours have been spent discussing **Him**, has anything changed?

*Please help! A guide for surviving: Squats, social spaces, occupations*

Glasgow is slowly losing access to free and unconditional social spaces. In order to exist you need to pay. This text, however, is not a miserable account mourning lost places and pointing out -once more- the everlasting greed of bosses. This text is a plea for radical change. Please participate, I beg you to occupy, build, protect spaces for me to exist unconditionally, minimise my suffering and I'll eliminate yours.

If I am not granted my existence, if my workplace and the bar are the main places I socialise I will begin to believe that I have one function: to make and spend money. I become compliant, miserable, stressed and I will never know the reason why because there exists no alternative unless perhaps...

Unless perhaps we establish one. I refuse to be reduced to my production of capital and I expect you to do the same. Anarchist identities are not products of theoretical analysis of Kropotkin or Malatesta but an honour to my existence, a way of survival.

In order to safeguard my honourable survival I need spaces to do so; I need places of creation or even destruction. By collectivising our needs and establishing autonomous territories,

we can demolish preconceptions of life being interlinked with misery, we can discuss, dream and even form futures that strain from constant oppression of all forms. Through constant and ever-changing dismantling of hierarchies of all forms, we can create microcosms of the politics we suggest. A proof that horizontal living is not a utopia, we just need the chance, a geography, to implement it. The existence of social spaces allow one to territorialize their constant struggles.

An autonomous space is necessary both within grand narratives and the individual. Despite the benefits of spontaneous actions, institutions for cultivating cultures of reflexes and aid in the construction of consciousness are essential. The Kenmure street protests wouldn't exist if not for established community. A space unequivocally 'ours' retains historical memory. The occupation of a building and its transformation to a community project both creates and honours local histories of resistance and alters histories of oppression through reclaiming them as our own. Its de facto collective nature insists on transfer of knowledge on all levels, from language exchange programs, to political self-education, to politicizing our experiences. If the personal is political as 2nd wave feminists claimed, then there needs to be a place that allows experience to be political.



The state has a hegemony in the territories it claims to be its property, an autonomous space, by definition, evades that enforced control. In practical terms, by denying the monopoly of the state, collective care is the only way to protect that space. Whoever partakes in said space protects it and ensures it is sustained. We learn and bond with each other by ensuring the material needs of the space and the dream of an autonomous existence materialises with the space.

Squats and occupations are means to demand for our recognition, demand for our inclusion. Inclusion means being allowed to survive with dignity. Our inclusion, our survival must be unconditional. A social space is a way to evade capital as the incentive for our allowance at a space we do not 'own'. We are living in cities where all its geographies are fabricated with capital as the main incentive. In most other spaces, we are allowed to occupy them only as 'plus ones' to our wallets. Only collective refusal will manifest in an existence with no expectation of spending. Having a space for us to connect, discuss, build is the only way to realise and counter our struggles. After all, if I don't have a place to create and sustain protective communities, who will help me once the shit hits the fan?

In a world of organised decay, we are our only salvation

**SQUAT! OCCUPY! CREATE! EVERYTHING IS OURS CAUSE EVERYTHING IS STOLEN!**

## *Gaels save Gaelic language officers*

Beurla:

The government in Edinburgh, in another effort to show just how unimportant any part of the country north of Stirling is for them, recently tried to cut some additional funding from Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the agency responsible for Gaelic. For a sum of roughly 200,000 pounds a year - pocket change for the government - a network of Gaelic language officers had been established, both inside and outwith the remaining heartland communities in the Islands. This represented the only concrete support for Gaelic in the Hebrides, where Gaelic has its few remaining heartlands in Scotland - some of the poorest and most battered communities in these islands, where vital community workers - often directly employed by community councils and collective land managers - were now to be taken away.

The responding outrage from the Gaelic world lead to greater uproar from within the community than has been seen in years, and even lethargic and apolitical groups such as Comunn na Gàidhlig and indeed the Bòrd itself as well as many of the community associations - most vociferously Urras Thiriodh in Tiree and Oighreachd

Choimhearsnachd Ghabhastan in Lewis, as well as the radical group Misneachd. The uproar was large enough, and spread enough around the media, that it could embarrass ScotGov into coughing up some spare change to keep funding it, a rare and important win in dark times for Gaelic. However, in its aftermath the question for the Gaelic community remains how to win the kinds of changes that we desperately need in the most critical time the Gaels have ever faced, as we stare extinction in the face, when embarrassment will no longer be sufficient. When will we go on the offensive, instead of defending a deeply inadequate status quo?

## *Gearraidhean - a-rithist*

### Gàidhlig

Halò. Tha mi dol a ràdh rudeigin mu dheidhinn poileataigs an là ann an diog, ach mus can mi càil eile, bu mhath leam rudeigin innse dhuibh mun phròseact beag agam seo. Tha mi an dòchas nach e seo ach a' chiad phìos ann an sreath a bhios tòrr nas fhaide, a thig a-mach am broinn na h-iris seo a h-uile triop, far am faigh mi cothrom beag meòrachadh air poileataigs an là sa Ghàidhlig. Is e mo dhòchas bruidhinn an dà chuid air ceistean a bhuaileas air saoghal na Gàidhlig gu dìreach - leithid cuspair a' phìos seo - agus ceistean nas fharsainge buileach. Agus, gus amas mo sgrìobhaidh a dhèanamh soilleir ro làimh, bu mhath leam beagan leudachaidh a thoirt air poileataigs Gàidhealach, gus beachdan a bharrachd air nàiseantachas Albannach a chur am follais agus fhosgladh dhuinn.

