

ANARCHIST STUDIES NETWORK
CONFERENCE 4-6 SEPT
2024

ANARCHISM IN / WITH / AS / BEYOND CONFLICT

ASN8



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2nd September Online Day

All times are in British Summer Time

9.30am – 11am

Stream 1

Organising in contradiction

A practical framework to understand contradiction, *Evelyne Mendouse*

Consensus Decision Making Sucks, *Kim Foale*

A cooperative plant lab for research and development in a rural zone, as an anti-example of social anarchism, *Karanastasi*

11.15am – 12.25pm

Stream 1

Pacifism and violence

Mapping the landscape between pacifism and anarchism: accusations, rejoinders, and mutual resonances, *Alexandre Christoyannopolous*

On Anarchist Violence, *Luigi Celentano*

The Paramount Importance of Mores in Ethics by Peter Kropotkin and in His Threatening to the Revolution, *Sergey Saytanov*

Anarchism and Just War Theory, *Nathan Jun*

Stream 2

History as a Battlefield panel

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12.45pm – 1.30pm

Lunch break

1.30pm-3pm

Stream 1

Tech

Those who can give orders, do so; those who are smart, obey: an anarchist critique of neoliberal “smartness” in the context of smart cities, *German Filho & Peterson Silva*

Conflict and complicity with Marxism as hegemonic alternative: the case of technological subjection, *Daniel B*

Stream 2

Conflict and Affinity at the Borders of Anarchism panel

3:15pm-4:45pm

Stream 1

Aesthetics and Art

Exploring the Conflictual Nature of Anarchist Symbolism, *Matteo Modena*

Music and Direct Action in the Burmese Civil War: Anti-Coup Anarchist Punks and Hip-Hop Artists in Myanmar, *Emily O'Dell & Ming Thet Paing*

Anarchism, the Differend, and the Audible: Revisiting Lyotard's Heterogeneity as an Aesthetics of Conflict, *Casey Robertson*

Stream 2

Anarchist ecologies and the politics of love: radical entanglements in/with/beyond conflict panel

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Stream 3

The Mind

The conflicted self and anarchist approaches to psychoanalysis/psychology/psychiatry (including critiques of 'wellness' and self-care), *Geoff Bathje*

[Somaterapia, psychedelic anarchism and the micropolitics of desire](#), *Aragorn Ellof*

Quiet Revolutions in the Conflicts between Mental Health Education and the State, *Andrew Wood*

¿QUIÉN ES PEDRO RODRÍGUEZ BONAPARTE?, *Fabricio Vomero*

5pm-6:30pm

Stream 1

Conflicts and paradoxes

Anarchism as paradoxical way of thinking, *Jonathan Eibisch*

Inequality, Power, and Hierarchy: Anarchism as Conflict Sociology?, *Dana Williams*

Prefigurative methods, *Camille Tinnin*

Stream 2

Decolonial, indigenous and autonomous power

Triumphs of the Unorganized, *Charlotte Lowell*

Autonomous Infrastructures of Care in Communization and Dual Power Theories, *Alex Barksdale*

Anarchism is Decolonization -and Conflict-, *Mariana Calandra*

Living Together as protest: The cross-pollination of Anarchism and Indigenous Resurgence, *Anton Vandevoorde*

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4th September, Ulster University

9.30am – 11am

Registration in room BC-02-308

11.15am – 12.45pm

Opening Plenary in BC-02-308

12.45pm – 1.30pm

Lunch in BC-03-122

1.30pm – 3pm

Room BC 02 203

Transformative Justice in Practice panel

Room BC 03 104(a)

Anarchism, Deportation, Diaspora, and Exile in the early Twentieth Century panel

Room BC 03 111

Quiet space/ DIY session

Room BC 03 122

Conference base and late registration

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3:15pm – 4:45pm

Room BC 03 203

Cognitive Conflicts

Psychoanalytic Anarchism: Scribbles on Segregation, or 'Conflict Between, *Duane Rousselle*

[Flipping the deficit model of anarchist activist burnout](#), *Liz Turner*

To be neurodivergent and to be an anarchist is to live in a constant state of conflict, twice over, *Flick Griffin*

Room BC 03 104(a)

Uncertain spaces

Playing with Uncertainty: Anarchafeminism and the Design of Social Innovation, *Val Volpi*

The Entangled War Faces of Naked Women: living with the invocation of antinomies, absurdities, conflicts, contradictions, incongruities, *Aisling O'Boyle, Cindy Brown and Louise O'Boyle*

Border-space, Family Preservation, and Feminist Networks of Solidarity, *Ayden Cox*

Room BC 03 111

Quiet space/ DIY session

Room BC 03 122

Conference base and late registration

7pm-10pm

'Belfast Confetti. Class and sectarian conflict in the Belfast shipyards 1886-1920'

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The (A) Centre, 6 Wellington Court, Belfast BT1 6HW

Going beyond often sanitised approaches to Belfast's shipbuilding heritage, this event utilises the story of Belfast/shipyard confetti to explore class and sectarian conflict in and outside the yards.

Acknowledgement of the violent use of rivets as 'shipyard confetti' (where rivets used in traditional iron shipbuilding were used as weapons, either thrown or dropped from height) is absent from the city's heritage and tourism industry. Rather than avoidance we will utilise this darker story to explore tensions between class and sectarian conflict in the shipyards and the city beyond. Beginning with the earliest incidents of the use of rivets as weapons during sectarian riots associated with the Home Rule Bills of 1886 and 1893, to industrial action such as the Belfast dockers and carters strike 1907 and the 1919 'engineering' strike, and concluding with the expulsions of Catholics and 'rotten' Prods from the shipyards in 1920.

Our main objective is using this topic to chart the conflict between class struggle, working class organisation and sectarianism.

7.30pm

Join Friendly St. FC for some 'Elite Low Level DIY Football'. Kickabout at Ormeau Park, BT7 3GG

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5th September

9.30am-11am

BC-03-203

Exhibition/performance: Resisting recognition? Anarchist perspectives on conflicted identities in live art.

BC-03-104(a)

Rethinking Conflict

...[All] things come into being and pass away through strife" (Heraclitus): In Praise of Conflict, *Diane Morgan*

Anarchic "Tolerance" and The Inevitability of Conflicts between Hierarchical and Non-Hierarchical Structures, *Ole Martin Sandberg*

The Role of Conflict in the Anarchy-Democracy Compatibility Debate, *Michal Biedowicz*

BC-03-109

Action and practice

Prefigurative practices of the anarchist/anti-authoritarian movement in Greece, *Dimitris Spyropoulos*

Intersectional Heterarchy: A Different Way of Understanding Power Dynamics in Autonomous Communities, *Tim Weldon*

Boycott, Strike or Sabotage? A Constructive Guide for Imaginative Action, *Elke Van Dermijnsbrugge*

Room BC 03 111

Quiet space/ DIY session

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Room BC 03 122

Conference base and late registration

11.15am-12.45pm

BC-03-203

Militant research: Relationships of freedom, power and care panel

BC-03-104(a)

Conflicts in Anarchist history

Re-imagining the Russian Revolution of 1917: An Anarchist Critique, *Saptadeepa Banerjee*

Anarchism, Marxism, and the (non-)neutrality of science and technology. A view from Italy (1960s-1980s), *Ginevra Sanvitale*

Room BC 03 111

Quiet space/ DIY session

Room BC 03 122

Conference base and late registration

12.45pm-1.30pm

BC-03-203

Workshop: The approach to conflict in UK Self-Directed Learning Communities

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BC-03-104(a)

Anarchist figures

Pyotr Before Paulo: Critical Consciousness, Humanisation, and Social Conflict, *Luke Ray Di Marco Campbell*

'One-man revolution': the quiet anarchism of Wendell Berry, *Quentin Broughall*

BC-03-109

Prefiguration, state and ethics

May's Consequentialism and Franks' Virtue Ethics: Competing or Complementary Moral Theories for Anarchist Philosophy, *Matti Eskelinen*

Conflicting futures: Deleuze and prefigurative politics, *Oscar Reed*

Technology and the Anarchist Project: The Decentralization of Power, Democratic Confederalism, and What Comes After the Nation State?, *Harry Halpin*

3.15pm-4.45pm

BC-03-203

Workshop: Hacking Convivial Technologies' features

BC-03-104(a)

War and Pacifism

Political Violence and Decentralised Federalism: A Pacifist Constitutional Approach, *Melis Kirtilli*

Anarchy, Liberty, Sovereignty, and the State of Nature, *Olly Colvin*

Anarchism, War and Peace, *Ruth Kinna and Alex Prichard*

Exploring the linkages between Anarchism, Propaganda of the deed and Baloch Insurgency in Pakistan, *Muhammad Feyyaz*

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BC-03-109

Music

No Pain No Gain: An Attempt at Pragmatizing Utopia, *Judit Csobod*

Anarchism, traditional music and teknil, *David Fox*

Contested spaces of Whiteness in Noise music: (un)invited invitations in search of belonging, *Yecid Ortega*

7pm

Failed States//Creative Resistances – listening party and conference social

The Art Shop, Ulster University (Birley Building), Academy Street, Belfast BT15 1ED

Join us for some 'intentional listening' focused around the *Failed States//Creative Resistances* compilation. This 3-disc vinyl record set has been curated by punks in Belfast (north of Ireland), Kosovo, and Band Aceh (Indonesia). The project explores the everyday lives of punks in these 'failed state' contexts, by curating tracklists that document the creative activities of these 'punk hinterlands'.

DJ Tevfik (all the way from Prizren) will mix-and-match the songs from across all 3 discs as a backdrop to the conference social.

Some nibbles/food will be available, but bring your own bottle!

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6th September

9.30am-11am

BC-03-203

Crime

What is 'Crime' it and is it an Adjacent Anarchist Concept?, *Autumn Lenart*

The Anarchist who happens to be a thief: a discussion around the politization of theft, *Lea Vignalou*

BC-03-104(a)

Mythology and spirituality

David Graeber, Social Worlds, and Mythology: Rethinking Conflict through Antinomian Knowledge and Imagined Orders, *James Willis*

The insurmountable conflict between Christianity and anarchism - Anarchist theology in conflict with Christianity, *Nuusa Niskala*

Towards a Mystical Post-anarchist Political Ecology, *Keith Lewis*

11.15am-12.45pm

BC-03-203

Against Empire

Anarchists, anti-militarism and the British Empire, *Eleanor Strangways*

'The only thing worth fighting for': Irish anarchist ideas and activism, *Máirtín Ó Catháin*

Anarchism As and Beyond Conflict with Religion in the Zapatista and Rojava Revolutions, *Rico G. Monde*

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BC-03-104(a)

Internal Conflict

Weaving anarchafeminist utopias: Navigating the waters of antagonistic and agonistic interactions with agonistic empathy, *Elena Pagani*

Behind barricaded doors: gender, class, and power in the London squatting movement, *Rowan Milligan*

A Magical Murder Mystery: Exploring power dynamics in migrant solidarity organising, *Nora Ziegler*

BC-03-109

Exhibition and talk: Architecture as a site and embodiment of conflict against domination,
Pijatta Heinonen

12.45pm-1.30pm

Lunch and Closing Plenary

Online Day Abstracts

09.30-11.00

Pacifism and violence

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Mapping the landscape between pacifism and anarchism: accusations, rejoinders, and mutual resonances

Speaker: Alexandre Christoyannopoulos

Pacifism and anarchism share some territory and have cross-pollinated in a variety of historical contexts, but they are also distinct traditions and movements, with voices in each holding serious reservations and criticisms of the other. This article identifies and critically discusses these reservations to correct widespread misunderstandings of both pacifism and anarchism in both the scholarship and the wider public, thereby also presenting arguments for those outside either tradition to re-evaluate their own assumptions and analyses. Anarchist qualms about pacifism and nonviolence include: disputes about the relative effectiveness of violence and nonviolence; a distrust of some of the origins and compromises of advocates of pacifism and nonviolence (including liberal leanings, collusion with the state, appealing mainly to white middle classes, racism, and sexism); and complaints about the censoring consequences of nonviolence being elevated to a position of dogmatic dominance over social movements. Pacifist qualms about anarchism include: its historical and ongoing support for violence; and its seemingly excessive radicality. Each of these accusations is nuanced or countered by articulating arguments grounded in the indicted tradition and related scholarship. Shared concerns and mutually resonating themes that emerge in the process are then identified, namely: their critique of state violence, militarism, and structural violence; and their arguments about means as ends-in-the-making.

On Anarchist Violence

Speaker: Luigo Celentano

Through research conducted under the framework of the English translation of the work by Fernando O'Neill Cuesta, *Anarquistas de acción en Montevideo, 1927–1937*, published by AK Press in 2020 as *Direct Action in Montevideo, 1927–1937*, we propose a discussion on the use of violence by “direct-action anarchists” active in Montevideo, Uruguay, during that time

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period and beyond. In particular, we will address two specific incidents: the attack against the “Estrella del Norte” bakery in 1927 and the assassination of Police Captain Pardeiro in 1932. Drawing on the profile of the “direct-action anarchist” developed by O’Neill Cuesta, we will examine the resort to violence as a means of resistance and social change, citing clear and concrete examples that sustain our hypothesis that violence not only is necessary to attain the aim of Anarchy but also inevitable. As such, it should not be shunned or feared, but rather embraced and respected.

From theory to practice, through this article we seek to recognize violence as a paramount and ineluctable means to an end. To achieve that end, though, violence in itself is not enough. An “educated” violence, a conscientious violence, is critical to awaken the masses, who have, for a long time, been in a dormant state imbued by capitalism.

We will attempt to offer some answers to the question of violence and the rejection by some sectors within the anarchist milieu to revolutionary “propaganda by the deed,” exploring the dilemmas and controversies this tactic/strategy has given rise to—not only within anarchist circles but also within academia.

The paramount importance of mores in ‘ethics’ by Peter Kropotkin and in his treating to the revolution

Speaker: Sergey Saytanov

“Ethics” by Peter Kropotkin has always been popular, both in Russia itself and abroad. Peter Kropotkin began working on it at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries. He developed this topic in his publications and during the revolutionary events in Russia in 1906-1907. But it was only in Dmitrov, where Kropotkin moved from Moscow in 1918, that he completely devoted himself to working on his Ethics. But Kropotkin intended with his book not just to outline the main thoughts, but also to lay the foundation for a whole direction of new anarchist morality. Peter Kropotkin identifies mutual assistance, justice and morality as the emerging basis of a new ethics. In this diverge the anarchist ethics of Peter Kropotkin from the communist ethics,

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where society dominate the individual . At the heart of Kropotkin's Ethics is a dispute with social-Darwinists over the issue of the "immorality" of nature. Deeply convinced that nature is moral, Peter Kropotkin found in it the sources of all the highest moral aspirations of man. For Peter Kropotkin, artistic and emotional thinking often prevailed over scientific and logical, sensual over strictly theoretical. First of all, he laid his mark on all his philosophical and anarchist views. Anarchism for Kropotkin, towards the end of his life, became a movement not so much “economic, in essence, but, in essence, a deeply ethical” movement aimed at “revising the foundations of all moral concepts” in order to rebuild life on the basis of a new morality. At the same time, Kropotkin expanded the term “anarchism”, taking it beyond the scope of sociology: this word began to mean not only a society without power but, more globally, Nature’s desire for harmony and self-organization.

