

SMASH THE SYSTEM!

PUNK ANARCHISM AS A CULTURE OF RESISTANCE





EDITED BY JIM DONAGHEY, WLL BOISSEAU & CAROLINE KALTEFLEITER



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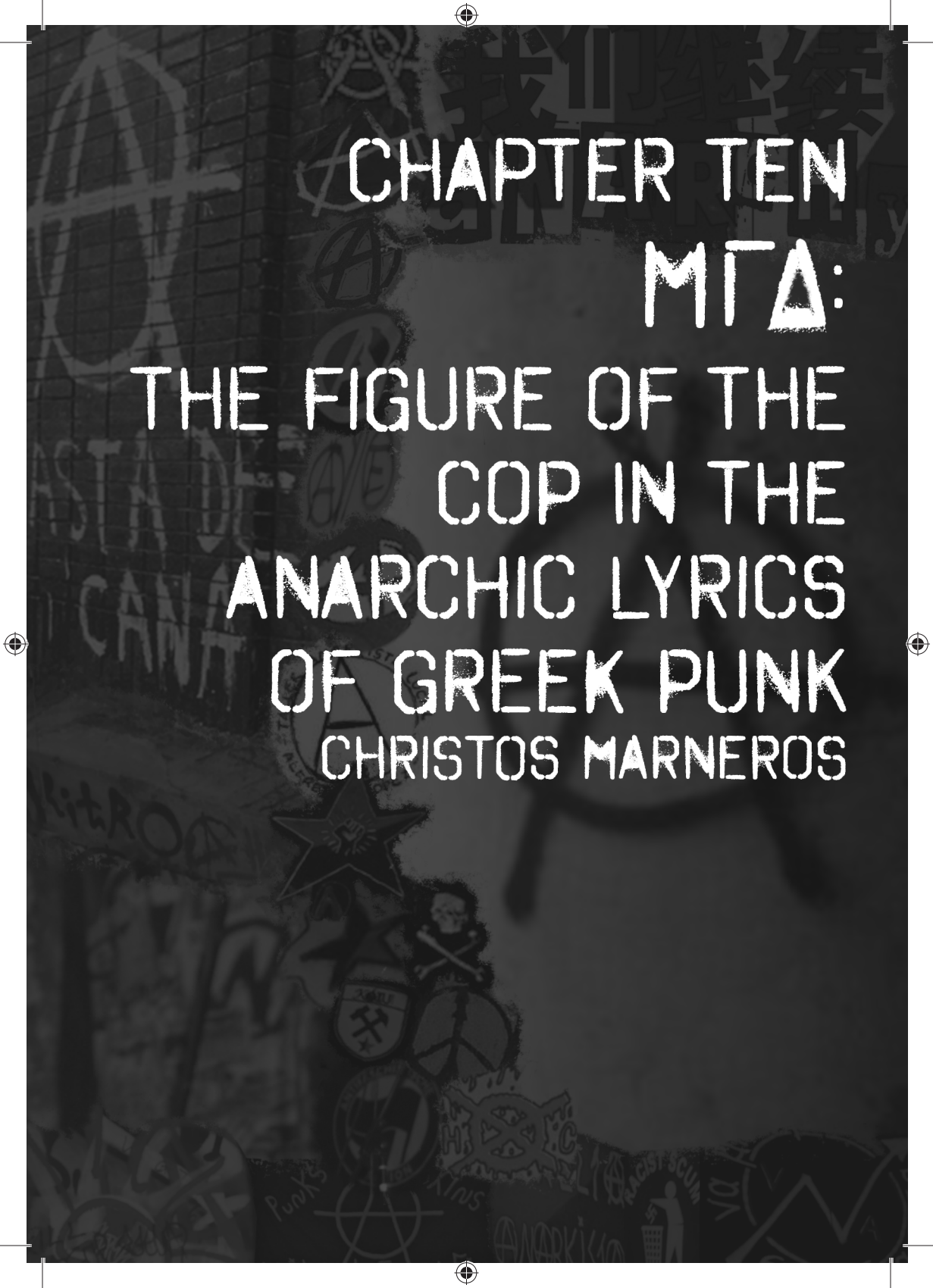
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CHAPTER TEN
ΜΤΑ:
THE FIGURE OF THE
COP IN THE
ANARCHIC LYRICS
OF GREEK PUNK
CHRISTOS MARNEROS