Mu dheireadh, cha chuir mi ainm ris na sgrìobhas mi an seo - chan ann a chionn 's nach eil mi an dùil gum bi fios aig daoine cò bhiodh a' sgrìobhadh ann an Gàidhlig ann an iriseag Anargach a thèid fhoillseachadh ann an Glaschu, ach gus beagan astair a chur eadar mi fhìn is mo phearsantachd agus na beachdan a thig an lùib seo, leis an dòchas gun gabh seo a leughadh mar bheachd Anargach am measg bheachdan eile, seach mar bheachd an

duine àraid seo fhèin a-mhàin. Is dòcha gu bheil sin rudeigin faoin, ach carson nach feuch sinn co-dhiù?

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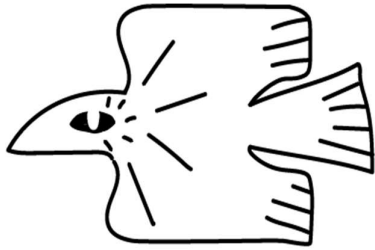
Tha gu leòr deasbad is fearg air nochdadh o chionn goirid am measg Gàidheil na h-Alba mu na geàrraidhean air a' Bhòrd agus gu seachd àraid mar a bhuail iad seo air sgeama nan oifigearan coimhearsnachd, a bha a-rèir a h-uile coltas ann an cunnart mòr a dhol fodha. Is e fìor-fhearg, fearg uasal agus cheart a bha seo, ag amas air riaghaltas na h-Alba gu sònraichte, is iad a' gèarradh air falbh a bheagan de dh'airgead, airgead nach mothaich iadsan eadar na billeanan eile a chosgas iad ach a bheireadh fìor dhroch bhuidh air na cothroman mu dheireadh a th' againn gus ar cànan is ar cultar a ghlèidheadh - cho eu-choltach is a tha sin a choimhead aig an ìre-sa. Bu chòir cuimhneachadh beagan dhi a thilgeil a dh'ionnsaigh a' Bhùird cuideachd - carson a bha an t-aona phrògram aca a rinn feum sam bith air a mhaoineachadh le beagan airgid a bharrachd nach robh tearainte, nuair a bhios iad a' cosg an uiread a bharrachd air sgeama nam planaichean Gàidhlig, rud nach eil leth cho feumail ma tha e idir. Ach is fhèarr a-nis a bhith toilichte gun deach againn air a'mhaoineachadh

seo a ghlèidheadh, agus gum faca sinn dùsgadh mòr aig buidhnean as àbhaist a bhith sàmhach air ceistean mar seo, leithid Comunn na Gàidhlig agus fiù 's am Bòrd fhèin, mus cronaich sinn a chèile cus. Tha adhbhar eile againn airson gàirdeachas cuideachd aig àm a tha dorch dha-rìribh, agus is e sin obair bhrosnachail nan oileanach Gàidhealach sa bhaile seo fhèin, a bhuannaich tòrr a bharrachd taic dhan Ghàidhlig - gu h-àraid an cruth fiosaigeach, le àite aig an oilthigh a-nis glèidhte dhan Ghàidhlig - tro chaismeachdan poblach is togail-fianais air an làrach fhèin, is bagartean a bhith a' dol nas fhaide na sin. Is mi a tha toilichte seo fhaicinn, is gu h-àraid an dòchas gun ionnsaich Gàidheil eile bho eiseimpleir nan oileanach òga, gum b' fhiach agus gum b'urrainn ar seasamh fhèin le nas motha na faclan, mar a rinn iad fhèin - is e bhios inntinneach coimhead air na nì an ginealach seo nas fhaide air aghaidh. Is

e a' cheist, ged-tà, carson nach tachair seo ach gu gann agus gu mall, carson nach seas sinn ar còir nas trice na nì sinn, le làn an fhios againn uile gu bheil pailteas adhbhar againn airson seasamh suas.

Tuigidh sinn uile, tha mi an dòchas, gur e pàirt nach gabh a mheasadh gu ro-àrd an dì-mhisneachd mhòr a thug eachdraidh chruaidh - planntachadh, casgan air ar cultar, sgrìos-cinnidh, fuadachadh, colonachadh - dhuinn, far nach creid sinn gu bheil seans idir againn, no luach idir annainn.

A bharrachd air sin, tha nàimhdean nan Gàidheal a tha anns na pàipearan is air na meadhanan sòisealta ag adhbharacadh nàdar de dh'eagal annainn - chan eil duine ag iarraidh seasamh is a ràdh nach eil cùisean mar a tha iad math gu leòr, le eagal gun tèid sin a chleachdadh gus a bheagan a gheibh sinn bhon riaghaltas a ghèarradh air falbh. Ach tha rudan ann a ghabhadh atharrachadh cuideachd, a tha freumhaichte ann an ideòlas nar measg-ne seach ann an eachdraidh no am measg nan Gall, agus saoilidh mi nach eil càil a dhèanadh feum dhar cuid mhisneachd, agus ar cuid luach annainn fhìn, ri bhith deònach ar seasamh fhèin agus strì a thogail. Mar sin, bu chòir dhuinn feuchainn ris na chunnaic sinn bho na coimhearsnachdan a thaobh nan oifigearan, is bho na h-oileanaich a thaobh na h-oilthigh, a bhrosnachadh anns gach dòigh as urrainn, agus na h-ideòlasan a chuireas casg air na nithean sin a cheannsachadh cho math agus as urrainn dhuinn - ach tillidh mi chun a' chuspair sin nas anmoiche. Airson an-dràsda, bitheamaid toilichte gur sinne a bhuannaich an turas seo, agus cleachdamaid a' mhisneachd a gheibh sinn às a sin - feumaidh guth nan Gàidheal, a tha air a bhith sàmhach fad ginealach, èirigh às ùir nar linn fhèin, mus tèid a mhùchdadh gu lèir. Aig amannan mar seo, saoilidh mi gun cluinn mi air a' mhac-talla mar-thà.