Mutual assistance, Justice, Morality – these are, according to Peter Kropotkin’s plan, the successive steps in the development of humanity. Consequently, according to Kropotkin, the revolution should not resort to immoral measures. For the same reason, Peter Kropotkin also judge a terror, considering it completely unacceptable, both in the anarchist movement itself and in the class struggle in general.

11.15 - 12.45

Organising in Contradiction

A practical framework to understand contradiction

Speaker: Evelyne Mendousse

We all have had this vague sensation that things don't fit well together, be it abstract statements, social processes, goals, minute individual actions... Given time and space to think, discuss, read, and write, it is possible to make out what was actually causing this sensation. Nonetheless, most of the time, for most people, this is not doable. We may instead make fools

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of ourselves, or accept ready-made analyses from supposed experts, or rationalize away a real problem that will only fester. I would like to offer a simple, integrated, hackable, unacademic framework to better understand contradiction as close as possible to the heat of the moment when a contradiction is the most manifest. Although various academic disciplines will be referred to, ultimately I want to present a practical framework the validity of which is to be determined by lived experience.

Consensus decision making sucks

Speaker: Kim Foale

There, I said it. I've spent a lifetime in groups using consensus decision making, been an advocate for it myself, been to trainings for it and taught other people. It feels extremely vulnerable and cancellable to say: I think it maybe just sucks. It might even be the biggest single source of conflict in anarchist organising.

More specifically: as a default cultural expectation it sucks. There's loads of places where we all use consensus without really thinking about it: running a household, in intimate partner relationships, in small groups around personal healthcare, going to protests or on demos with a group of friends, and for that matter just going to the pub. Essentially, any situation in which people have roughly equal investment, already know and trust each other, and are doing something difficult, intimate, or life sustaining with each other. In each of these cases there's a real need for it, and I wouldn't feel comfortable without it either. Outside of that though I'm now increasingly convinced that consensus, as it is practiced in the communities I've used it in, is just getting in the way. Why? Because consensus needs a range of preconditions to make it work, none of which normally exist. In my experience of activist groups there is no clear common purpose, and time is not made to decide common purpose. They generally consist of a few existing relationships and friendship groups mixed in with a few relative strangers and friends of friends "vouched" for, and so can't be described as high trust environments. Usually no-one has had any formal or informal training in consensus

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process, and space for this training is not made. Proposals are rarely written down formally, minutes and action points are seen as an afterthought, and there is no culture of meeting facilitation. There is never a project plan.

Rather than talking about these things and trying to establish trust, train people in consensus decision making, be honest about the internal friendship groups and cliques within any given group, and making time to mutually agree common purpose, instead we just kind of _pretend_ all these things are true and then get surprised when people fall out with each other or burn out. It feels truly back to front: rather than arriving at consensus through a long term commitment to getting to know each other and exploring the territory the group wants to, we kind of assume that if we use consensus everything else will magically get fixed.

No one way works: let's stop pretending it does.

A cooperative plant lab for research and development in a rural zone, as an anti-example of social anarchism

Speaker: Karanastasi

Universities and research institutes in the European climax are governed by nepotism and oligarchy. The Greek territory is not an exception. Here, the hierarchical dictators of the institutional authority are in conflict with the knowledge production per se, since the economic resources are not communal and democratic.

In this dystopic environment, we founded a small-medium enterprise of sole proprietorship. It is a small nursery for organic trees production and breeding. The employees are acting on a cooperative mode. Self-organization and direct democracy is a manner towards grassroots horizontality. The workers shall be share holders in the near future, under a collective company of solidarity. We use crowdfunding as a source of capital and we invite investors to join us. Fair trade in local and international market is the way for channeling personalized groups of customers, against capitalist modernity.

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11.15-12.45

History as a Battlefield Panel

The value of historical interpretation to revolutionary movements has been affirmed for generations. Specialist historians have emerged out of revolutionary movements or have considered their work useful to those movements for reasons that once seemed obvious. History can provide us with an understanding of revolutionary tradition, a series of lessons drawn from past struggles, a knowledge of human capacities, and an understanding of the potential for social change. Although there has been no let-up in the production of revolutionary history written in this spirit, its usefulness can no longer be taken for granted. Insofar as our movements continue to generate reasons for optimism and hope, the role played by historical debate or shared historical interpretations is obscure... Is there still a point to revolutionary history? For this session, two historians of anarchist history will reflect on their practice and its purpose, before being responded to by discussants also working in the field. We will endeavour to ensure plenty of time for attendees to add their twopence.

13.30 - 15.00

Tech

Those who can give orders, do so; those who are smart, obey: an anarchist critique of neoliberal "smartness" in the context of smart cities

Speakers: German Gregório Monterrosa Ayala Filho & Peterson Roberto da Silva

Smart cities are a growing urban trend, yet their definition remains elusive, often shaped by the interests of their project designers. Although smart cities did not originate in the Global



South, they have become a crucial discussion in Brazil, presented as a necessity for cities to compete for investments. In 2018, a group of local associations along with the Florianópolis City Hall in southern Brazil launched the “Smart Floripa” reports. This research aims to provide a critique of the conceptualisation of “smartness” implied in the reports, informed by anarchist theory and critical geography, uncovering it as a rhetorical move in conflicts concerning urban policies and principles of sociopolitical organisation. As method, we chose a documentary analysis of two reports: “Smart Floripa 2030: transforming Florianópolis into a smart city” and “Smart City Florianópolis: the journey to creating the innovation path of a tourist island”. We begin the article by considering neoliberalism and its impacts on Brazilian municipalities. We then discuss smart cities and the Smart Floripa reports, which represent just another repetition of neoliberal urbanization policies, verified by critical literature as the current urban development paradigm. We conclude with remarks on the meaning of neoliberal “smartness”.

Conflict and complicity with Marxism as hegemonic alternative: the case of technological subjection

Speaker: Daniel B

Marxism is today the hegemonic alternative to capitalism - Marxists (starting with Marx himself) have in theory and action sought to police and exclude alternatives and appear as the only one. This has had devastating effects for anti-capitalism that play out continually in the present. I am interested to begin an exploration of just one such effect of this hegemony: The Marxist failure to account for the subjecting nature of the modern technological milieu and its consequences.

Drawing on some personal experiences, my methodology becomes my argument. The Marxist injunction one would understand if one would read (more of) their sacred texts amounts to a kind of academic Marxist counterinsurgency. Instead it is appropriate to understand what Marxism tends to do as a whole, rather than enter into endless hermeneutic exercises which

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nevertheless do not bring about agreement and typically affirm the authority of those who have read against those who have not. Which is to say that it does not matter what paragraphs you can point to in Marx or any other writer to show that Marxism is not in fact harmful, because it is what Marxism as a whole actually does that is in question. So I will identify some core tendencies of Marxism: vanguardism, statism, techno-optimism, progressivism, industrialism, economic reductionism, dualism, top-down notions of unity, and work/workerism. These tendencies are most present and their effects harshest in the most impoverished places of the Global South, where access to nuancing texts is often scant.

I will claim that Marxist hegemony is bolstered by the authoritarian internal coherence of these tendencies, and that divergences from that cohering whole tend to be marginalised views within Marxism as a whole. Insofar as anarchists are trapped in this authoritarian economic-reductionist black hole, we are also complicit with Marxist hegemony.

Drawing from anarchist philosophy of technology I will claim that, because of its reductionist orientation, the Marxist refrain about material conditions has ironically been unable to consider material necessity outside of labour valorisation processes. As such Marxism as a whole has (rein)forced the idea that (1) technology is neutral and (2) technological progressivism is natural and good, rather than understanding it as an ever-expanding social-material substratum which demands our participation and its perpetuation for our sociobiological well-being.

Those two ideas, both false, have been maintained against alternatives by Marxist hegemony, and are at the core of a failure to see securitisation and the efficient use of technology as distinct material growth orientations that maintain capitalism along with profit-seeking. They are complicit with our current world of high-tech genocide, borderization, and ecocide and its dark future.

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Conflict and affinity panel

This panel will investigate some tensions and affinities at the borders of anarchism by exploring different radical, communal, post-human, and non-state traditions, practices, and theories that both coincide and conflict with the practices and ideas of anarchism. We will discuss how these different liberatory currents unsettle certain assumptions held by anarchism and how taking seriously the critical theory and practice of these different traditions might provide us with fresh insight. As such, by looking at liberatory practices and ideas outside of anarchism, we seek to deepen our understandings of liberation and to sharpen our anarchist critique.

The Community and the Commune

Ryan Knight

This essay takes up a study of two sociopolitical formations, the Indigenous community as practiced and theorized in southern Mexico and the anarchist commune. I want to analyze how these two organizational forms, or collective subjects, conflict with the organizational and decision-making forms of the state and capital; how their politics of the communal or the commons differ from those of authority, hierarchy, private property, and individualism. Furthermore, I want to explore the relationship between the community and the commune, the tensions and differences in their politics, also the commonalities and interconnectedness.

Are There People Without a State?

Imuris Valle

In anthropology, from time to time the phantom of the state appears, causing the naive to think that there has always existed a powerful and authoritative entity that monopolizes violence. There is also material evidence of other forms of social organization that don't occupy institutions like the army, the classroom, or the necessity to have a territory called a country. The anthropologist David Graeber has already provided various examples of this, but

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there are family groups like the Romani, the Kale, and the Ludar who have survived with their cultural particularities, and have done so without the necessity of maintaining a “democratic” state. In this paper, I will study these groups to present their example of how to embody anarchist practices in the etymological sense of the word without being defined as such.

Towards the Destruction of the Human

Scott Campbell

Abstract: In recent decades, Black feminist and Afro-pessimist thinkers have problematized the notion of the "Human," arguing that this construct of modernity is rooted in and necessitates an ontological and epistemological anti-Blackness. As an intellectual and socio-political movement, anarchism has come far in its analysis of race as a hierarchical social construct. Nonetheless, an unresolved tension within anarchism remains its origins in modernity and thus raises the question of how does a movement navigate and understand race if said origins are premised in anti-Blackness? This paper will offer a problematization of the Human drawing on theories of power, administrative violence, Black feminism, and Afro-pessimism. It will then propose that calls for the destruction of the Human and lines of flight from the Human inherently present a challenge to anarchist thought by forcing anarchism to reckon with its roots and its understanding of race from a perspective that, will be argued, is more radical than anarchism itself.

War and propaganda

Exploring the linkages between Anarchism, Propaganda of the deed and Baloch Insurgency in Pakistan

Speaker: Muhammad Feyyaz

The maiden ideological invocation of Propaganda of the deed (POD) was a campaign of tactical terror by Russian anarchist revolutionaries in the late nineteenth century to mobilise the



society for a revolt against the despotic Czarist monarchy. Among other global instances, movements nuanced by similar attitudes have also existed in the Indian Subcontinent. One example is the anarchists of the early twentieth century, who rebelled against Imperialist rule to rid the country of colonialism.

A closely identical strain of POD can be witnessed in political clandestine violence in contemporary Pakistan. The ongoing separatist Baloch insurgency, fighting for an independent Baloch state, is one possible site of anarchist-imbued POD whose cadres are reportedly indoctrinated with the 'Critical consciousness' for freedom. In other words, they seek liberation from the so-called dehumanisation of the oppressor, the government and its repressive structures by embracing the underpinnings of the 'pedagogy of the oppressed' — an emancipatory and humanising ideology to fight domination.

However, extant conflict and terrorism scholarship eludes a structured examination of this conflict syndrome from an anarchist lens, which can improve its understanding and, thus, the governance odds. More importantly, the study will potentially engender significant insights departing from existing perceptions that mainly associate nationalist conflicts entirely with ethnocentrism without yielding intellectual space for alternative ideologies such as anarchism.

Methodologically, the present contribution will be an inductive undertaking embedded in empirical data, thus leaving possibilities for more explanatory hypotheses. The study expects to locate some original findings that will be substantively helpful for various stakeholders and anarchism studies in general.

Anarchism and Just War Theory

Speaker: Nathan Jun

Anarchists' attitudes toward war—no less than their engagement with traditional theories of, and justifications for, warfare—are extremely multifarious and complex. In this presentation I will attempt to highlight a few of the more significant themes that have featured in anarchist



discussions of war since the nineteenth century as well as the various ways these themes have been expressed in anarchist political practice. Following a brief synopsis of traditional just war theory (TJWT), I will discuss a range of general anarchist commitments that are especially salient to understanding its relationship to TJWT. I will close by examining specific anarchist perspectives on war and violence in light of these commitments as well as representative examples of how they have been put into action.

15.15 - 16.45

Aesthetics and Art

Exploring the Conflictual Nature of Anarchist Symbolism

Speaker: Matteo Modena

The symbolic repertoire of the anarchist movement is as varied as its schools of thought. This paper intends to analyze some founding elements of visual communication that make the anarchist movement's history through a qualitative study combining historical investigation with visual studies focused on symbolic images: the torch, the circled A, and the black colour. Each of these elements can be studied from the perspective of anarchist thinkers and activists and through a study aimed at understanding their semiotic dimension. The analysis of these symbols is therefore conducted through the study of the construction of meaning, its adherence to the historical context of origin, and the subsequent stratification of expressions (verbal, written, and visual declinations), but mainly through a study of today's figurative aspects. Some questions arise: have some of these transformed or been almost abandoned in favour of other symbols? Are these symbols useful in terms of group identity or for practical purposes (such as for a warning, a gathering, etc.)? What narrative do they hide, and what passions do they express? Considering this last aspect, we can use the investigation results to understand how these expressed passions relate in research on conflict, asking ourselves: is anarchist symbolism always intrinsically conflictual? And if so, in which sense?



Music and Direct Action in the Burmese Civil War: Anti-coup Anarchist Punks and Hip-Hop Artists in Myanmar

Speakers: Emily Jane O'Dell & Ming Thet Paing

This paper will analyze anarchism and conflict in Myanmar within the context of the country's 2021 military coup, ongoing civil war, and ethno-religious politics that fueled the Rohingya genocide. As Myanmar has only had a few punk bands and hip-hop artists connected to anarchist politics and practices, there has not been much research on anarchism and music in Myanmar. In addition, anarchist literature written in Burmese has not been translated into English. Further, in Myanmar, due to misconceptions about anarchism, there is a great deal of misinformation and discrimination against anarchists, who are stereotyped as drug addicts, bohemians, and individuals who do whatever they want with no regard to laws or cultural norms. Moreover, the majority of self-described Burmese anarchists are themselves ignorant of Myanmar's historical anarchist movements and tend to regurgitate "tankie" talking points to praise the likes of Mao, Ho Chi Minh, Stalin and Mao (Kyaw, 2023).

This paper seeks to rectify these archival absences and misconceptions by highlighting anti-coup punk anarchism and the relationship between hip-hop and anarchism in Myanmar through an analysis of Burmese anarchist actors (organizations, musicians, and individuals) opposed to the oppressive Burmese military government, authoritarianism, and dictatorship. The paper opens by focusing on the punk band "Rebel Riot," whose band members have been engaged in anarchist political action and communities related to punk-anarchism and the anti-coup movement. In addition to their songs railing against the military and religious (Buddhist) propaganda, they have also participated in direct community action, such as in supporting the un-housed community and playing benefit shows for the local Food Not Bombs branch. Politically, they joined the anti-coup protests in person and forged solidarity networks with anarchists and anti-fascists outside of Myanmar. For instance, their collaborations with punk activists and anarchists from the UK have been captured on film in the tour movie called No



Spicy No Fun, which features their punk history, lifestyles, and activities (Jak, 2022). Lastly, this paper will look at the role of anarchism in Burmese hip-hop, with special attention paid to Bro-Y. In a country plunged into a brutal civil war triggered by a universally unpopular military coup, Burmese anarchists are using music and direct action to help envision and foster a society in which individuals can actively make decisions for themselves.

Anarchism, the Differend, and the Audible: Revisiting Lyotard's Heterogeneity as an Aesthetics of Conflict

Speaker: Casey Robertson

The Political philosophy of Lyotard has often been a difficult realm to grasp within a comprehensive fashion. While his overarching political project has often been described broadly as somewhere on the left, Lyotard's work has been rife with contradictions, and often misread through over generalizations, ideological dismissals, and even mischaracterizations from an unbalanced amount of scholarship solely focused upon his infamous 1979 report on knowledge. Despite such difficulties in generating a comprehensive picture of his political project, we can still isolate useful currents of theorizing to retool within contemporary contexts, notably in relation to anarchist thought and related modes of artistic practice. As a thinker on aesthetics most heavily influenced musically/sonically by the anarchist composer of the avant-garde, John Cage, we can revisit Lyotard's politics of aesthetics through concepts such as the differend which aim to enlarge the complexities of conflict and disagreement rather than simply smother them in the authoritative discourse of the intellectual. Through such practice, this paper explores how contemporary anarchist thought and practices can be put into a productive conversation with Lyotard's past work on the politics of aesthetics. From the theorizing of the differend to the technological rationality of the inhuman and the sublime, this discussion will explore how such concepts push us to re-examine our practices pragmatically; beyond the generalizations of political discourse or mass movements to recognize the heterogeneity of the specific. Through such theorizing, this paper examines how

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we might search within the localized aesthetic for momentary ruptures against the negentropy of late-capitalism.

Anarchist Ecologies and the politics of love: radical entanglements in/with/beyond conflict

What's Love Got To Do With It? Anarchist Approaches to Revolutionary Social Transformation.

Speaker: Hillary Lazar

Chances are, for most, love is not the first word that comes to mind when thinking about anarchism. It may even seem antithetical to anarchist thought and practice. Yet, as Italian anarchist Errico Malatesta suggests, love is at the heart of the “anarchist spirit.” In recent years, the question of love’s role in our movements has generated fierce debates within the radical Left, anti-fascist, and anarchist milieus. Calls for universal love, for instance, are critiqued for being flattening and naïve distractions from more substantive challenges to structural domination. And there’s the long-standing divide over nonviolence versus a “diversity of tactics.” From Bakunin to today’s antifascists, however, even the most militant revolutionaries see love as a powerful motivator to action. Love can also be considered a core part of anarchist prefigurative practices such as mutual aid and care-based, transformative social relationships. As part of the theme on conflict in anarchism, this paper will consider the divergent perceptions of love’s role in anarchist visions of social emancipation. And will, ultimately, push us to think beyond the false dichotomies of love/hate, militant/pacifist, prefigurative/insurrectionary and to, instead, recognize love as vital to revolutionary social transformation and anarchism in all its forms.

I want to know what love is. Pathways of care taught by edible wild greens: A lesson to thrive during colonial ecocide.

Speaker: Beatriz Paz Jiménez

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Based on my interaction with edible wild greens known in Mexico as “quelites”, I metaphorize their botanic ethology to take from them keys for social organization. I call them “anarchist quelites” and I study, through them, the principles of mutualism, cross-border, prefiguration, and resistance to capitalism. Quelites preceded and supported the development of crops native to Mesoamerica such as corn and tomatoes. Colonial prohibitions targeted them; contemporary racism and classism bias their consumption, associated with a disdained indigenous diet. Quelites are in dizzying extinction, like much of our planetary biodiversity. Being that they are nutritionally dense —during the COVID pandemic, they provided food security in rural areas—, abundant, and resistant to drought, they coexist in a social space of food scarcity and industrial polluting agriculture. Their history is a reflection of colonial deindigenization: a policy of erasure of memory that leads to the annihilation of foodscapes and natural artifacts for life reproduction. Quelites, literally and metaphorically, emerge in the city ruins from their underground resistance, being a beacon of relational imagination, agroecology of care, and multinaturalist associations.

All We Need is Love ... and a little organization.

Speaker: Marina Sitrin

Communities and groups resolving conflicts and harms themselves, without looking to the state or judiciary is not, in and of itself, something new. The scale to which this is currently occurring however, and the diversity in geographies and processes, is. Examples of care and community-based justice practices to be discussed include those in activist-based movements and groups, such as attempts in Occupy Wall Street in the US, to larger community-based organizations, such as RODI in Kenya and HIJOS in Argentina, to autonomous territorially based communities in which justice mechanisms function outside the state, such as in Guerrero Mexico and Rojava (NE Syria). This contribution aims at rethinking justice from the perspective of within movements and communities, based in how groups/communities are looking to one another and deepening the care and trust upon

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which the movement is grounded. And, from the position of deepening community and care, examining those remedies and processes that exist that reimagine justice, while addressing harms, committed and perceived. One of the areas to be discussed is the role of specific processes and agreed upon mechanisms so as to best address harm. Structures to support the love.

How deep is your love? Cultivating more-than-human affinities of solidarity and care towards a generative politics of the deep commons.

Speaker: Matt York

This contribution will think about the puzzling disconnect between the increasing calls for action to protect ‘the environment’ made by so many, and the continued domination and violence enacted by humans towards our biosphere and the non-human animals we share it with. I will suggest that fundamental questions are being overlooked: What are the underlying (and unexamined) values, subjective meanings, life-modes, philosophical perspectives, and cosmovisions regarding humanity’s relationship with(in) nature that determine current responses to these crises? And what world(s) do we prefigure as a result? Until this challenge is fully addressed, responses based on anthroparchal theoretical orientations will unwittingly perpetuate the very crises they aim to solve. Bringing activist voices into dialogue with classical and contemporary anarchist thought, this paper will discuss ongoing research exploring the conditions of empathic entanglement that provide the basis for both individual and societal formation, and for the radical loving-caring praxes which underpin many contemporary struggles. By extending popular conceptions of the commons to include our more-than-human psycho-socio-material relations, these ‘deep commons’ will be proposed as a ground through which a (r)evolutionary love might circulate in order for new political intersubjectivities to manifest — exploring how this radical interrelationality might serve as the basis for a co-emergent relational ethics of solidarity and care.

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The Mind

The conflicted self and anarchist approaches to psychoanalysis/psychology/psychiatry
(including critiques of 'wellness' and self-care)

Speaker: Geoff Bathje

I have engaged in psychological research on psychological dissonance and justification, multicultural psychology, and harm reduction/mutual aid. Combining these topics with my study of community psychology and anarchism has led me to believe the anarchist movement could support the mass adoption of anarchist ideas by helping people to better psychologically prepare for the collapse, dissolution, or overthrow of states. I propose that when the social order is disrupted (see the pandemic or natural disasters) people will tend to become more deferential to the state rather than less deferential (when the state has representatives present or sites to gather). In light of a crisis, it becomes easier to engage in self-justification of deferring to authorities and the state. I believe this is due in large part to the actual skill gap and actual lack of functioning mutual aid networks present prior to the crisis. While not minimizing the importance of theory and protest, I will propose that to meet basic psychological and material needs for survival, and to therefore build an anarchist movement, it is crucial for anarchists to train themselves and share their skills related to these basic needs: community organizing, mutual aid group formation, self-defense, growing food, foraging food, making, salvaging, and repairing crucial items, such as clothing, to name a few. Frequent mutual aid efforts and skill shares can help populations to gain confidence in their ability to survive in solidarity with their neighbors rather than deferring to an often minimally involved state in the event of crisis or disruption of the state. I will draw from psychology, anthropology, and sociology to elaborate my reasoning and proposed solutions.

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[Somaterapia, psychedelic anarchism and the micropolitics of desire](#)

Speaker: Aragorn Ellof

In his introduction to Anti-Oedipus, Foucault succinctly summarises Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalytic project by observing that 'it's too easy to be antifascist on the molar level, and not even see the fascist inside you, the fascist you yourself sustain and nourish and cherish with molecules both personal and collective.'

While unwavering anarchist opposition to fascism of the molar variety is an inextricable feature of our praxis, we've also historically grappled, albeit in less obvious and oftentimes inchoate ways, with these more subtle and molecular forms of microfascism. From the lifestyle experimentation of early anarchist communes like Colônia Cecília to the 60s radicalism of Ubi Dwyer's LSD-fuelled Head Liberation Front to the queer dance parties of the contemporary radical milieu, composing our relations to ourselves and each other differently in order to map out and eradicate the seeds of fascism that have taken root in everyday life has regularly formed part of the cultivation of thriving anarchist communities and projects. When we ignore or even disparage such micropolitical practices - as 'petit-bourgeois lifestyle anarchism', for instance - we perpetuate an impoverished, dangerous view of what fascism is and how it functions, in some instances even encouraging its growth within anarchist spaces.

In this presentation I discuss the Brazilian anarchist practice of somaterapia - a radical anti-fascist practice premised upon the notion that relations of hierarchy and domination manifest not only in the psyche and the socius but in our bodies themselves. Through an eclectic assemblage of capoeira Angola, Gestalt therapy, radical physical trust exercises, anarchist pedagogy and group analysis, somaterapia aims at eradicating fascism on the level of desire, chipping away at the somatic armouring and heteroregulation wrought by oppressive social relations so that we may recompose our selves and our communities of resistance and prefiguration in more liberatory and autoregulatory ways. While remaining cautiously optimistic about practices like somaterapia, I also, as a final task, draw attention



to the possible risks entailed in taking such micropolitical experiments, vital as they are, too far.

Quiet Revolutions in the Conflicts between Mental Health Education and the State

Speaker: Andrew Wood

This presentation examines the inherent conflict in mental health and the state. Coming from an American perspective, but sharing in many characteristics of mental health institutions around the world, the state has an interest in who becomes a mental health clinician and who does not. On the opposite end of that experience is the individual who wants to help others in distress. They may find themselves called to helping others, whether through their own experiences of distress or in an innate need to help others. In the middle of this equation is the educator who volleys between the needs of the state and the student, purportedly in the service of those seeking mental health services. They aid in providing an education required for licensure, as dictated by regional or national bodies. This exchange becomes especially conflicted when an anarchist approach to education and mental health is required now more than ever. In this fulcrum, the educator can become an agent of the state in their role, or work to directly agitate it. This presentation will discuss reorienting our mental health fields in “quiet revolutions,” (Ward, 2004) starting in educational spaces and branching into already functioning mental health spaces that value concepts like mutual aid and liberation and prefiguration of mental health in a more free society.

17.00 - 18.30

Conflicts and Paradoxes



Anarchism as a Paradoxical Way of Thinking

Speaker: Jonathan Eibisch

Clarifying the relationship between anarchism and conflict is essential to understand this political-ideological current, social movement and specific ethic. In my PhD thesis, I analysed the inherently pluralistic anarchist thought with an extended postanarchist approach. The concept of politics in particular proves to be paradoxical, insofar as it refers to emancipatory politics as decentralised, voluntary and autonomous self-organisation on the one hand and rejects nationalised politics as a relationship of governmental domination on the other. I assume that it is precisely the irresolvable conflict between the two poles that provides deeper insights into the essence of anarchism.

Based on this, anarchist thought appears to be permeated by paradoxes in a comprehensive manner. This can be seen, for example, in questions about the use of violence, dealing with technology, spirituality and atheism or communal individuality. Paradoxies become manifest also in theoretical concepts such as "libertarian socialism", "striving for autonomy", "social revolution" and others.

The paradoxical way of thinking similar to dialectics. In contrast to dialectics, however, it accepts that some opposites cannot be resolved or transcended - which challenges us eventually more to search for solutions to social problems. Paradoxical anarchist thinking can therefore provide anchor points for achieving the ability to act in complex and contradictory social conditions - with, against and beyond the associated conflicts. This is also relevant to social movements in which divergent positions need to be continuously mediated and synthesised if they are not to be simplified in an authoritarian way.

In my contribution, I would like to elaborate on these political-theoretical considerations and invite a benevolent reference to paradoxes.

Inequality, Power, and Hierarchy: Anarchism as Conflict Sociology?

Speaker: Dana M. Williams

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Sociology has long prioritized the study and theorizing of conflict centrally within the discipline. But, how do sociological analyses differ from anarchist analyses of conflict? Sociology may often analytically emphasize conflict, but it is far less adept at engaging in conflicts within the wider world (like anarchism praxis does). In particular, conflict is both a rather general, abstract theoretical framework for students in “Introduction to Sociology” courses and a more diverse, albeit sometimes quasi-functionalist, mid-20th century invention for students of sociological theory. This paper assess the historiography of conflict in sociology, as a perspective and as a stand-alone theory. Conflict sociology is indebted to classical figures like Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Georg Simmel, as well as later sociologists such as Ralf Dahrendorf, C. Wright Mills, and Gerhard Lenski. The two people who have contributed most to the popular use of the term “conflict sociology” are Lewis Coser and Randall Collins, both of whom conceptualized conflict in a synthetic fashion, often far more diverse than the concept’s typical use. In contrast, the rather critical analyses of conflict offered by anarchists, provide evidence supporting the claim that anarchism is a particular form of conflict sociology. There is clear overlap between conflict sociology and anarchism, in their primary concerns with inequality and power. However, hierarchy is a less common concern or characterization for sociologists, while playing a key role in anarchist analyses. This paper evaluates how sociologists typically define conflict sociology and conflict theory for textbook audiences, how frequently sociologists study hierarchy per se, and what anarchists mean by “conflict” (and whether their framing is compatible with sociology). These analyses help to illustrate affinities (and divergences) between sociology and anarchism, as well as to point the way to a constructive vision of anarchist sociology.

Prefigurative Methods

Speaker: Camille Tinnin

How does one ethically research radical social movements in a way that does not replicate existing hierarchies? Do commonly used data collection and analysis methods provide what



is needed to study prefigurative movements? And, if not, how do we prefigure our methods themselves, all while existing within the confines of the neoliberal university?

This presentation will discuss the questions above by considering the development and implementation of my dissertation research methodology within the contradictions of the neoliberal university. My dissertation focuses on the development of radical imagination by police abolitionists and how they work prefiguratively and collectively. This presentation will focus on the dissertation's methods primarily, and I will discuss:

- 1) Pushing against broad social science assumptions about knowledge, ways-of-knowing, and bias
- 2) designing the project to be as community-engaged as possible, not positioning myself as "the expert", while still using my research skills to advance the movement
- 3) balancing reflexivity and considerations of my own positionality (and telling my own story of becoming a police abolitionist), while focusing more on amplifying other's voices.
- 4) Using 'prefigurative methods' that experiment with new and life-affirming ways-of-researching,
while not expecting an impossible amount of time and participation from my very busy interlocutors.
- 5) considering trauma (of both the researcher and the interlocutors) in data collection methods, including providing multiple approaches to narrative interviews (including walking interviews and object elicitation) and using arts-based methods for autoethnography that are often used by trauma therapists in their research.