## *Fighting Border Violence in the Wake of the Rwanda Bill*

[CW: self-harm, torture, suicide]

On the 23rd of April, the UK government passed legislation allowing the deportation of asylum seekers to Rwanda. This is despite legal challenges citing the UK's responsibility to the 1951 Refugee Convention, which asserts the right to seek asylum in a safe country. Hours after this bill was passed, five people seeking safety, including a seven-year-old child, were killed while attempting to cross the channel to reach the UK. In the last 10 years, over 240 people have been killed or have gone missing while attempting this crossing. These deaths are not accidents. They are the predictable result of our current border regime, under which safe routes for refugees are almost entirely non-existent. In an attempt to look tough on immigration and cling to power, our government has clearly decided that these deaths are an acceptable price to pay.

The violence of the border does not stop in the channel. Those who have already made it to the UK and applied for asylum are trapped in limbo while they wait for their claim to be assessed. This process can take years, with the threat



of a refusal constantly hanging over them. Unable to work or claim benefits, they are given a tiny allowance to scrape by on. The current weekly amount is £49.18, or only £8.86 if placed in accommodation that provides food.

The 2022 Nationality and Borders Act and the 2023 Illegal Migration Act built upon the existing cruelty of Theresa May's 'hostile environment' policy by criminalising asylum seekers and making it an offence to enter the country through 'dangerous routes'. This allows the Home Office to refuse to process asylum claims in the UK, and instead to deport people to a third country. This is effectively a complete dismantling of the UK's asylum system. Now the Safety of Rwanda Act 2024 has falsely defined Rwanda as a 'safe country' for these 'removals'. The passing of the bill was followed by the announcement of a UK-wide detention operation beginning on the 29th of April, creating a huge amount of fear for many. Asylum seekers who arrived in the UK after January 2022 (or those whose claim has been rejected) could have immigration officers show up at their door or could be detained when attending a mandatory appointment. Many people have now been imprisoned indefinitely and are being threatened with deportation. Of course, it now seems unlikely that these deportations will actually take place if the Tories lose the

upcoming general election. While the Labour party has promised to scrap the Rwanda plan if elected, their migration policy is still based on the demonization and criminalisation of migrants. It includes a pledge to create a new 'Border Security Command', which will have 'counter-terror powers to smash criminal gangs and strengthen our borders'. This militarisation of the border and expansion of the surveillance state must be opposed just as aggressively. The border regime will continue to imprison, degrade and brutalise, no matter which party is in government.

The Border is not just a wall, or a fence, or a line on a map. It is threaded throughout our society - an alliance of private and state actors. Mitie Care and Custody operates multiple private detention centres in the UK, including Dungavel near Glasgow. Out of the 11 UK detention centres, 9 are operated by private companies, including G4S, Serco, and GEO Group. These companies profit from the inhumane treatment of migrants and are incentivised to keep their costs as low as possible while detaining more people, leading to horrific conditions, medical neglect, abuse, and deaths in custody. Harmondsworth IRC, also operated by Mitie, was the subject of a public inquiry into abuse last year, which found that there were 24 incidents of self-harm in March 2023 alone. This included a protest against abusive treatment and

indefinite detention, during which at least 4 detained people attempted suicide. According to the charity Detention Action, 15,864 people were imprisoned indefinitely in immigration detention throughout 2023.

Companies providing asylum accommodation are also profiting from lucrative contracts with the Home Office. The current asylum housing contractor in Glasgow, Mears, took over contracts from Serco in 2019. Serco was widely condemned for carrying out lock-change evictions, leading to the formation of the Glasgow No Evictions Network, a grassroots migrant support network that continues to organise resistance to evictions, raids, and detention. Mears is set to receive £1.1bn over 10 years for their contract with the Home Office. They have been accused of providing accommodation that is not fit for habitation and of re-traumatising asylum seekers, with tragic consequences. In June 2020, Adnan Walid Elbi, took his own life while living in asylum accommodation in Glasgow. The Home Office and Mears staff were aware of Adnan's mental health issues and previous suicide attempts, one of which took place when he was detained in Dungavel. A survivor of torture at the hands of Daesh (ISIS), he was terrified of being deported to Syria. Instead of receiving support he was punished for seeking safety and ultimately lost his life. Those now threatened with deportation are also

unsurprisingly extremely distressed. There are reports that dozens have taken part in a hunger strike in Colnbrook IRC, and at least one Colnbrook detainee has threatened suicide if he is sent to Rwanda.