Decolonial, Indigenous and Autonomous Power

Triumphs of the Unorganized

Speaker: Charlotte Lowell

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What does it mean to break down? What becomes possible when we enter the break again and again? Triumphs of the Unorganized positions theft, vandalism, and sabotage as agonistic forms of working-class resistance that encourage self-expression and public participation. Finding resource from scholars like Robin DG Kelley, Fred Moten, Saidiya Hartman, and Marquis Bey, the paper describes clandestine forms of Black working-class resistance that fall outside the bounds of union organizing, charts the relational tensions that emerge from these fugitive actions, attests that these tactics reveal anarchist tendencies where self-determination is an action towards collective liberation, and theorizes that the presence of conflicting priorities actually affirms their affective power. In this light, the workplace becomes an “experimental venue,” a “recursive imagining” that is unlivable because it hasn’t been lived yet, that is “unmapped” and “unmappable” and yet which we inhabit in order to “discover and enter it” (Moten and Harney 2013). Being inside the break may require imagination, may require surrender, may require trust in the people that we are breaking for. This paper uplifts the generative potential of conflict and insists on beginning, again and again.

Autonomous Infrastructures of Care in Communization and Dual Power Theories

Speaker: Alex Barksdale

Care is now often rightfully at the forefront of discussions of radical politics. Within anti-authoritarian and anti-capitalist movements, there is an emphasis on autonomous infrastructures of care. This talk discusses the role of building autonomous infrastructures of care in communization and dual power theories, tendencies salient in anarchism today. Close consideration is paid towards temporality and causality, by thinking through the relationship between autonomous infrastructures and the process of revolution. One point of reference for care in communization theory comes from the work of scholar-activist M. E. O’Brien in *Family Abolition: Capitalism and the Communizing of Care* and *Everything for Everyone: An Oral History of the New York Commune, 2052–2072* (with Eman Abdelhadi). While providing an utopian political imagination, O’Brien’s model of communization discounts prefigurative

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organizing, believing the social relations of a post-revolution society will be forged only through insurrection. Care infrastructure is meant to sustain revolutionary communes but bears little relation to pre-insurrection organizing. I believe such a dismissal of prefiguration is unwarranted. Dual power, on the other hand, embraces prefigurative organizing, especially with regards to forming systems of autonomous social reproduction. I look towards anarchist-feminist articulations of dual power, particularly in regards to reproductive autonomy (Bewsick 2024). I argue that dual power represents a better theory for understanding the role of care in revolution and a promising model for anarchism.

Anarchism is Decolonisation - and Conflict -

Speaker: Mariana Gabriele Calandra

This article argues that anarchism decolonises and is therefore conflict. The experiences of different anarchist tendencies that have continued since the Latin American post-dictatorships (Calandra 2016, 2019, 2019, 2021, 2022), in addition to the debates on anarchism that have been taking place in the region since the beginning of the 21st century (Rodríguez 2007, Rossineri 2011, Barret 2011, Uzcátegui 2014) have been ignored by the institutional research spheres. To the omission of concrete contemporary anarchist ideas and practices, some scholars add an exhortation to "decolonise anarchism" (Taibo 2018, Pico 2021).

In contrast to such approaches, this article understands anarchism as a continuum of decolonizing impulses. The individual anarchist drive, affinity-based groupings and international anarchist solidarity are impulses towards at the decolonization of individuals, social relations, and territories because they attack sovereignty at different levels. According to Perlman (1984), human beings living in the national territory dominated by a state can be transformed into internal colonies, i.e. sources of preliminary capital. In other words, individuals are the property of the state. By the same token, Gelderloos (2017) defines the state as an engine of economic exploitation, is an institutional development to enslave people through coercion and alienation. As Kinna and Prichard (2019) state, the absolute exclusivity

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or sovereignty is central to both the private property and the State. In short, every person's life is subordinated to the logic of the government or the asymmetry and distribution of command and obedience without which there is no state sovereignty. This asymmetry is based on domination, a type of influence that forces continuous subordination through terror (Malabou, 2023).

If government is, the dominion of human behavior (Goldman 1910), the anarchist drive provides an opening to the state terror by opposing resistance to domination. While Bakunin argues that sovereignty, as an impulse towards absolute domination, is inherent to every state, Zaltzman (2020) points out that the anarchist impulse (*la pulsion anarchiste*) opens a vital outlet to total domination where violence closes in on the individual and destines him to death. In this sense, Malabou (2023) adds that the anarchist movement draws its strength from the death drive and uses that force against it and its destruction.

In state-imposed relations, the only possible action is to respond to orders from an immediate superior. The division between command and obedience, a decision-making body and a subordinate operational level to carry out decisions, is replicated in all organisational forms that the state authorises. Anarchism breaks the logic of government by practising another form of relationship in which organisation is based on affinity. It is a form of direct individual-to-individual action that avoids the intermediation of authority. The purpose of establishing direct contact is to act against the government's logic. But above all it is a non-fixed bond, an anti-social activity that forbids the temptation of unity. In this sense, according to Malabou (2023), anarchists are the ungovernable: they are either actively ignored or killed. Faced with this eventuality, anarchists draw their strength from the death drive to resist it. Such resistance, unlike the Marxist armed groups of the Guevarist and Maoist left, avoids both the professionalisation of struggles and the cult of the martyr (Loadenthal, 2019). For example, in insurrectionalist anarchism, a tendency exclusively focused on violent conflict, attacks have a playful character and are designed to create spaces of freedom in an oppressive environment (Wettstein, 2014). In this sense, the means used against systems of domination are ends in

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themselves; the attack does not have a tactical character, it is the end in itself because it opens up a space of freedom here and now.

On the other hand, the inter-state system suppresses any possibility of an outside governmental logic. While sovereignty, as exclusive and absolute control and jurisdiction, fosters competition between states, placing the 'national' and the 'international' on a continuum of relations of violence (Kinna, Prichard 2019), it also ensures a form of cooperation in terms of non-interference in intra-border affairs that hinders external support for groups and individuals in conflict with state dominance. However, as Cospito (2019) points out, solidarity with those repressed by the state drives anarchists towards the internationalisation of struggles, an impulse born out of the need for mutual aid. The third decolonising impulse is then internationalist solidarity between anarchists from different countries, for example by attacking the embassies of states that have imprisoned anarchists. Each of these impulses is decolonising, because it circumvents the sovereignty of the state over people, their modes of attachment and the territories they inhabit, even profaning the principle of sovereignty within the state and in the inter-state system.

Living Together as Protest: The Cross-Pollination of Anarchism and Indigenous Resurgence

Speaker: Anton Vandevoorde

In so-called Canada, nine hundred kilometer north of Vancouver, the Gidimt'en have been resisting the Coastal GasLink Pipeline for six years. In 2018, the clan of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation decided in a *balhats* (a governance feast or potlach) to join their sister clan (with the Unist'ot'en house group) in their resistance against gas and tar sand pipelines from Alberta to the west coast. They built a checkpoint with cabins, infrastructure to live year-round on site and over the last years even a huge feast hall that can host almost hundred and fifty people. Their reoccupation, 44 km on the FSR from Houston to Kitimat, has been a successful endeavor thanks to the not-always-easy collaboration between Indigenous people and anarchists.

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In this paper, I explore ethnographically the relationship between anarchism and Indigenous resurgence in practice. They find each other on principles of equity, autonomy, and collective care, but they also often clash as there are equivocations around concepts like hierarchy, sovereignty, peoplehood, nationality and non-oppression of more-than-humans. These disagreements are rooted in differences in their ontological takes on reality and ethics.

I argue that reoccupations, thanks to their unique nature that requires living as protest and daily life as a form of resistance, offer the possibility to overcome these equivocations. Through shared experiences on the land, reoccupations facilitate a pedagogy of resistance and living on the land together, enabling partners to find each other on uncommon grounds. Here, western anarchism can become truly decolonial, when it recognizes its own modernity and leaves space for other conceptions of the world.



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1.30-3pm

Transformative Justice in Practice

The aim of this panel is to provide practical insights into current modes of organising that use transformative justice as a framework for responding to conflict. Júlia Rojo, IWW Ireland
Júlia has been developing a Transformative Justice and Complaints Committee within the union. This has involved members coming together to learn about transformative justice as a potential approach for dealing with conflict in a workplace organising setting. Spit It Out
Project Spit it Out (SiO) is a Scottish grassroots community-led organisation established in 2020 that is dedicated to opening conversations around mental health and healing through creativity, accountability and community care. They deliver free inclusive activities and resources to fight loneliness, learn together and create a lasting change in their community through an intersectional Transformative Justice lens. Cassidy Ferrari, Ulster University
Cassidy's current PhD project involves exploring the possibilities of anarchist sexual pedagogy, through creative collaborative research using arts and play-based methods. This work, alongside community organising in a variety of settings, frequently involves finding non-carceral alternatives to preventing and responding to sexual violence.

+ Film screening evening Spit It Out Project have also offered to screen two documentaries, Spit It Out (2019) and Friends on the Outside (2023).

War and Pacifism

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Political Violence and Decentralised Federalism: A Pacifist Constitutional Approach

Speaker: Melis Kirtilli

This paper starts by exploring the concept of political violence in the thought of Pierre Joseph Proudhon through a comparison of his theory of war with that of Kant and Hegel, whom he directly comments on, and that of Arendt. Over time, the study of violence and nonviolence has evolved as violence can no longer be defined only in terms of physical forms of power exercised by individuals and states, but also in domestic, symbolic, and economic spaces as exercised by institutions, corporations, and international organisations.

Interestingly, although Proudhon starts his theory of political violence through a criticism of war between states, his concept of governmentality and pacification addresses some of these multifaceted and over-encompassing aspects of violence almost two hundred years ago. Proudhon argues that states come to existence through conquest; violence is manifested in the history, culture, and nature of states. His subsequent, quasi-pacifist, solution to wars is an anarchist constitutional model characterised by its egalitarian, horizontal, and bottom-up decentralised federalist organisation. This model informs the vision of other classical anarchists, Bakunin and Kropotkin, on stateless organisation, more recently Bookchin, contemporary anarchist grassroots movements, and partially Arendt's approach to council democracy. The paper concludes that the theory of decentralised federalism offers helpful insights into the theory of nonviolence, democracy, organisation of political institutions, and constitution-making.

Anarchy, Liberty, Sovereignty, and the State of Nature

Speaker: Olly Colvin

‘The condition of mere nature, that is to say, of absolute liberty, such as is theirs that neither are sovereigns nor subjects, is anarchy and the condition of war’

Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, Chapter XXXI, Of the Kingdom of God by Nature

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This paper explores Thomas Hobbes' 'Leviathan', through his foundational conception of 'Sovereignty' and the State's 'legitimate' powers of coercion over subjects, with Hobbes premising that the 'State of Nature' before/without/beyond the state, is a state of permanent anarchy, conflict, and a war of all against all, where life is 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short'. However, against Hobbes' pessimistic view of human nature, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's more optimistic view of human nature will be opposed; before confronting Rousseau's conception of liberty and 'popular sovereignty' with later anarchist theorisations of human nature and working-class cooperation against capitalist exploitation and state power. Finally, following the modern writings on sovereignty and the 'Biopolitical' by Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben and Tiqqun's 'Introduction to Civil War', we shall explore potential methods of resistance and 'desubjectivization' against sovereign powers of subjectivation, inclusive-exclusion, and control, under the diffuse biopolitical machineries and machinations of 'Empire'.

Anarchism, War and Peace

Speakers: Ruth Kinna & Alex Prichard

Anarchists, Glen Newey argued, have long understood the overlap between 'the methods of political power' and 'war-making': that politics relies on the use of force, including violence. In response, he suggested that anarchists consider war and violence unjustifiable, and therefore refused 'to engage' in either. Taking a lead from George Woodcock, he described this critique as consistent, but worried that the consistency was bought at the cost of the rejection of violence and politics. In this paper we complicate Newey's account of anarchism. Using Proudhon and Tolstoy we argue that the relationship between war and politics is more than an overlap. Both Proudhon and Tolstoy argued that politics is war. Not only in its iconography and mythology, it's martial language and adversarial methods, but also in the way in which politics sustains what came to be known as the class war. Yet contrary to Newey, they reject the idea that politics starts with sovereign power: for Proudhon, the

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exercise of power is only possible collectively, and this is politics because it is necessarily conflict. As Proudhon argued, war was not ‘the antithesis of right’ and peace was not ‘the opposite of war’. But can war be consistent with convivial politics? Proudhon and Tolstoy’s responses were quite different. Proudhon argued for the replacement of the political contract with economic contracts, turning the martial spirit into an industrial one. Tolstoy veered towards the rejection of politics because of its inherent association with violence. We explore this tension to unpack the different accounts of peace and non-violence both propose, and assess their relative merits for anarchist politics today.

Anarchism, Deportation, Diaspora and Exile

Speakers: Steven Hirsch, Kenyon Zimmer, Anna Elena Torres, Morgan Rocks

This panel explores the reciprocal relationship between deportation, diaspora, and exile on the one hand, and the politics of transnational anarchist movement on the other. As its contributors show, various forms of displacement and statelessness fostered anti-statist politics, but also catalyzed transformations of ideas and tactics.

Kenyon Zimmer examines anarchist resistance to incarceration, immigration detention, and deportation during the United States’ First Red Scare (1917-1925). These include widespread examples of mutual aid, production of underground newspapers, smuggling of correspondence, hunger strikes, direct confrontation with authorities, escape, and illegal reentry. Together, these practices sustained anarchism and its adherents through the fiercest period of political repression in American history. Steven Hirsch explores the complex relationship between Peru’s anarchist movement and South

American anarchist deportees and exiles in Peru during the early twentieth century. His paper analyzes the ways Argentine, Bolivian, and Chilean anarchist deportees and exiles were integrated into Peru’s anarchist study groups, presses, and labor organizations and how they influenced Peruvian anarchist discourses and engagement with transnational anarchist networks. His paper also examines tensions between Peruvian anarchists and their foreign



counterparts over the revolutionary potential and organization of Peru's indigenous population. Anna Elena Torres examines representations of exile in the work of anarchist Yiddish writers, including Peretz Markish, Malka Heifetz Tussman, and Mollie Steimer. She considers how they represented their own experiences of exile and deportation, their theorizations of diaspora, and their literary thematization of antistatism. Morgan Rocks looks at the transpacific networks forged by Chinese expatriates in North America and anarchists in China, and how their members on both sides of the globe functioned in tandem.

Cognitive Conflicts

Psychoanalytic Anarchism: Scribbles on Segregation, or 'Conflict Between'

Speaker: Duane Rousselle

George Ritzer and other sociologists have famously identified "conflict theory," which has its roots in the work of Karl Marx, as a major foundational "school" of classical and contemporary sociology. Conflict theory has often taken, as its point of departure, the foundational assumption that the best way to understand a given social arrangement is to reveal intrinsic conflicts over resources, place, knowledge, or identity. On the one hand, anarchist theorists have offered a counterpoint: diverse theories of conflict that are not reducible to those of the "Conflict Theory" school. On the other hand, psychoanalysis has revealed the extent to which its discourse is challenged by the elimination of conflict (e.g., conflict is often what brings one into the clinic). I therefore propose to include another category of conflict: between. When conflict occurs between social groups, rather than within an overarching social bond, new challenges are presented to both psychoanalytic practice as well as anarchist discourses on revolution.

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Flipping the deficit model of anarchist activist burnout

Participation in disruptive social movement climate justice activism has impacts for young people's wellbeing. This presentation will present findings from interviews with twelve Australian climate justice activists 18 – 25 years of age, contextualised through analysis of interviews with activist elders and political discourses about protest. Those involved in contemporary waves of climate justice activism face dilemmas about identity, efficacy, community and coping. Younger anarchists may experience trauma if underprepared for police brutality when first encountered. While older anarchists can support younger anarchists to prepare for aftermaths of police violence, generations of anarchist activists are missing from these communities following the neoliberalisation of their lives. As the global movement builds in numbers, this has implications for strategy. Seeing activist burnout as both a "spiral" and a "spring" helps flip deficit-based understandings of burnout. Springing back, creativity, community and meaning make it possible to reimagine what direct action means, to redefine the limits of possibilities in the anthropocene.

To be neurodivergent and to be an anarchist is to live in a constant state of conflict, twice over

Speaker: Flick Griffin

How does 'educate, agitate, organise' resonate with someone on the autism spectrum? How can 'standing on the line' heal, flare and create trauma? How does the in/ability to mask impact direct action? How does ADHD help and hinder a squatting project? How do fatigue and burnout feel different in relation to mutual aid? At least 1 in 7 people in the UK are neurodivergent, yet support services continue to be stopped amid significant funding cuts under the Tory government. Structural barriers make disability benefits inaccessible to over 70% of neurodivergent adults. Education is restricted for neurodivergent children and young people during the 3-5 year waiting periods for appropriate diagnoses, whilst many go undetected and unsupported long term. Regardless of age, neurodivergence is depicted as

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undesirable, with contemporary medical discrimination, seeking to breed us out of the species, and failing to provide lifesaving treatment. Historically my self reflection practices occur in my artistic outputs (a song, a poem, a short story), distinct from my academic work, which tends to analyse the interactions between the group and societal levels. For this conference it feels appropriate to turn my agitation inwards, and to shake things up, by putting my neurodivergent filing system into conflict! Using anarchist autoethnography and concepts from mad anarchism and anarcho-autism, this presentation will explore the intersection of conflicts in everyday life and political organising as an anarcho-queer-neurodivergent activist.

Playing with Uncertainty: Anarchafeminism and the Design of Social Innovation

Speaker: Val Volpi

My PhD journey on anarchafeminist design for social innovation (DSI) unfolds at the intersection of conflicting domains and seemingly incompatible subjectivities—design and anarchafeminism, theory and praxis, academic and activist. And yet it is precisely this unlikely confluence that may help me transcend binary dichotomies, challenge the prevailing consensus-based approach of liberal academia and question the machist and avantgardist glorification of violence as the sole ‘certain’ path to enact change.

Central to my study is indeed the exploration of uncertainty—not a mere deficit, but a rich, liminal space ripe for exploring new research methodologies and activism strategies not just to resist uncertainty but to resist and organise through uncertainty. This journey is not about reconciling tensions between multiple, often discordant, subjectivities but rather exploring and inhabiting them as avenues for growth, leveraging creative frictions to foster deeper insights into the nature of the social change that we imagine, and the designer/researchers' role in this struggle.

Games and collective playful narratives emerge as pivotal tools within this context, serving as dynamic spaces for experimenting with and embodying the principles of anarchafeminist

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DSI through the exploration of alternative realities, and the self-reflexive performing of different identities. While challenging conventional notions of time, power, and participation, games centre conflict as a catalyst to facilitate collective storytelling, role-playing, and collaborative problem-solving, providing another platform for prefigurative politics and the construction of new and complex social paradigms.

The Entangled War Faces of Naked Women: living with the invocation of antinomies, absurdities, conflicts, contradictions, incongruities

Speakers: Aisling O'Boyle, Cindy Brown, Louise O'Boyle

Please be aware before you read further that this abstract contains literal and symbolic references to gender-based violence

This paper is a gathering together of the conflicts threaded into the lives that we live as transformative university educators. We have both resistance and willingness to explore such processes of selving, and so draw on the embodied ethnographies of our academic colleagues across different decades and contexts to do so (e.g. Leitch 2006, Ortega, 2023). Aware of the complexities and potential triggering of the phrase 'Naked Women' (NW), we use it nonetheless and question what being a Naked Woman (NW) means and what it means to be a Naked Women (NW). Caught between inner wars and outer oppression, NW have and hold access to an anchoring force sourced from a power of authenticity but are weighed heavily by it. In elite, well-clothed, and mask-wearing spaces the presence of NW annoys, irritates, and offends. In these elite arenas, NW become objects of vitriol, symbolic aggression, symbolic violence and/or are used for titillation and tokenism. Above all, they are considered to be so disposable, to be used until they are done, that there is not a hint of sustenance, maintenance, or restoration. So, the War Face of the Naked Woman comes to be. You know the War Faces of the Naked Woman by her doings. Her choice is to not follow the 'rules of the game' despite knowing that it will cost her. She is called naïve, stupid, unwise, self-sabotaging, incapable of self- control, but resists these narratives and anchors



her power forward. With neither a confessional nor singular stance, we examine the conflicts of the entangled War Faces of Naked Women because we want to prepare the ground for new methods and ways of growing radical transformative agency. Diffracting the conflictual motives with(in) our disciplines and across our contemporary workplaces further emboldens our praxis for equitable action on pressing social needs.

Border-space, Family Preservation, and Feminist Networks of Solidarity

Speaker: Ayden Cox

My fieldwork is going to be with women who have set up a shelter at the US Mexico border space highlighting the work they have been tirelessly doing for years to keep families together whenever possible! I will be doing my differentiation the first week of May and provided that goes well I will be conducting fieldwork and I would like to present some of my findings and reflections at your conference.



5th September

9.30-11

Exhibition/performance: Resisting recognition? Anarchist perspectives on conflicted identities in live art

Marina Iodice & Mousa AlNana

This exhibition proposal, supported by a critical text, presents questions raised by *Reassémbledge* a collaborative live art piece by Syrian artist Mousa AlNana and southern Italian artist Marina Iodice, recently showcased at Belfast International Festival of Performance Art. The work delves into the intricate dynamics of recognition, conflicts, and anarchism. Through tattooing, multisensory elements, and audience interaction, the work explores societal dynamics and individual autonomy, revealing how recognition can transform into an imperceptible confine, limiting personal liberty and enforcing control. Recognition is intricately woven with power structures and social frameworks, shaping one's identity and self-worth. Thus, it may foster an illusion of self-determination, masking underlying power structures. Here, conflicted identities emerge, providing avenues to articulate tensions and creative dilemmas. Anarchism offers a crucial lens to confront power dynamics, advocating for autonomy and hierarchical critique.

The performance unfolds within a dimly lit room, with the faint smell of burnt wood lingering in the air, with Mousa encased in a metal structure, evoking both confinement and resistance. Marina gradually dismantles a surrounding fence, signifying the dissolution of borders and the disruption of power structures. By marking himself with the word 'refugee' in Arabic لاجئ (laji), Mousa embodies the complex interplay of displacement, detachment, and identity within migrant experiences. These gestures invite contemplation on control dynamics and resistance strategies.

Throughout, the sound of a tattoo machine permeates the space, serving as a sonic

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manifestation of anticipation and transformation. It shapes an endlessly waiting sonic track, which underscores the tension intrinsic to conflict. Audience engagement becomes crucial as participants indirectly contribute to the disassembly of the structure.

Through the *(dis)assemblage* of its elements, the work urges exploration of new realms of thought and acts of resistance.

Rethinking Conflict

...[All] things come into being and pass away through strife" (Heraclitus): In Praise of Conflict

Speaker: Diane Morgan

Given the inevitable exacerbation of conflicts in the future when what used to be called "natural resources" become scarcer and scarcer; when the essentials for life, that should be in common possession, are yet further privatised; when tides, temperatures, tensions, tempers rise...., it is urgently necessary to develop a robust form of resistance that is nevertheless as nonviolent as possible. The theme of this conference is most timely.

An integral aspect of such a strategy would be the reassessment of what "conflict" is. Instead of regarding all conflicts as problems to be solved, as risk elements to be "managed", or as justifiable means to an end, "conflict" should be resituated within the processes of life itself. Confrontation is just one aspect of conflict, but not all. In fact, positivising conflict can paradoxically lead to the autoregulation of violence, as Miguel Benasayag and Angélique del Rey have argued.

This paper wishes to explore the place of "conflict" within the work of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, whilst drawing on the French reception of Heraclitus' *Fragments*.

Anarchic "Tolerance" and The Inevitability of Conflicts between Hierarchical and Non-Hierarchical Structures

Speaker: Ole Martin Sandberg

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Can we imagine an anarchist (i.e. non-hierarchical) society living peacefully and neighborly alongside a capitalist state (i.e. a hierarchical society)? This could indeed be part of an ideal libertarian imaginary which would allow for and even encourage different types of social structures granting each individual the freedom to move and choose between the societies they prefer. But in reality, there are reasons to fear that societies based on hierarchy and exploitation have an inert tendency towards expansionism, leading them to seek to dominate societies that are seen as having "weaker" power structures. This is, for example, the argument of Alan Carter, according to whom the development of exploitative and repressive technology within a society constitutes a feedback loop with its own inherent political logic. This logic sets the internal political relations on a certain path but it also affects the political relations in neighboring societies as the mere existence of a militaristic neighbor constitutes a threat that encourages the introduction of repressive and exploitative technologies in otherwise peaceful societies, setting them on the same path towards relations of hierarchy and domination. It is thus hard to imagine peaceful coexistence between hierarchical and anarchic societies as the hierarchical ones will either conquer and subsume the anarchic ones or force them to become hierarchical themselves to avoid said fate. I will take this argument a step further and claim that a similar process is true for various social structures within a given society: In a liberal society we are all members/participants in various communities, social structures, organizations, etc., some of which have various forms of democratic or non-democratic structures, some of which are hierarchical, non-hierarchical, etc. Often, this is not seen as a problem, either because people are free to opt in and out of these relations or the compulsory membership is not seen as socially important enough to infringe on the core values of democratic engagement and liberty. In contrast, I claim that the social structures in one type of organization can "spill over" and affect the social structures in another within the same society. They do this, either by putting direct pressure on the other organisations they interact with to make them adopt similar structures for decision making, etc, or indirectly by shaping the thoughts and habits



of their members who are also members of other social structures and therefore carry the social and political habits and expectations with them into other spheres. In conclusion, I argue that there is a possible inherent conflict between hierarchical and non-hierarchical social organizations even when those are not considered to be in danger of encroaching on each others' (geographical or political) territory. This poses a problem for the ideal of "tolerance" regarding different types of social organization as we might not be able to be "neutral" about how others organize themselves.

The role of conflict in the 'anarchy-democracy' compatibility debate

Speaker: Michał Biedowicz

This paper discusses the ongoing debate between anarchists (though not limited to anarchists) about the compatibility between the concepts of anarchy/ism and democracy. Due to 'conflict' being a pertaining doctrine in the realm of politics, this paper will look at the relationship between the two concepts in terms of conflict. While the position of this author is that anarchy and democracy are most certainly compatible in conceptual, theoretical, and practical terms, it is expected to be intriguing what kind of role may the notion of 'conflict' play on the compatibility. Therefore, it will be examined whether conflict strengthens or weakens the compatibility, or perhaps it may turn out to be somewhat irrelevant.

Prefigurative practice of the anarchist/anti-authoritarian movement in Greece

Speaker: Dimitris Spyropoulos

The purpose of the following proposal is to explore the prefigurative practices of the Greek anarchist/anti-authoritarian movement. Based on our research we will be able to draw several conclusions on prefigurative strategy. Also, given the fact that your conference is addressed and hopefully will be attended by several people from all around Europe and hopefully from other parts of the world as well, it would be a great opportunity to share common experiences on prefigurative practices between the Greek reality and the rest of the world. Our purpose is

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not just to cite some prefigurative practices of the Greek anarchist/anti-authoritarian movement but based on them to contribute to the discussion on the prefigurative strategy in general. Our case study could include several prefigurative projects like self-organized sports clubs like “Apaleftos”, “Proodeytiki Ekrixi Toumpas”, journalist projects like “Alerta”, social centers like “Respiro”, democratic schools like “Ataxia” and many more. Our case study could also involve the recent students mobilizations against the establishment of private universities that were in a big part influenced from the prefigurative logic. Some other issues that could concern us could be to examine the differences between “legal” forms of prefigurative practices such as social centers, and “illegal” ones such as a squat. What can we learn by examining the two ways anarchists/anti-authoritarians chooses to act? What are the pros and cons of the two ways?

If we had to define prefiguration in a very simplistic way, we could say that it is a strategy that the social movements follow and in which the way they act is in accordance with their intended targets. This strategy tends to be inclusive, egalitarian, horizontal and participatory, highly influenced by the anarchist and feminist tradition. Prefiguration does not appear only in the way that social movements act but also in communes, teams and organizations that try to create the so called “concrete utopias”.

To summarize and to return to your conference’s main idea, our proposal will be about how anarchists/anti-authoritarians in Greece act *Beyond Conflict*, what they create, how they organize themselves and how they interact with each other and the rest of the society in the present, trying to live in accordance to their beliefs. Once again, given the fact that the conference is international, I consider more interesting a general presentation about the prefigurative practices that take place in the Greek reality and some thoughts about them. Doing so, we can have a good basis for further discussion on the Greek anarchist/anti-authorization movement, its accomplishments but also its failures.

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Intersectional Heterarchy: A Different Way of Understanding Power Dynamics in Autonomous Communities

Speaker: Tim Weldon

Traditional models of understanding power dynamics within social structures – specifically within anarchist circles – have long been dominated by top-down hierarchical models and horizontal ones aspiring to egalitarianism. However, neither fully encapsulates the complex, non-binary nature of the power relationships I have seen within autonomous social dynamics. In this presentation, I introduce the concept of "Intersectional Heterarchy" as an alternative framework for understanding influence and power dynamics within self-organized collectives and movements, particularly those observed collectives such as "Klinika," an autonomous squatted social center, where I spent two years as a participant observer.

The notion of heterarchy suggests a system where diverse, interconnected units share influence in a manner that is flexible and neither top-down nor equitably distributed. Authority within a heterarchy is dynamic, varying by circumstances and tasks, and enables multiple, non-linear and diverse pathways of influence. Intersectionality enunciates these nuances further by considering how individual identities, experiences, and capabilities contribute to power differentials that affect social equity and a smooth circular flow of power. This paradigm acknowledges that influences fluctuate as the diversity of personal attributes and external societal factors invariably shape social interactions and group dynamics within autonomous communities such as this, where any person could initiate or participate in tasks and decisions at any time.

This presentation posits that Intersectional Heterarchy is a more fitting way to engage with the complex interplay of identity, ability, and power within communities governed by principles of autonomy and direct action. Such a framework enriches our understanding of social dynamics by recognizing that varied and shifting power configurations are inherent to communal cooperation. It reframes the discourse, advancing the concept of an informal



heterarchical social structure where members navigate fluctuating power landscapes driven by both collective ideals and individual attributes. In doing so, it offers a critical reflection on the practical workings of horizontalism and challenges assumptions regarding power and its distribution within spaces that strive to transcend traditional hierarchical orders.