We find ourselves confronted with the stark violence of the border and the brutality of a state apparatus that allows children to drown rather than offer them refuge. The border strips us of our humanity, classifying us as citizens, immigrants, refugees, foreign workers, or simply 'illegal'. The description of asylum seekers as 'illegal immigrants' has crept from tabloid headlines and fascist rallies, to the speeches of Tory and Labour politicians alike. This redefinition has now made its way into UK border policy explicitly, categorising thousands of people's very existence as an act of criminality. But those who move, whatever their reasons, should not be thought of as passive victims. To struggle for mobility in a bordered world represents the rejection of a global system of enforced inequality. Migration itself is an act of resistance against this system - a refusal to accept the totalising power of the State and an insistence on free movement in spite of the barriers that are built between us. Far from naive utopianism, a no-borders politics is rooted in the reality of migration as a fact of life. People have always moved. It is the Border that is the

aberration. We will continue to build community across borders and resist the State apparatus that seeks to divide us.

In May 2021, Glasgow residents succeeded in preventing the detention of two of our neighbours by blocking an immigration van on Kenmure Street and demanding their release. Anti-raids groups across the country are currently mobilising to support those at risk. In Glasgow, the No Evictions Network is helping to alert people to raids, and has been organising stalls outside the Home Office reporting centre on Brand Street to offer people support. Direct action like this can save lives. In 2017 a group of no-borders activists, who became known as the Stanstead 15, broke onto a runway at Stanstead airport to stop a deportation flight. Some of those onboard are still living in the UK today due to this action. Actions such as this may be necessary again in the near future, regardless of which party is in power. Across the UK, people are mobilising to protect each other from border violence. Anti-raids groups are growing, immigration vans are being stopped, information is being shared, and networks of mutual aid are spreading. We must continue to grow the movement against all borders and fight the Border everywhere it rears its head. Those who profit from inflicting harm on our friends must be targeted. The architects of the border regime have blood on their hands. We will not

stand by while the State rips our communities apart, throws our neighbours into cages and drags them onto planes. We can build a world without borders, if we are willing to fight for it.

Follow Glasgow No Evictions Network: @no\_evictions

Follow Edinburgh anti-raids: @antiraid\_ed

## *Taking over the city: anti-authoritarian movements and social centres in South Europe*

This text is partly based on the 2017 book 'Ο Αναρχισμός στην Ελλάδα του 21ου Αιώνα' (Anarchism in 21st Century Greece) by P. Kalamaras, as well as a 2002 interview on social centres in Italy with comrades from Forte Prenestino, published in brochure format by the Μαύρη Γάτα squat in Thessaloniki: 'Μια συζήτηση για τα αυτοδιαχειριζόμενα κοινωνικά κέντρα στην ιταλία' (A discussion on self-managed social centres in Italy).

### **Autonomie**

Since land began to be enclosed, people have resisted this commodification process through the occupation and use of space for collective purposes. We can trace the contemporary anti-authoritarian usage of the term 'social centres' to the autonomists in Italy. *Autonomia operaia*, the movement for worker's autonomy (to define and struggle for their own interests, far from parties and trade unions), which had flourished in the 1960s, was flanked in the 70s by what came to be known as *autonomia creativa* [creative autonomy], groups such as the youth proletarian circles, young (un)employed who practiced autogestion through self-reductive 'proletarian shopping' (more commonly known as shoplifting)

and housing occupations, or the so-called metropolitan Indians, largely students who looked to indigenous peoples for inspiration in the negation of capitalism and metropolitanism, while embracing various alternative views related to environmentalism, nutrition and sexual liberation. These new groups reflected changes in the demographics of the autonomist movement; no longer just industrial workers, but the new, marginalised proletariat of students, the young unemployed, the precariat, migrants...

### **Can you blow up a social relation?**

Worker's autonomy was weakened by the terrorist turn in the late 1970s, a shift among significant numbers of militants towards armed vanguardism and clandestine total warfare against the state, capital and fascists; this shift has been the subject of much heated internal debate, which we will not get into. As the failure to storm the heavens in '77 led to a depression of sorts, some militants attempted to construct an autonomous movement in wider society through the establishment of social centres, based on the theoretical and practical experience of decades of workers' struggle; these held a similar role for the metropolitan proletariat which base organisations held for the industrial proletariat. Also significant was the experience of the widespread housing occupations of the late 60s and early 1970s, when tens of



thousands of proletarian families appropriated empty homes and lived collectively. The central role of women's social and reproductive needs in these struggles is demonstrated by the emergence of collective daycares, communal kitchens and women-led health centers. Also significant to the establishment of social centres was the influence of an emergent subcultural underground, with the spread across Europe of Britain's own summer of '77. This experiment in social organisation attempted to establish alternative social relations, which would develop new ways of life for people, in how they work, interact with one another, exchange opinions, how they produce political bodies and alternative proposals to contemporary society. Social centres are the places where social conflicts can be transferred from the heat of spontaneity to the level of constructing consciousness. In Italy, they have been sites of intense cultural activity, hosting radical online forum Indymedia, infoshops, workshops, counter-cultural networks, etc. Social centres are not soulless institutions; they live through and experience social changes, and can always transform, as an idea, a structure, a project. They are themselves a proposal for a different kind of political organisation, in which a crowd of affinity groups organise and make decisions in autonomous and independent ways.