Boycott, Strike or Sabotage? A Constructive Guide for Imaginative Action

Speaker: Elke Van dermijnsbrugge

This paper presentation actively engages in alternative world-making through the exploration of Education for Uprising. Uprising is understood as 'the creation of autonomous communal spaces and modes of interaction' (Newman, 2017, p. 285) where social transformation happens. I investigate the concept of Uprising by looking at its practical enactment through boycott, strike and sabotage.

Central to the arguments is the development of the radical imagination as a collective practice (Van dermijnsbrugge, forthcoming) that can drive what David Graeber (2007) calls 'insurrectionary moments' within and across our communities in classrooms, in our homes and in all the spaces we travel. I build on earlier work on utopia as method (Van dermijnsbrugge & Chatelier, 2022) and anarcho-syndicalist organizational principles (Chaterlier & Van dermijnsbrugge, 2022; Van dermijnsbrugge, 2023) and make use of interdisciplinary theoretical and practical resources. I focus on three examples of direct action: the boycott, the strike, and sabotage (Scalmer, 2023) with practical illustrations for each. The boycott is framed as a call for deceleration; the strike is explored as a call for refusal; sabotage is directed towards a call for less productivity.

The overarching aim is to cultivate conceptual and practical possibilities that lie beyond the ubiquity of crisis narratives. I try to offer ways of being, thinking and doing that 'not only help reveal structures and systems of violence, exploitation and domination...[but] must also contribute to people's capacity to imagine and forge paths beyond them.' (Haiven &

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Khasnabish, 2014, p. 85). It is an engagement for 'the ones who stay and fight' (Jemisin, 2020). It is a call to action!

Militant research: Relationships of freedom power and care panel

Speakers: Elena Pagani, Sam G, Nora Ziegler

This is a panel and group discussion of the role of militant research in our shared autonomous, activist, and intellectual spaces. Elena Pagani, Sam G and Nora Ziegler will each introduce their respective research and share some of the dilemmas and insights that have emerged for them. We will then invite participants to engage with us in discussing some of our questions below, as well as their own questions and experiences.

Elena: My militant research involved radical worker co-operatives in Greece and trying to address problems of power misuse and concentration that happen in less intentional and conscious ways. Consequently, my work explores freedom as a relational, interpersonal, and intersubjective process. I will present some examples of militant research practices while conducting research (militant research as a process in the now), and also the more tangible outputs after its completion (militant research as outputs). I will also talk on ways I found to break out of guilt, duty, and loneliness while conducting research and more importantly while writing it up. Finally, I will talk about what militant research gave me as a person and a comrade.

Nora: My current research involves interviewing former residents and volunteers of an anarchist shelter for homeless migrants and refugees, where I was a live-in volunteer for 5 years. I am trying to unpack, with others, some of the complicated power dynamics we experienced and learn more about how people build transformative relationships of care and accountability across differences of power. I want to talk about how militant research can be used to hold and be held accountable, and to give and receive care. I also want to talk about what and who it takes to understand and transform power dynamics, and how we can

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weave together very different world views, needs and strategies in our research and organising.

Sam: I investigate the dynamics of homelessness activism in squatted and occupied spaces. My primary focus is a case study of a winter shelter in Brighton in 2019-20 but takes in similar projects in Bristol, London, and Manchester. My work explores autonomy, the role of political ideas like prefiguration in direct action projects, how to deal with structural imbalances of power and access, how occupied space unlocks and restricts politics and how alliances and solidarity can happen across often profound differences. I want to talk about the ways militant research can be effective for the movement it happens within and how to overcome the disconnection and alienation that often comes with turning our comrades and communities into objects of study.

Questions for discussion. Which questions we focus on will depend on who is in the room and what they are interested in:

- How can we find collective joy and playfulness in airing 'elephants in the movement room' and difficult conversations more broadly?
- How can militant research happen in more collaborative and co-produced ways?
- Why isn't there more militant research?
- What kinds of insights can be useful and empowering for people with diverse strategies and tactics?
- How can militant research help us engage with the tensions we experience in organising without oversimplifying or concealing them?
- Who gets to theorise what? Interdisciplinarity or anti-disciplinarity?
- Does Militant Research tend to deliver a wide or real enough impact? Does good research require lots of time? In which case is that a problem?
- What role does Militant research play in solving problems? It produces texts (which may be far too long for most to read or dragged into inaccessible academic debates)

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and it produces experts (the people who spend hundreds of hours trying to organise the research) but does it produce growth and improvement in movement practices and thinking?

- What is the responsibility of a researcher who unearths lots of dynamics and conflicts between other people?

Music

No Pain No Gain: An Attempt at Pragmatizing Utopia

Speaker: Judit Csobod

In a manner analogous to how a beautiful pearl is created through an oyster's struggle with a piece of sand inside its shell, I propose that irritation and confrontation have the potential to serve as important elements in ethnographic research. Conflict does not equal violence. Non-violent conflict is where individual voices meet in consensus-based co-creation. When conflict appears outside of the realm of competition, it enables cooperation and shared responsibility in finding solutions. The presence of conflict can lead to creative solutions, innovative tactics, and unexpected outcomes. Conflict surprises. Conflict, therefore, is desirable. In this presentation, I explore the ethnographic potential of conflict as a methodology for a researcher as an active participant in the field. The case studies to be discussed reveal conflict situations that I have encountered during my lived experience as an organizer in different local scenes of free improvised music. These widely self-organized, independent scenes resist conventional forms of ideological and artistic categorization and hence contain a wide variety of different ideas and voices, which results in frequent conflict situations when it comes to practical matters in group decision processes. These case studies will, on one hand, display the essential nature of conflict in the process of group consensus, and on the other, they will call forth hidden controversies, and evoke silences to speak in ways no other method would reveal.

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Anarchism, traditional music and tekmil

Speaker: David Fox

This presentation will argue that traditional music - and traditional practices more generally - are important sites of conflict for the anarchist movement. Based on research into the use of traditional music by autonomous social movements across Europe, this paper will explore the different ways that these traditions are critically elaborated by musicians and activists in Ireland, Austria and Greece. Within this is a particular understanding of conflict, based on the notions of critique, self-critique and tekmil drawn from the Kurdish liberation movement. In contrast to the 'hermeneutics of suspicion' prominent within western academia, which sees critique as a tool to debunk opponents from a position of inherent superiority, tekmil proposes a more positive and dialogic understanding of critical engagements. Here critique is understood as a productive practice based on comradeship and mutuality, that allow us to grow as political subjects within our struggles. This has important resonances with anarchist understandings of the productivity of conflict, contained particularly in the work of Proudhon. From this perspective to critique traditional practices within a given society can also be a constructive activity. We can see these practices as important but contested sites of collectivity and struggle and critique as a way for these to be supported and expanded. We can understand our conflicts with social forces as a way for our movements to become responsible to and for the continued development of autonomous social life.

Contested spaces of Whiteness in Noise music: (un)invited invitations in search of belonging

Speaker: Yecid Ortega

In this spoken word noise performance presentation, I describe my experiences as a Latinx brown person in white spaces within the experimental scene in North America and the UK while struggling to find my own self and experiencing an internalized colonization



mindset (Ortega, 2021). I draw on critical decolonial theory (Dei & Lordan, 2016; Leonardo, 2009) and whiteness (Gunew, 2007; Levine-Rasky, 2011) as entry points to argue that an unseen and imperceptible system permeates artistic scenes that prohibit or constrain IBPOC (Indigenous, Black, People of Colour) folks to actively participate in White spaces. Although I have not necessarily experienced any racism or discrimination as a cultural producer or fan of extreme music, I argue that some sectors of the art industry can do more to open safe spaces that are not performative or cosmetic to welcome more diversity. I will present this oral essay as an experimental noise piece of art to generate chaos, disruption and confusion as a way to create some awareness of how folks at the margins have felt while engaging in white performative spaces. Thus, institutions must find opportunities to challenge or disrupt white supremacy and build critical understandings of racialization across the arts (Woods, 2024) and other communities at large to ultimately foster equitable ways of living together and sharing spaces as a society to combat conflict.

Palestine

Mayday Comrades: Distress and Conflict Amidst Nonviolent Pro-Palestinian Protests at New York Universities

Speaker: Caroline K. Kaltefleiter

In Spring of 2024, Israel's war on Gaza has (re)ignited activism on university campuses in the United States. Students called for a ceasefire, an end to Israeli occupation, divestment of universities in U.S. weapons manufacturing companies, and militarization. Building on organizing strategies and tactics used in both the Black Lives Matter and Occupy Movements, Pro-Palestinian demonstrations, and encampments sprang up across the United States, bolstered by independent media coverage of the Columbia University, City College of New York, and Purchase College encampments. The subsequent conflict, crackdown, and use of drone surveillance and brutal force by police against students and faculty, authorized by

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the university and carried out by the State, resulted in mass arrests and university suspensions, conjuring the words of the late sociologist Todd Gitlin (1980) “the whole world is watching.”

This paper situates arrests and academic repression as a logic of neoliberalism (Giroux, 2013) and a part of the dominant media framing of Pro-Palestinian university protests. This offers oppositional logic and alternative narratives shaped by independent, student, and anarchist media. Issues of race and class are central to discussions of how public versus private institutions handled the protests and the fallout afterward. Drawing upon my activist experiences and involvement with the Positive Force Collective (2014) and demonstrations against the Persian Gulf War (Kaltfleiter, 1992), Iraq War, and Occupy Wall Street (Kaltfleiter, 2022), I incorporate student engagement and involvement with campus media to document the crises of “Gaza” Spring revealing student resilience and commitment to the anarchist value of direct action.

2/

Workshop: The approach to conflict in UK Self-Directed Learning Communities

Facilitator: Artemis Bear

This workshop will offer an overview of and a chance to practice the conflict processes common to the emergent liberatory movement of Self-Directed Learning Communities (SDLC) in the UK. SDLCs are a new form of education and vehicle for culture change that centres the rights of the young person, in direct opposition to the authoritarian nature of schooling. The conflict process explores a regenerative approach to conflict and centralises power dynamics, drawing on transformative justice.



Anarchist Figures

Pyotr Before Paulo: Critical Consciousness, Humanisation, and Social Conflict

Speaker: Luke Ray Di Marco Campbell

This contribution explores the parallel thought processes of Russian anarchist Pyotr Kropotkin (1842-1921), and Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1921-1997) concerning radical reform to educational practice, asking whether the former deserves a space in academic study and activist literature of liberation-oriented pedagogy. Specifically, it examines Kropotkin's advocacy of fostering critical consciousness as a means for resolving or creating spaces for conflict (dependent on circumstances) - albeit not in the same terms as Freire - in his 1885 article, *What Geography Ought to Be*. It further demonstrates the ways that this renowned anarchist laid the theoretical foundations for Freire and others to build on some eight decades prior to Freire's (1968) most celebrated text, *Pedagogia do Oprimido* - known in English as *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1990) - which has, for many, become central to non-hierarchical approaches to dialogue and education. Freire's works examined the urgency of fostering educator-student and student-educator relationships (see e.g. Freire, 2005, 1968), premised on a horizontal power dynamics, recognised organically-fostered knowledge and insights with a view to undertaking socially-oriented action that would positively alter the material circumstances of those affected by a given social, political, or economic conflict (see e.g. Blackburn, 2000; Kidd and Byram, 1982; Beckett, 2013).

Although Kropotkin's (1885, p.940) article centres on geography, he posits the field as core to broader "hard" and "social" science (naming 'Biology, Climatology, Anthropology, and Comparative Ethnography' among them), stating that by engaging in critical praxis of any kind, a given actor 'shows their mutual action and consequences with regard to the superficies of the globe'. Whether the intended outcome or not, by interacting with the world, he believed

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that none of us 'could [...] remain an outsider to the general scientific movement' (ibid.) - meaning Kropotkin (1885) was already attuned to the very forms of power conflicts which Freire has entered Community Development and Social Justice academic and activist canons based on (Di Marco Campbell, 2023; Ledwith, 2001; Mayo, 1993). Consequently, geography, in its breadth, permits what Kropotkin believed to be an accessible entry point to a deep dialogue on pedagogy, wider educational discourse, critical reflection on the purpose of learning, and exploration of the socio-political systems that govern our lives when we permit them to. This exploration will, therefore, advocate the extension of such literary canons to include the often marginalised anarchist bodies of work by, in this first instance, justifying a place for Kropotkin within critical pedagogy as thought and action as a means for expanding knowledge in resolving or, where necessary, fostering conflict whenever and wherever exploitation and oppression occur.

'One-man revolution': the quiet anarchism of Wendell Berry

Speaker: Quentin Broughall

Let me be the one

To do what is done –

My share at least lest I be empty-idle.

Keep off each other and keep each other off.

You see the beauty of my proposal is

It needn't wait on general revolution.

I bid you to a one-man revolution—

The only revolution that is coming.

Robert Frost, 'Build Soil' (1932)

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Wendell Berry (1934-) is best known as an American poet and essayist, who has built a career on providing a voice for rural American culture. His writing celebrates agricultural life and pastoral community, while criticising corporate industrialisation and ecological despoilation. Often as critical of the left as he is of the right, Berry emerged in the 1970s as a prominent champion of the burgeoning environmental movement in the United States. Vitally, both his writing aesthetic and his political views have been shaped principally by his lifelong occupation as a farmer in rural Kentucky. Although Berry has never identified himself as an anarchist, a clear thread runs through all of his writing that is undoubtedly anarchistic in its protest at the *status quo* and its emphasis on self-help.

Wendell Berry's simple, pragmatic philosophy presents an ecologically-aware anarchism in which the individual and the local community reclaim responsibility from the government and its corporate proxies. It is powered by a measured rage at the forms of economic and ecological destruction his career as a farmer has witnessed. In contrast to popular forms of agnostic, urban anarchism, Berry presents a form of political dissent that is agrarian-centred and Christian-inflected. His views bear the influence of Christian anarchists, such as Leo Tolstoy, Simone Weil and Dorothy Day, not to mention American transcendentalists, such as Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

My paper will depict how Wendell Berry has forged a worldview that may be described as anarchistic, yet which departs from many of the tropes associated with traditional anarchism. Focused closely on family, farm and locality, his pastoralist anarchism provides a rejoinder to populist forms of urban, youth-oriented anarchism. Instead, Berry invites us to become a one-person revolution in our own localities, whether town or country; making changes to our own individual habits and lifestyles, while forging strong links with our local communities based on the principles of stewardship and mutual aid. Presentist and practical, Wendell Berry's anarchism comes, not at the point of a megaphone, but in a softly-spoken Kentucky accent, being no less robust or radical for its quiet articulation.