## Taking over the cities!

Initially, occupied social centres, reflecting the political orientations of participants, were truly self-organised spaces, insular, and isolated from wider society. A coordinated effort, on national and local levels, led to the development of social centres as important reference points for localities, for anyone who wanted to cover their needs in a self-productive way. Social centres attempted not to construct separate, parallel worlds, as in the past, but more to be proposals for a different productive model, touching, and arising from, society's bases themselves. This meant different things for different social centres. The international meeting against capitalist globalisation in Genova in 2001 made it abundantly clear that there were serious differences between the Italian social centres, with some orienting towards the symbolic confrontations of the more institutional Tute Bianche and Disobedienti, while others went in a more insurrectionary direction. Three main tendencies can be located in the trajectory of the Italian social centres movement post-2000. The first of these is the development of the 'organised' autonomists, who, while supporting the autonomy of the movement, do not reject relationships with various institutional factors; most of these tend to be legal, either legalised ex-squats or spaces which participants pay rent for. A second tendency is that of occupied social centres, influenced by

the metropolitan Indians, DIY culture and anarcho-punk. The final tendency is that of insurrectionary anarchism, which does not accept any cooperation with institutions (despite the fact that some of its social centres have been legalised), while simultaneously criticising the organised sections of the anarchist movement, like the *Federazione Anarchica*. Variety is characteristic of any movement; the matter becomes to empower these connections found in polymorphism without losing distinctiveness or radicalism.

### **Across the (Ionian) pond**

Across the pond, then, in sunny Greece, the contemporary anarchist space begins to take shape in the decades following the fall of the military dictatorship in 1974. Rejecting the narrative of national unity which some forged out of the 1973 Polytechnic insurrection, the anarchists form a radical alternative to the bureaucracy of both PASOK and the Communist Party. In these initial decades, the university amphitheatre was the site where the various small groups which formed the anarchist space would meet, discuss and plan; this partly reflected the student character of the movement at the time. At this point, physical spaces associated with anarchism were few and far between, and largely confined to Athens, Thessaloniki and Patras. An important process that was taking place in the background,

however, was the development of a flourishing print culture. From translations of various works (from the situationists to Castoriades to classical anarchists to so-called post-anarchists), to theory production in journals and counter-information in newspapers, to self-produced DIY zines, the printed word played a decisive role in the reproduction of anti-authoritarian thought in these early years. A shift takes place in the anarchist space in the 1990s. If the anarchist of the 70s and 80s was either a (bourgeois) student who listens to rock'n'roll and reads Debord and Negri or a punk, in the 1990s, there is an integration into the space of the popular strata, while age and gender boundaries also increase. The anarchists adopt more popular behaviours, listen to rebetika and read Bakunin and even Marx, winking to the always intense tradition of communism in Greece.

### **Against a world of organised decay**

Housing squats - social centres appear in the late 80s, with anarchists taking root in social space and time; these are not confined to the capital of Athens (and 'co-capital' of Thessaloniki) but emerge in various towns and cities, while the organised collectives of the anarchist space grow in size and number across the country. While initially, these squats fulfill the housing needs of participants as much as their desire to have social spaces, a wave of occupations in the

early '90s explicitly express the various tendencies of this era (from insurrectionists, to punks, to Italian-influenced autonomists). Some of these projects have taken on a more long-term character; **Lelas Karagianni 37** in Kipseli has been around since **1988**, and is associated today with the **Anarchist Political Organisation**. The 'Fabrika Yfanet' social centre, in an abandoned clothes factory, was opened to the public in **2004**, and has been a staple of the anti-authoritarian/autonomist space in Thessaloniki. Another example is the legendary **Villa Amalias**, a key site of the developing anarchist movement from its occupation in **1990**, remembered among others for its (punk) gigs, at times a veritable social phenomenon for the life of the metropolis. **Villa Amalias** served as a key point of the antifascist movement in **Athens** for decades, especially following the **May 2011** murder of a **Greek** citizen by immigrants in the centre in a botched robbery. The fascists turned the site of the murder into a base of operations for racist pogroms and attacks on their political opponents, under the blessing of the police; during this weeks-long period of unrest, the defense of **Villa** was successfully self-organised by various groups from across the anarchist space. A special anti-terrorist operation was required in **December 2012** to evict this historic squat; a failed **2013** attempt at reoccupying **Villa**, ending in multiple arrests, saw one of the largest, organised and militant anti-authoritarian solidarity mobilisations of the **21st** century in **Athens** (see

the video for the 2013 version of song "To Megalo Spiti" ['The Big House'] by legendary punks Forgotten Prophecy). Also key to the antifascist struggles of this period in the centre was the anti-authoritarian - anti-fascist 'Distomo' space, named after the site of a nazi massacre during the occupation, a reprisal for partisan action. This space was opened in the central square of Ag. Panteleimon, which for years had been the base of operations of the racist, anti-migrant alliance of police, neo-nazis and committees of 'concerned residents'. This frontal project brought together those involved in militant antifascism in the neighbourhood, including anarchists, various other kinds of anti-authoritarians, but also communists, marxist-leninists, and anti-fascist football fans; this space ended its cycle of struggles in 2020, arguing that its intervention in the neighbourhood was largely successful.