Prefiguration, State and Ethics

May's Consequentialism and Franks' Virtue Ethics: Competing or Complementary Moral Theories for Anarchist Philosophy

Speaker: Matti Eskelinen

Anarchism has been at times blamed both for having too much emphasis on ethics, making action and decision-making almost impossible as well as having no room for supposedly elitist moral deliberation standing only in the way of fighting against the oppressive machines of global capital and violent police states. However justified these two polarising and stereotypical figures are, they, nevertheless, point towards anarchism's somewhat complicated relationship to ethical thinking. Anarchists emphasise the broad nature of the anarchist ideology and that there is room to accommodate numerous philosophical positions. This has the consequence of anarchists holding different kinds of views, sometimes almost diametrically opposite, on the preferred ethical orientation that affects political actions undertaken and vice versa. In my paper, I inquire about anarchist moral philosophy through the lens of two differing theories of ethics that have resonated deeply with anarchism in recent decades. Todd May's post-structural anarchism with its consequentialist ethical orientation and Benjamin Franks' practice-oriented virtue ethical anarchism are compared here to elucidate their relation to each other and wider anarchist theory and practice. It is argued that, regardless of their divergent influences, French poststructuralists for May and Alasdair MacIntyre for Franks, and competing background moral theories, there are surprisingly, and previously overlooked, similarities in their moral theories for anarchist political philosophy. Beyond its value for anarchism, my paper will offer a novel contribution to the broader moral theoretical field by analysing consequentialism and virtue ethics together instead of the more familiar marrying of deontology and utilitarianism as well as giving an account of moral deliberation grounded in a lived experience of radical politics instead of the more common moral abstractions or public policy



centred applied ethics.

Conflicting futures: Deleuze and prefigurative politics

Speaker: Oscar Reed

Prefiguration has been variously described as an epistemology, a set of tactics, and an ethical framework (Franks 2018), with this vagueness undermining both its explanatory power as a concept and its efficacy as an organising principle. Prefiguration creates a tension between the world as it is now and the world that anarchists would like to inhabit by introducing a conflict between present and future that, if left unchecked, could lead back to utopianism. The philosophy of Gilles Deleuze has fielded accusations of vagueness with regard to its own political and ethical implications (Badiou 2000, Žižek 2003). However, this is for the opposite reason, since Deleuze tells us repeatedly that the future *cannot* resemble the conditions from which it actualises in the present.

Despite this apparent incommensurability with respect to the relationship of present and future, there is a point of commonality between Deleuze's philosophy and the anarchist concept of prefiguration which allows for fruitful dialogue: an emphasis on material practice. This paper explores competing interpretations of prefiguration in the context of an encounter with Deleuze's philosophy; foregrounding immanence, virtuality, and practicality as concepts which can help clarify implications of the former. In doing so, the paper argues that utopianism can only be successfully staved off by a prefigurative politics which views the movement from present to future as an always-shifting problematic horizon, rather than a teleological goal.

Technology and the Anarchist Project: The Decentralization of Power, Democratic Confederalism, and What Comes After the Nation State?

Speaker: Harry Halpin

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The engagement of anarchist theory with technology, starting with classical theorists such as Proudhon and Kropotkin, has a long and varied history, but the invariant hypothesis has been that new forms of technology can further help decentralize power and allow new forms of social co-operation and mutual aid to emerge both within and against the state. Indeed, in modern times the tendency has been exemplified by a championing by theorists as different as Bookchin and Benkler of technologies that can be ran by communities or individuals, ranging from renewable energy to free software. However, the most wide-ranging theory of technical power was presented by Lewis Mumford, who contrasted decentralized polytechnics with the megatechnics of the state at the inception of human civilization, tracing a continuity from Ur to supercomputers. In an increasingly cybernetic and financialized era, much of the focus of decentralized technologies has been championed by cryptocurrencies and 3-d printing, which are being increasingly integrated into capitalism in seeming contradiction to Mumford. Yet Ocalan, the imprisoned leader of the Kurdish revolutionary movement, provides the framework for rethinking Bookchin and Mumford by focusing on the “democratic network” - the trade routes in the edge of communes often controlled by nomads - as vital to the development and resistance to civilization from Ur onwards. With this framing, we can rethink a new form of democratic confederalism based on “dual power” even within and against the most technologized capitalist societies, so that decentralized technology - including previously capitalist technology with a polytechnical character - can be repurposed for anarchist revolution amidst the slow dissolution of the Westphalian nation-state system.

Workshop: Hacking Convivial Technologies' features

Speaker: Carlo Milani

How do the technologies we want look like?

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Manifold culture and social wars are being carried on under the flag of Technology - the Technology will Save us - or, the Technology will Damn us - and the World will follow our Fate. The Specter of out-of-control technology is being waved by reactionaries nostalgic for the Golden Age as well as self-styled progressives who for technical governments, rebranded as "governance systems" banning politics for computation - with our acquiescent contribution as "mere" users of their technology.

We know it's not only up to us, because technology embeds beliefs and politics. We do not want to give up to these narratives of technology as a neutral tool in our hands, not least because at the moment the development of technologies of domination serve the perverse fantasies of few sociopaths multibillionaires and their high-placed acquaintances.

Convivial technologies are being developed to increase, redistribute and diffuse power, understood as the ability to intervene in the definition and application of social norms.

We consider access to power as the key precondition for any possible freedom. As we spread sociopower, however, we must also take care we do not oppress each other and ourselves - in other words, we must desert the command-obedience pattern by enhancing mutual aid practices. Believing that human beings are all equal in that they are equally free is an idea not based on scientifically demonstrable facts. It is not a choice made on the basis of more or less sophisticated algorithmic models, but a moral decision.

Education in the recognition of mutual freedoms in equality, mutual support, and effective democracy do not depend on the correct categorization of data, but on the application of normative and ideal beliefs.

Freedoms are never final achievements, nor can they result from the application of automated choice methodologies, but are the result of conscious decisions to be confirmed day by day, based on non-computable, non-demonstrable beliefs.

We need more power to go beyond, that is why we assume an hacker attitude - we do like machines we choose to live with in mestizos, ecological-driven systems. We argue that some convivial technologies can be selected to help humans co-evolve if inspired by philosophical

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reflections, political initiatives and collective practices capable of envisioning a more just and equitable world, because they can be programmed to care for human vulnerabilities, help humans be less arrogant, kinder, less sloppy, more compassionate.

Conflicts in History

Re-imagining the Russian Revolution of 1917: An Anarchist Critique

Speaker: Saptadeepa Banerjee

The Russian Revolution of 1917 brought in its wake significant changes in the socio-political, economic and cultural fabric of Tzarist Russia, leading to the formation of the first socialist government in the history of the world. The revolutionary process that eventually culminated in these changes involved many anarchist actors who often identified their revolutionary ideas and aspirations with that of the Bolsheviks, the latter having chosen to ally with them in order to fulfil their revolutionary goals. The revolution, thus, paved the way for an uneasy alliance between the anarchists and the Bolsheviks that did not last long as a result of the ideological incompatibility of anarchism and Marxism. This ideological incompatibility could be discerned in the nineteenth century polemical conflict between Karl Marx and Mikhail Bakunin centering on the methods, tactics and goals of revolution, which took off within the International Workingmen's Association. Ideological debates in the second half of the nineteenth century helped mould Anarchist doctrine into a coherent language of 'libertarianism' that posed a potent challenge to Tzarist autocracy during the Russian Revolution of 1917. In the post-revolutionary period, this anarchist language of



'libertarianism' came in conflict with the Marxist revolutionary goal of establishing 'dictatorship of the proletariat', that eventually resulted in the suppression of the anarchists. Tracing the development of this 'libertarian' language of anarchism, the paper shall focus attention primarily on the anarchist thought of Mikhail Bakunin in order to trace the roots of 'libertarian' socialist thought and the manner in which this 'libertarian' language of the anarchists not only challenged Tsarist Russia but also the 'authoritarian' brand of socialism, that is, Marxism (according to Bakunin), in the early decades of the twentieth century. The paper would take a look at the manner in which anarchists re-imagined the Russian Revolution of 1917 through their critique of the Revolution that found expression in anarchist writings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Contrary to what they had hoped to achieve through the Revolution, the anarchists had to confront the 'myth' of the Revolution and this 'myth' eventually led to a concrete and coherent analysis of what the Revolution should have essentially entailed. This paper would try to weave together libertarian arguments in order to bring to the fore the re-imagined libertarian anarchist language of Revolution which was for the first time coherently expressed by Bakunin within the First International in the late 60s and early 70s of the nineteenth century.

Anarchism, Marxism, and the (non-)neutrality of science and technology. A view from Italy (1960s-1980s)

Speaker: Ginevra Sanvitale

The fields of scientific and technological development have always been crucial sites of intellectual, cultural, and political conflict. When it comes to the theories and practices of anarchism, a key source of conflict lies in the "technocratic" model which historically oriented most large-scale techno-scientific endeavors. As shown by researchers (Swann 2020; Keyes et al. 2019) and social movements (Maxigas 2012), this contested genealogy does not preclude from building a different, mutually beneficial relationship between anarchism and techno-science. Yet, science and technology remain a highly contested

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dimension in contemporary anarchist theories and practices (Firth and Robinson 2020; Gordon 2009). This paper discusses sources of political and intellectual conflict relevant to anarchist theories and practices of techno-scientific development, starting from a key question in the political history of science and technology: Are science and technology neutral? If not, when and how do they become polarised, turning into a symbolic and/or material tool for the realisation of a specific political vision? I address this question by discussing historical conflicts and intertwining of anarchist and Marxist perspectives on the relationship between science, technology, and power. Starting from the legacy of Malatesta's critique to Kropotkin's "Scientific Anarchism", I present a set of 1960s-1980s analyses on the political dimension of techno-scientific development published by Italian-based anarchist editorial projects (e.g. the magazines "Volontà", "Materialismo e Libertà", "A-Rivista Anarchica"; the publishing house "La Salamandra"). I discuss these analyses in connection with Marxist critiques to science and technology emerging in Italy at the same time, particularly within Workerism (Pasquinelli 2015) and in the theories and practices by Radical Science Movements (Ienna and Freyberg 2023). I underline common points of criticism to the "capitalist" and "technocratic" use of science and technology, as well as evidence the unique features -and conflicts- characterising anarchist-informed and Marxist-informed approaches to techno-scientific development.



6 September

Crime

What is 'Crime' and is it an Adjacent Anarchist Concept?

Speaker: Autumn Lenart

The publication of *Contemporary Anarchist Criminology: Against Authoritarianism and Punishment* (Peter Lang, 2018) and of *Classic Writings in Anarchist Criminology: A Historical Dismantling of Punishment and Domination* (AK Press, 2020) confirmed the place of 'crime' alongside anarchism's traditional political concepts. Still, neither one of these edited volumes proposes a sustained analysis of anarchism's critical engagement with 'crime'. Continuing the important theoretical work undertaken in *Anarchism: A Conceptual Approach*, and drawing on Michael Freeden's (1996) approach to the study of ideology, I make the case that 'crime' qualifies as an adjacent anarchist concept. After situating the concept within anarchism's conceptual structure, I provide a preliminary description of the concept, drawing upon both anarchist and abolitionist deconstructions and structural analyses of 'crime'. Borrowing Marquis Bey's (2020) reconfigurative approach to anarchism, I develop a description of 'crime' based upon the 'generative encounter' between anarchism and Black, as well as white anti-racist, abolitionist thought.

The Anarchist who happens to be a thief: a discussion around the politization of theft

Speaker: Lea Vignalou

Anarchist theft was presented by the main anarchist writers of the 19th century as a theft committed in reaction to the original capitalist theft. This rhetoric was lost during the illegalist resurgence in France in the second half of the twentieth century. The capitalist system is still criticized, but theft is not necessarily a reaction to it rather than a means of

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getting by without having to fall into other of its flaws, such as wage labour. It is also sometimes the only way to get enough money to continue one's activist work. Armed robbery, a rite of passage for revolutionary anarchists from the 1960s to the 1980s, was at times dealt with by the special court for political crimes, and at other times classified under ordinary law along with other offences against property. When theft is legally treated as a political crime, it is not property regimes that are reflected upon but rather the militant actions associated with these thefts. We then no longer have the public questioning of the capitalist system through the phenomenon of appropriation. Anarchist movements lose the figure of the thief who is a revolutionary and gain that of the revolutionary who is a thief. And while the distinction between common crime and political crime was supported by anarchist thieves at the beginning of the twentieth century, it was refuted in the second half of the century, in favour of a generalised illegalist mobilisation.

Mythology and Spirituality

David Graeber, Social Worlds, and Mythology: Rethinking Conflict through Antinomian Knowledge and Imagined Orders

Speaker: James Willis

Recent publications suggest the late David Graeber can be remembered as a “theorist of religion” (Arnal, 2023; Tremlett, et al., 2023). While this provocative claim may be true, I suggest a more effective reappraisal of Graeber’s thought in relation to religion: in the creation of social worlds where mythology manifests as an “as if” conditional. I propose that mythology functioned as a social precursor to what we think of as *religion* today, but it functioned entirely in the “as if” condition whereby imaginary worlds could be created and disassembled as needed. Structurally, conflict emerged when these myths were codified into organized religions because the “as if” conditional was then socially accepted as truth and reality instead of a playful, albeit entirely imagined, story. No longer fluid, and depleted of its



“as if” conditional status, mythology codified social identities in ways that have become inseparable from religion today. If we reimagine Graeber’s social worlds, we can suggest how reclaiming mythology as a mechanism to encourage others to “play along” is a form of antinomian knowledge. The imagined orders which were the purview of mythology previously have significant political implications, particularly if we consider conflict as the base case of transition from “as if” to reification. Rather, imagined orders allow us to re-mythologize the world, in a state of awe and wonder, which is akin to Graeber’s theorizing about life together. I propose that conflict, understood here as the transition back to “as if” status to allow mutual “playing along,” can help re-establish antinomian knowledge as a mythological mechanization of anarchist politics.

The insurmountable conflict between Christianity and anarchism - Anarchist theology in conflict with Christianity

Speaker: Nuusa Niskala

Contrary to what very limited research has suggested, Christian anarchism is a multifaceted phenomenon within which there are very different understandings of Christianity and of anarchism. These different areas have not been explored in previous research. Nor have the lived realities of Christian anarchism been explored beyond a few localized case studies of the Catholic Worker movement. In my research I ask what the lived political theology of Christian anarchists is in the 21st century. I examine how Christian anarchists locate themselves within the anarchist tradition on the one hand, and within Christianity on the other, and what kind of lived theology emerges from this. The aim is to explore, through qualitative empirical research, how Christian anarchists live out their political and spiritual identity. My research data consists of interviews with Christian anarchists from around the world, which I collected using narrative and semi-structured questions. The interviews were conducted during the spring of 2023 in Zoom. I am doing abductive data analysis and I build on previous research on radical contextual theologies, liberation theologies and anarchist

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studies. My research draws on feminist methodology and activist research methods. Contextualization is particularly important in my research as it helps to understand Christian anarchism as part of a general anarchist countercultural activity and political theology. These different aspects become a holistic way of life for a more equal and freer world in the life of the individual. Understood in this way, my dissertation fills a clear research gap. At the moment I am in the middle of analysis process and my idea would be to present the preliminary conclusions of my dissertation, highlighting the notion of challenging a monolithic Christianity, examining anarchist lived realities and spirituality, and doing 'messy theology' rather than pure dogmatism.