### **Left or Right, the Bosses are the Same!**

The insult which squatting presented to property relations, the 'no-go zone' of Exarchia, this small number of 'known unknowns' who were able somehow derail demonstrations into mass violence, were some of the key issues underlying the electoral campaign of Kyriakos Mitsotakis of New Democracy (ND) in 2019 (Kyriakos [PM 2019-]: son of Konstantinos [PM 1990-93], brother-in-law of Pavlos [MP 1989-89, assassinated

by armed Marxist-Leninists [RO17N], uncle of Kostas [Mayor of Athens 2019-2023], just to give you an idea). The election of SYRIZA in 2015, hailed by many as the first time the Real Left rose to power in Greece, had various academics licking themselves imagining a progressive alliance between those above and those from below, where militant social movements are guided by the benevolent yet firm hand of the left-populist party leadership. While tracing the rise and fall of SYRIZA is far removed from the scope of this text, it suffices to say that no such alliance emerged throughout this period. Instead, we had at least 27(!) evictions, targeting housing squats, social centres, as well as various spaces that had been opened up to house incoming refugees. SYRIZA, afraid of losing radical clout, kept as quiet as possible on these. New Democracy was able to exploit this weakness by presenting itself as the only body capable of clamping down on the forces of chaos and lawlessness, the internal enemy of the anarchist space. The election of ND in 2019 saw some early defeats for the squatting movement, including some evictions in the summer following the election; the timing was purposeful, given that this is a period where the working strata tend to be engaged in seasonal work to deal with the incoming tourist masses, or enjoying the few days off they get a year. While Exarchia was never the libertarian safehaven that it is sometimes presented as internationally, the permanent installation of riot cops in the

square was unheard of, a sign of the times, as was the eviction of various neighbourhood spots, including migrant squats on Themistokleous and Sp. Trikoupi streets and the Dervenion 56 social centre. Also significant was the December 2019 attack on the three buildings of the Koukaki Squat Community, a key body in anti-gentrification struggles in Koukaki, a historically proletarian neighbourhood under the shadow of the Acropolis. An attempt at reoccupation in January was ultimately unsuccessful, although the cops were not able to take back the buildings without getting pelted for hours by (among other things) rocks, paint, a frying pan and a guitar. Also significant were the evictions of 'Terra Incognita' in 2021 and 'Mundo Nuevo' in 2022, two historic social centres which represented, respectively, the insurrectionist and social anarchist tendencies in Thessaloniki.

### **10, 100, 1000...**

One could read the above with pessimism; many attempts at reoccupation of these evicted spaces have unfortunately failed, despite some pretty heroic attempts and heavy-handed repression. While people taking squats back was never particularly rare, we have seen a successful string of reoccupations recently. After a first eviction in 2020, the Kastelli hill in Chania, Crete, which holds various buildings, including the Rosa Nera squat, was reoccupied, and then



evicted once more for April Fool's this year, to start construction on a hotel. Twenty days later, comrades re-entered their space, only to find that the cops had decided in their absence to... piss, shit and draw fascist symbols on beds, walls, and floors, and destroy all the books in the library; thankfully, shite, piss and swastikas were cleared away, and new books have entered these historic walls, which stand as a bulwark to the (further) touristification of the island and impoverishment of those from below. Similarly, the Evangelismos squat in nearby Heraklion was reoccupied on 1/12/23, after a 62-day period; thankfully, beloved four-legged comrade Stachti was found alive within the space, despite the fact that the cops had sealed her inside the building with concrete following the eviction. A video of this action, published online and set to a reading of the ACAB nursery rhyme by beloved, departed UK comrade Sean Bonney, is enough to bring a tear to the eye of even the hardest of anarchists. A (rather long) ferry ride away, in the capital, there have also been some significant victories. At the end of last August, a double eviction targeted the Ano-Kato squat, in Patisia, and the Zizania squat in nearby Viktoria. While the former has been around since the '90s, having become a staple of the neighbourhood and developed relations of friendship and solidarity with its neighbours, the latter is one of few squats to have emerged in the capital

post-SYRIZA, and has been especially significant in anti-racist and

migrant solidarity struggles since. Respectively, they were reoccupied in October and December; while these were ultimately successful, those outside the squats during reoccupation (usually a small working group enters the building while a larger force defends the area) faced heavy-handed repression. Also significant were the reoccupations of self-organised university squats in the Polytechnic Universities of Crete and Athens. Such reoccupations were not easy tasks. They required, among other things, bodies, bravery, expertise, equipment from ladders and gas masks to axle grinders and self-defense tools, and lots and lots of hours of careful planning and conspiratorial discussions in smoky amphitheatres...

Και στα δικά μας! ('And to ours!')

As is put more eloquently elsewhere in this zine, Glasgow desperately needs more free social spaces, more explicitly politicised ones, uncompromising in their values and open to the participation of all who desire a life that is more free and just. I hope that giving examples of how such spaces have existed and functioned elsewhere, in the past and to

this day, may inspire some more local extremists to take matters into their own hands.

Unfortunately, since the writing of this text, both Zizania and the Self-Organised Polytechnic squat in Athens have been once again evicted by Greek state forces. A banner was raised in solidarity with the former on Anarchist Folk Night in Glasgow on 8/6/24 in Queen's Park. Until the next time...



## *The aestheticization of student activism*

The British University has always existed as a centre of knowledge production in aid of imperial expansion and the state. The claim of the university as a site of radical dissent, free speech and progress within a capitalist society are at best a nostalgia for a fabricated past of activism and at worst a re-telling of movement history to legitimize the university as an institution and grant it some positionality outside the state and capitalist production. While Universities have often attracted politically active people who participated in movements and struggles, the University was simply a physical space where such people congregated rather than being in itself an inherent site of revolutionary movements or spearhead of autonomous thinking and organising.

The contemporary University even more than ever before is characterized by private enterprise and decisions made in the interest of profit, rapidly declining quality of education, displacement of young people to new cities, the anonymisation of students and lack of community and gentrification resulting in higher living cost for locals and students. The promise of a streamline into well-paid jobs for university students and social mobility through higher education is also

increasingly a thing of the past. University graduates in **STEM**, social sciences or humanities, Masters degree holders and those with outstanding academic backgrounds are all flung into the same job market of gig economies, badly paid hospitality work or outright rejection from jobs in their field.