Towards a Mystical Post-anarchist Political Ecology

Speaker: Keith Lewis

The dominant, neoliberal, paradigm of economic growth is proving unsustainable, and national and supra-national political institutions appear unwilling to effect change adequate to the scale of the ecological catastrophe it is leading us towards. The problem of climate change is, at its root, a spiritual one. Capitalism's valuation of the earth as a natural resource entails an anthropocentric separation of the human species from the rest of the natural world that is inherited directly from the Judeo-Christian religious tradition. At the same time, the neoliberal pursuit of material reward as the source of individual fulfilment has the effect of obscuring the spiritual dimensions of existence and the deeper sense of fulfilment this affords. If climate change is a spiritual problem, it requires a spiritual solution. The aim of this paper will be to sketch out the broad outlines of a mystical post-anarchist approach to political ecology that can offer a spiritual response to the problem of climate change and stand as a sustainable alternative to neoliberal environmental politics. My broad argument will be that, as part of a post-anarchist political ecology, mysticism can help enable neoliberal subjects to overcome the psychic hold of consumer capitalism and the logic of market competition while,

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at the same time, eschewing the anthropocentrism and chauvinism of fundamentalist approaches to religion. At the same time, it can help provide the tools for the elaboration of a depersonalised, pantheistic conceptualisation of the divine that can lead to an understanding of the latent divinity of all forms of life. I will suggest that this, in turn, can help furnish us with a source of belief and ethical direction that can make it possible to chart a way past the seeming hopelessness of the apocalyptic future we are currently heading towards. I will argue that it can do this by providing an ethico-spiritual orientation to the processes of systemic transformation required to create the non-anthropocentric and non-hierarchical social relations that anarchist political ecology aims towards.

Internal Conflict

Weaving anarchafeminist utopias: Navigating the waters of antagonistic and agonistic interactions with agonistic empathy

Speaker: Elena Pagani

In our effort to prefigure anarchic relationalities and utopias, we not only challenge the capitalist, patriarchal, deterministic TINA discourse ('there is no alternative') and its (sic) inescapable power hierarchies and inequalities, but we move beyond its antagonistic binds. For feminists, a critical element in this attempt ought to involve the transformation of informal hierarchies and the oppressions they bring. However, the majority of our collectives face continuous inter-personal conflicts and tensions around the formation of anarchy on the interpersonal level, with informal hierarchies and antagonistic interactions prevailing. These hierarchies produced conflicts seem to contribute to movement shrinking and political stagnation. At the same time empirical and theoretical militant and academic research studying anarchy on the interpersonal and intersubjective level is scarce. Therefore, to intentionally be, feel, and do more of what we decide, the challenge lies in thinking how

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both antagonism and anarchy could be conceptualised and practiced on the interpersonal level.

Therefore, focusing on both informally hierarchical and radically horizontal interpersonal interactions in anarchist/-ic organising, the question I try to address is “how do we do anarchy on the interpersonal level?”. My aim with this question is to better understand which conditions can enable/ hinder people and groups to create and re-produce anarchic relational processes. My aim is also to better understand interpersonal interactions in terms of relationality. With this I mean what ways of being appear to be in relation in interpersonal interactions and how these ways of being relate. For example, fast in antagonism with slow and fast in agonism (weaving) with slow.

To answer this question, in this paper, I discuss the concept of agonistic empathy. Based on a militant research of anarchic worker co-operatives within politics of prefiguration, and inspired by Proudhon’s antinomies, Kropotkin’s mutual aid, and anarchafeminist problematisations on conflicts due to informal hierarchies and rigid militancy, I propose the concept of agonistic empathy as a form of mutual aid that can help us navigate through antinomies, such as agonism and antagonism. As such, I propose agonistic empathy as the interpersonal process of self and other understanding toward creating anarchist relationalities and utopias.

To construct agonistic empathy, I draw from postanarchist discussions on the self and equal freedom weaved together with feministic, phenomenological and psychoanalytic literature on affective interpersonal processes. I do this to account first for a process of understanding better interpersonal antagonistic processes as interpersonal conflict due to perceptions and practices of power as inescapably hierarchical, unequal, and oppressive; different ways of being hold different amounts of power. I argue that what appears to hinder interpersonal understanding of antagonistic processes, such as produced by informal hierarchies, are (subjectification) processes of social conditioning that champion masculine, hierarchical, unequal relationalities, those processes’ psychological/ emotional binds (loops of

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repression) and the emotional intensity of the conflicts they bring. For example, a masculine fast has more power than a feminine slow, and at the same time faster has more power than fast, if I am not fast enough I hate myself and if you are slow I hate you some more. I argue that these antagonistic relationalities are difficult to detect, and resist, mostly due to repression and unravel mostly due to lack of alternatives, and that this is what lies to some extend beneath the enactment and persistence of informal hierarchies. Moreover, these hierarchies produced challenges appear to intensify at the intersection of ways of being, including roles we take in meetings.

With agonistic empathy I also account for interpersonal processes of understanding anarchy as interactions of pluralist radical horizontality. Through a prefigurative and feminist lens, I discuss these interactions as a pluralist weaving between different ways of being as if these ways were radically equal with simultaneous awareness of their social power rankings. Fast, faster, slow and slower come together in a weaving as if the concept of power and its rankings and quantities are redundant while I am aware of the social hierarchical and gendered power they hold. In these radically horizontal weavings, emotional and affective manifestations can take forms that are liberating for the self and others rather than repressive and oppressive.

Thinking on anarchist utopias as attempted in anarchist/-ic collectives in the now, my final argument is for antagonistic and agonistic processes to be seen as co-constitutive for an unbounded evolution and re-invention of anarchy (and anarchist/-ic organising) on the interpersonal level; by understanding better antagonism we understand better anarchy, and by understanding better anarchy, we understand better, antagonism. Therefore, we become more conscious and intentional on the interpersonal level in choosing ways to be, feel, and do, while we help each other in this process. Having more agency on our emotional relationalities is crucial in at least sustaining ourselves, our activism, and our collectives, if not towards creating concrete utopias.

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Behind barricaded doors: gender, class, and power in the London squatting movement

Speaker: Rowan Milligan

Squatting involves a fundamental shift from an individualistic ethos to a communal one, with all the beauty that entails, but all the messiness and conflict that arises from it too. In perpetually precarious and temporary housing, squatters exist on the border between housed and homelessness, and squats operate as a location for both domestic and collective politics, making this a rich field for analysing classed and gendered dynamics and negotiations in both private and public Spheres. Using a combination of Bordieuan, feminist, and anarchist theories, I consider how unequal levels of social capital affect interpersonal relationships and decision-making within squats. I examine several key sites of conflict and the manifestation of power, paying particular attention to the dynamic of the house meeting. I suggest that outcomes of formal processes were influenced by the relative social capital possessed by those engaged in the conflict, and the informal hierarchies operating in the space. Further, I argue that these tensions have increased over time as squatting gets more difficult, and positive relations with your crewmates take on a fraught and vital dimension. This increased precarity has particularly dire implications for those already vulnerable due to their class or gender, where the sharp edge of the housing crisis is pressed closest. My research functions both as a case study for an under researched 'subculture' and as an exploration into homemaking and everyday social relations under conditions of precarity, with implications for research into the broader axes of power relations in other domestic and organising environments.

A Magical Murder Mystery: Exploring power dynamics in migrant solidarity organising

Speaker: Nora Ziegler

I share some reflections and stories from my ongoing auto-ethnographic research of a Christian anarchist shelter for homeless migrants and refugees. Trying to figure out 'what



happened' in a concrete situation can generate radical insights and capacities for collective struggle (or so I hope). I explore power dynamics and solidarity by weaving together systemic approaches (the role of intersecting structures and identities) with magical approaches to power (the role of desires, dreams, vibes, ghosts, delusions, and conspiracies). There is something about power and relationships that we are missing if we don't engage with the mad, the magical, the eerie, or if we don't ask questions because we can't know the answer. Instead of translating these different approaches back into theory, perhaps we can learn multiple languages (of which theory is one) that enrich our conversations and practices around power.

Against Empire

Anarchists, anti-militarism and the British Empire

Speaker: Eleanor Strangways

In 1941, the anarchist, anti-militarist newspaper *War Commentary*, published an article entitled 'How Kenya is governed'. The author, Jomo Kenyatta, future first President of Kenya, used this text to detail the injustices of British colonial rule in Kenya to expose the 'kind of democracy which Mr. Churchill and his Labour Party colleagues ask us to defend'.¹ Kenyatta was part of a small and select group of anti-imperialists that published their articles in minority papers exploring pacifism and anti-war politics in Britain during the Second World War, that also included Peace News (PPU), Socialist Standard (SPGB), and Socialist Leader (ILP). In 1945, as the war was drawing to a close, the four editors of *War Commentary* were arrested. This case brought the anarchists widespread attention across the British empire,

¹ Jomo Kenyatta, 'How Kenya Is Governed', *Freedom*, 13 December 1952, <https://freedomnews.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Freedom-1952-12-13.pdf>.

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and a committee was set up to defend the accused, with important anti-imperialist George Padmore on the board.

This paper will analyse the anarchist response to the Second World War, situating this response to conflict within the context of the British empire. To untangle this complicated web of anarchism, anti-militarism, and empire, this paper will particularly focus on anti-imperial voices within anarchist publications and how imperialism became central to the anarchist critique of the war. Finally, it will demonstrate how the arrest of the editors in 1945 became a springboard for anti-imperial solidarity. To this end, it will show that anti-war politics during the Second World War was a key mode of critique to British Imperialism and that the consolidation of social movements around the anti-war sentiment should be understood within the context of Empire. Furthermore, responses to this conflict became essential for forging enduring solidarity connections between anarchist groups in Britain and anti-imperialist groups in the colonies.

'The only thing worth fighting for': Irish anarchist ideas and activism

Speaker: Máirtín Ó Catháin

Anarchists from Ireland made little impact in the country of their birth. Like many other radicals, whether political or artistic, their sphere of influence was restricted both by the conservatism of time and place, and consequently lay more often outside of the welter of Irish political debate, as well as the island itself. The anarchists, however, rarely complained of 'exile', referred regularly to Ireland as a nursery for their revolutionary class struggle ideas, and in keeping with the strong anti-nationalist tradition of most anarchists, displayed little or no interest in the national question, notwithstanding the claims of some in recent years (Gutiérrez and Ferretti, 2020). Indeed, for a generation of individuals with both Ulster and Protestant roots in particular who began to develop anarchist ideas in a period of intense and fractious political agitation around the question of home rule, nationalism held little allure. Anarchists from Ireland, indeed, perhaps counter-intuitively if not uniquely, probably

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displayed less interest and fewer connections to nationalist and anti-imperialist currents in anarchist thought than anywhere else. Moreover, as migrants, they were rarely at home in Irish communities abroad and their activism and ideas put them beyond the pale of even that most unusual spectacle to many bemused observers: the Irish socialist. This paper will examine some of the origins, influences and development of anarchist ideas in Ireland, the resistance of Irish anarchists to the atavistic pull of nationalism, their conflict with socialists, and the re-formation and expression of their ideas in communities of struggle across the globe.

Anarchism As and Beyond Conflict with Religion in the Zapatista and Rojava Revolutions

Speaker: Rico Monde

As a specialist in comparative religions and comparative theology, with a sub-specialization in continental philosophy and religion (including political philosophies in the Marxian and anarchist traditions), my research focuses on the relationships between religion, oppression, and liberation. My proposed paper will be a comparative study of the spiritualities that undergird the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico, with the spiritualities at the core of the Rojava Revolution in Northeastern Syria. In both cases, Christian, Muslim, and indigenous spiritualities have moved beyond their traditional conflict with the atheism in much of anarchist and Marxian political theory, but to distinctly differing degrees. In Chiapas, Roman Catholicism has played a historical role in oppression of the indigenous Mayan communities. However, with the advent of liberation theology in the Roman Catholic Church, new attitudes formed allowing for neozapatismo to result from a blending Catholic, Marxist, anarchist (libertarian-socialist) and indigenous Mayan thought. While not strictly anarchist, anarchism remains in a productive tension with these other lines of thinking and even the Muslim minority in Chiapas has become a part of these direct-democracy consensus-based communities. With the Kurdish-led Rojava revolution, now stabilized (and partially compromised) as the AANES, the movement has had important parallels and



divergences from the Zapatistas. The implementation of Abdullah Öcalan's adaptation of Murray Bookchin's democratic confederalism and libertarian-socialism has been perhaps the only positive thing to come out of the Syrian Civil War. With Rojava, however, the proportions of religious identity are flipped. Most Kurds and Arabs are of Sunni or Shia Muslim background, while there are substantive minority numbers of Arab and Syriac Christians. Smaller religious groups amongst the Kurdish population are also present. As is the case with neozapatismo, Rojava has been able to blend the social justice emphases of the Abrahamic monotheisms with secular anarchist and Marxian theories in order to produce what is the most thriving region in Syria. Nevertheless, religion is the source of more conflict in Rojava than it has been in Chiapas. While some in the so-called "Western" world would quickly blame this conflict on the supposed inherent intolerance of Islam, I suggest that the primary differences come from the manner in which each movement was born out of a different conflict. Neozapatismo initiated conflict with the neoliberal capitalism that was infringing on the rights of self-determination of the indigenous population. Rojava, on the other hand, was born out of a geopolitical conflict of mass destabilization involving the agendas of the oil-rich Gulf states, the U.S., Russia, Iran, and Israel. Leaked DIA memos have shown that the U.S. government knew its Gulf state allies desired a salafi-state to emerge, forming a division between the Syrian and Iranian governments. The intentional fomenting of salafi-jihadi fundamentalism is the primary factor causing a minority of Muslims of the region to reject the egalitarian and liberatory vision of Öcalan and Bookchin.

Exhibition and talk: Architecture as an embodiment and site of conflict against the status quo

Speaker: Pijatta Heinonen

I propose to present and discuss architecture as an embodiment of conflict against the state

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and capital, and as a site of conflict, where the struggle between freedom and domination manifests. The proposal is based on my doctoral research that examined the characteristics of architecture in certain occupied, mostly self-built autonomous geographies. The study was based on grounded theory and data was collected through participant observation, drawing, and interviews. While the politics enacted in these geographies are typically defined as autonomous or non-representational, their core principles and practices are often very similar to the tenets of anarchism. The similarities concern, for instance, the rejection of the state and capitalism, and the promotion of egalitarian and non-hierarchical principles. Importantly, these principles manifest in the practice and characteristics of architecture. First, architecture embodies the conflict against the state and capital. The primary incentive for the occupied geographies is often an attempt to stop the expansion of exploitative infrastructures, such as mines, and architecture is a method through which that conflict is localized, represented, and – importantly – maintained. The significance of architecture as an embodiment of conflict is in its ability to not only symbolize but also to materially prefigure and propose, as well as to shelter and defend. Second, architecture is a site of conflict where the struggle between power and its dissolution, permanence and change is fought. Architecture, typically understood as stable and enduring, has been used for the reproduction of power throughout human history. Consequently, for example, Colin Ward discussed that a non-hierarchical approach would necessitate a malleable and open-ended arrangement of architecture. Malleability, precisely, underlies a broad extent of architecture also in the examined geographies. Buildings adjust, transform, and grow according to the inhabitants' changing needs and desires. Third, architectural (and urban) planning is a site of conflict where the struggle between imposed organization and voluntary cooperation manifests itself. The dominant, hierarchical practice of planning tends towards increasing organization and determination of the spaces of everyday life, a tendency instrumental for the extension of power. On the contrary, in the examined geographies, planning is characterized by coordination-in-space, arising voluntarily and gradually from the bottom

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up. It is based on individuals' (architectural) freedom and, consequently, diverse ideas, practices, and their agreements and disagreements are manifested in space.