Out of this reality, today's student activism emerges. The poverty, misery and overworkedness which many students have suffered, have been amalgamated into an easily digestible and aestheticized package of 'The Student Experience' which is repackaged and made into a romantic marketable product that can be sold to young people. Working-class students who must work to support themselves (often struggling through insecure and badly paid positions while accumulating large debts) must necessarily live this reality with a glimmer of hope that their misery is some sort of financial 'investment' that will guarantee them riches and success in their adult lives. In reality, this period of time is a precursor to similarly miserable working conditions that will follow workers throughout their lives. Affluent middle and upper middle-class students who attend university 'for the experience' and to widen their horizons to the depth of human knowledge are able to eat pesto pasta, complain about their dingy accommodation (which they share with their

working counterparts) and complete their (admittedly heavy) academic workload with a net of safety that they can fall back on should it all get too much. The 'Student Experience' is a quirky three/four-year period of their lives they can recall in twenty years when reflecting on the knowledge they have gained about the world.

A quintessential part of The 'Student Experience' package for those who imagine themselves as the most radical in their cohorts, is student activism. This activism is insular, institutionalized and diffused into a palatable resistance against a vague 'system'. Universities run campaigns of 'decolonization' while funding arms and autonomous weapons, and the vast majority of sanitation staff being immigrants on low salaries silently cleaning around the white students who studiously continue to read about decolonization. Classes on gender equality are taught while sexual harassment is commonplace on campuses. Murals are created in praise of the activists and dissidents of the past while university staff is on strike demanding higher pay, freedom from discrimination, secure work contracts and pensions. University activism is allowed to exist in the most controlled of environments, enough to allow students to feel like they are getting the full 'Student Experience', but violently suppressed (as we have seen from pro-Palestine university encampments)

as soon as it escapes acceptability. The existence of a solely Student movement as opposed to a worker's movement, feminist movement, queer movement, black liberation movement etc. (potentially containing students), creates an isolated space containing a very limited cohort of people. The goals of such (acceptable) movements and campaigns are centred solely around the function of the university, the assumption that it can be in some way redeemed as an institution in a capitalist society and the idea that a functional change in a singular university will in some way provide a social victory. This will never be possible.

The students who are able to engage in activism through the 'Student Experience' are those same students that will be recruited by hedge funds and banks, oil and arms companies and the third sector of institutionalized and salaried activism. The subdued and institutionalized form of activism, far from being any sort of radical dent in any system, is a hands-on training for tomorrow's salaried activists and a de-activation and enmeshment into capitalist workings and functioning into managerial positions. These 'Student Movements' are divorced from meaningfully political content, localized understanding of specific contexts, cooperation with other existing movements or struggles or developing

community issues. Student Activism has been reduced, as so many other struggles to an aestheticized version of its most radical iterations.



## *Bodies in motion*

Content warnings: sexual violence, sexual harassment, coercion.

“If this comes to a fight, you would win, but it would be very ugly for us both. Is that really what you want?” I would have liked to name it there and then, but I was disarmed. That’s precisely what happened, my strength was taken from me. I felt the bruiser in him, the entitled angry part of him- the part that wanted to extract revenge on me for having made him want me- and I could not push back against it. To name it might have worsened things’

Katherin Angel, ‘Snout’

As long as there is movement, there is safety- or so I’m told. It is dark and desolate, but I am safe. Even as I am accustomed to small village lanes and friendly faces, I am safe walking the night through wide lonely urban streets. Motion is safety and I the sole agent of my own destiny- for better or for worse. I keep my wits about me, I’ve seen enough scenes of sudden violence to know that much. Short bursts of gore and guts printed in my consciousness

more vividly than long shots of despair, angles lingering lovingly on every inch of anguish.

So, I stay alert, take my headphones out, stride quickly and efficiently. My safety lies in my machine conversion of energy to motion my raw self-preservation. If someone comes out of that alley, I'll sprint. I'm young and fast and clever. I am everything I can be and more. If I turn and someone is behind me, I'll quickly use my elbow in their face, spit at them, scream. My reflexes will be fast.

This is true. This is a universal fact. An object in motion will remain in motion unless acted upon by an external factor. I am the object and my motion must continue. My brain cannot compute a scenario where this is not the outcome. Since I have a point from which I initially departed, and I have a point to which I am heading, and since I am doing so fast and with caution, I am suspended in safety and agency. Or so I'm told.

I am standing on the staircase at my work. The middle-aged cook and his half-hearted malice and hunger for dominion, advances on the waitress below me in the open plan kitchen. She is moving fast and steadily and his hand

on her hip makes her stop, freeze. She is new and good at her job and just 18. He leans over her shoulder slowly, brushes her hair behind her ear and whispers in her ear. She is still, and I, her unfortunate shadow stand motionless on the staircase looking down. My hands burn and blister from the plates I carry but I am still. A few seconds later it is over. For those few seconds though, I am stripped of movement, from production, from my perpetual journey from start to destination. No one else notices, they are lost in their need for production, speed, movement, agency, outcome. Later I approach her to ask her if she's okay, and as I talk to her, she polished the silverwear more vigorously, her leg taps, her eyes remain down as she nods- she's fine. Or so I'm told.

I am in a Man's room. This is not a boy, but a Man and his room is big, in a flat he owns. When he moves, he does it slowly and precisely. I am high and a drunk and fully aware I've lost my speed, agility and reflexes. I have little agency left and no safety. I cling to what little movement I have left. I do not go limp the way I want to. If I do, I can no longer block the knowledge I have no agency, no power, no last resort to save myself. Here is this external force that acts upon me as I tell myself I am still in control. When I get home, I recount the night

to my friends, carefully polishing it with a veneer of humour, embrace its absurdity, coat it with cool street-smarts. My friends don't smile and they don't laugh along- they hug me and for a second we are still and my eyes burn. I fidget, laugh it off nervously, start making my dinner. I chop the carrots quickly and almost catch my finger on the knife.

If movement is production, and production purpose and worth, purpose and worth are safety. Safety in my place in the world, my identity, my social role. As long as I have something to show for my experiences, I am shielded from powerlessness, vulnerability and victimhood. 'Did you say no?', 'did you fight back?', 'did you punch and claw and scream and spit?', 'did you create a dent in time and space?' 'Do you have something to show from it?'. In the absence of movement, without a physical fight, or a law suit or piece of evidence in a clear plastic bag, there is nothing. Nothing happened. Only we know, in the still moments in the depths of the night, as we pause in a queue and stare at the sky, as we sit by the river and watch the water ripple, we know something happened.

Passivity, stillness, lack of productivity are derogatory. What happens when we have no will or power or strength left

to make noise as we go. What happens when we go limp and accept that alone we are stripped of agency, of autonomy, of all the things we were promised could be ours if our bodies were able and fit, our minds sharp. What happens when we simply want to be still? Machines cannot get hurt, only replaced. The more I make, move, produce, the less I am someone who can get hurt and the more I am something that can simply be replaced, fixed. I am an object in motion.

## *The Manarchist Revisited*

(cw// SA, rape culture)

who is he? who is he organising with?  
why is he still in our spaces?



everybody agrees that the Manarchist is an asshole. everybody reads Ray Filar's article at every community-education event on sexual violence and then everybody goes around in a circle and agrees that the Manarchist is a wanker, a shithead, and that we should stop organising with him. and then we continue to invite him to meetings.

everybody knows what the Manarchist looks like: everybody knows that he'll tell you he's a feminist if it means you'll suck him off; everybody knows he stands too close to women at parties, leans over them, doesn't take "no" for an answer; everybody knows he's only been correctly gendering the transgender people he thinks are hot. and then we argue over whether we should let him or his rapist pals into our groups.

everybody knows that the accusations made against the Manarchist are made up by the SWP. or the IMT. or the Communist Party. or some crazy ex he had a bad breakup with (don't ask the details you'll just upset him). everybody knows that the twelve accusations made against him from different people who've dated him is proof of collusion and conspiracy against him. his exes were bought off by the bosses. or the police. or the politicians. they're just trying to make anarchism look bad.

and every meeting we have the same conversations about the fucking Manarchist. and every meeting we agree he's an asshole but then someone mentions all the good activism he's done in the past and that all the twelve accusations from different women are from our enemies. and the debate continues. the Manarchist is a piece of shit, sure, but he would also be helpful because he knows how to break locks. or where's safe to run from police; how to barricade doors from the inside. or how to run an online presence. and besides, he has all the contacts. everyone knows him: he's been involved in community activism for years.

the best we can hope for is delaying the inevitable. one day the Manarchist will join our collectives and stand too

close to our female members at parties lean over them not take "no" for an answer breathe down their necks and invite his rapist pals to our events our gigs our occupations and our squats and our community will no longer be safe.

ours is a movement that attracts a lot of victims, for good reason. but it also attracts a lot of people who want to have access to the vulnerable. everybody agrees that the **Manarchist** is an asshole: nobody wants to be the **Manarchist**. so why, then, do people keep on defending him?



*We're having a GAS*



**WARNING  
G.A.S AT WORK**

Glasgow Autonomous Space is back. Once again the city will have an autonomous social centre, in a shiny new premises in Govanhill.

The closing of "old" GAS, that venerably DIY industrial unit on Kilburnie Street in Tradeston, was a huge blow for the radical scene in Glasgow. Gone was the movement space that was the obvious choice for where to hold meetings or events. Where else was it possible to host free talks, film screenings, etc without paying by the hour for the use of the space? Countless groups and projects suddenly found themselves without a home; scattered to the wind and forced to operate from people's flats or spaces that didn't share our anti-capitalist principles. Gone was the hub for a whole variety of projects and people doing anti-capitalist organising in Glasgow; where people involved in different projects could meet or hear about each others events and an easy entry point for those new to the scene to find things to get

involved in. It's not easy to overstate the impact of **GAS's** closure in the early months of **2023**.

So, it's no surprise that we are thrilled at the prospect of a new space opening this summer. Any movement requires spaces to organise in and an anti-capitalist, anti-hierarchical movement needs those spaces to be anti-capitalist and anti-hierarchical. This is what we hope "new" **GAS** will be: what it was before and perhaps even something better. And, it's what we need it to be because we have a lot of organising to do. With the beginning of implementation of the state's sinister Rwanda scheme and the increase in detainment and deportation of refugees this entails, state support for genocide in Palestine, the ever increasing cost of living, continual attacks on the trans community, the failings of a tory government in its death throes and the prospect of a new conservative government wearing different coloured ties: we need to build connections and community across the anti-authoritarian left and a space like **GAS** could be a vital part of that.

We would encourage anyone who wants to see an autonomous social centre in **Glasgow** again to get involved in any way you can.



Open for contributions <3

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