Chapter Ten: ΜΓΔ: The figure of the cop in the anarchic lyrics of Greek punk

Christos Marneros

Is punk music and (sub)culture anarchistic? And what about the Greek punk scene in particular? Within the international sphere there was, and perhaps still is, a clear line distinguishing punk bands and subculture from any form of theoretical or ideological position. To that extent, punks, at least those of the ‘first wave’, are to be situated in a position that stands beyond any form of ‘ist’ or ‘ism’ (Wetherington, 2010). As Mark Wetherington notes, ‘thorough analysis reveals that the majority of the more visible bands and organisations related to the punk movement, both past and present, were not affiliated closely or genuinely with anti-establishment politics’ (2010, p. 104). Taking a similar approach, in his seminal research on the Greek scene’s origins from 1979 and its development until 2013, Yannis N Kolovos [Γιάνης Ν Κολοβός] explicitly distinguishes between the political stance of the punks (or better put, their anti-political stance) and the so-called politically ‘mature’, theoretically informed positions of anarchist circles. More precisely, when he discusses the ‘demographic’ composition and the different groups of people that populate(d) the Exarcheia area of Athens, he states that ‘we witness the emergence of all the subjectivities, which were expressing the spirit of the subculture of the previous decades and which were, probably, formed and grounded on artistic bases, revolving around “an abstract and politically non-threatening anarchism”’ (Κολοβός [Kolovos], 2013, p. 366).^{*} This form of anarchism, as Kolovos explains, is to be distinguished from the anarchist cells of the area ‘which had formed a clear and concrete political identity through which they were giving shape to a *praxeological* tactic’ of resistance against the Greek nation and its pseudo-consensual, pseudo-progressive (actually ultra-conservative and reactionary) politics (2013,

^{*} This translation from the Greek original text and the subsequent translations of texts and lyrics are mine unless otherwise stated.

p. 366). (See also Kolovos' chapter in this volume). To explain, this praxeological mode of resistance indicates that the anarchist cells of Exarcheia were *consciously* coming together, discussing and deciding on the ways of cooperation and resistance against the state and its institutions.

Yet, despite these differences and distinctions, I would support the position that (Greek) punk subculture has ‘an inextricable link’ (Donaghey, 2013, p. 138) with an *anarchic ethos* of resistance against the hierarchical structures of the politics of the state and the norms of the mainstream society. With the term *ethos*, I want to signify a way of living that engulfs all the aspects of our existence, in the sense that it defines our modes of being, thinking and acting, including our ways of



Figure 10:1 - Cover of Γενιά του Χάους's self-titled LP (1986).

doing politics. Such an ethos is evident even in the multiple cases where punk's discourse is not directly informed by anarchistic theories, neither in the form of references to a theoretician of anarchism nor via any explicit identification with any anarchist group or school of thought. A distinction is made here between 'anarchic' and 'anarchistic' in order to distinguish between the political thought of anarchist groups, activists and thinkers (denoted here as 'anarchistic'), and the ethos of resistance cultivated by punks without necessarily belonging to an anarchist group or espousing the theories of specific anarchist thinkers, which I call 'anarchic'. Such an ethos is anarchic because it questions, disorients and

Figure 10:2 – Cover of Αντίδραση's *Ενάντια* LP (1991b).



mocks the hierarchical structures and politics of the state and mainstream society.

An example of the strength of this connection to Greek punk subculture (and counterculture) is to be found in the lyrics of Greek punks. The themes revolve around an ethos of resistance against the suffocating conservatism of Greek society, against the authority of the state, the family, the Church, the police, and generally anything that tries to impose its oppressive, hierarchical structures upon the youth. The lyrics, then, often act as personal ‘manifestos’ of Greek punks, narrating their personal experiences from direct participation in anarchist collectives, involvement with anarchist political causes and occupations, and even the personal stories of punks who witnessed the repulsive face of authority as its primary victims, detailing the mass arrests and the prison cells where they experienced the savage, fascistic face of the police (Σούζας [Souzas], 2017, pp. 261-262).

In addition, and perhaps ironically, this close relationship between Greek punk and anarchy is something that was also constructed through the discourse of the dominant political forces and which was promoted by the media. This narrative tries to represent the punks, anarchists, drug users, sex workers, migrants, queers and so forth as a threat to the status quo of ‘civilised’ society and its values. All these groups are the usual target of the forces of repression, most often expressed by the brutal actions of the police, with arrests, beatings and in extreme cases even murder becoming a norm. The legendary punk band Genia tou Haous [Γενιά του Χάους] depicts this mainstream societal view of these groups and their ultimate construction as the ‘deviant Other’ in the lyrics of the song ‘Κοινωνικά Υποπροϊόντα’ [Κοινωνικά Υποπροϊόντα – ‘Social By-products’ or ‘Social Waste’], where they directly ‘address’ the rotten conservatism of political powers and mainstream society:

Εσείς οι εραστές της σάπιας εξουσίας ... Με ποιο
δικαίωμα θα μας καταδικάσεις; Πόρνες, Πρεζάκηδες,
πανκς, αναρχικοί. Θάβεις αλύπητα οποιαδήποτε φυχή.
Σκέφου όμως πως τους έφτιαζες εσύ ...

[You the lovers of a rotten ruling authority ... By what right will you condemn us? ... Prostitutes, junkies, punks, anarchists. You mercilessly bury any soul. Think though that all these are your own making ...]

(Γενιά του Χάους, 1986)

We can observe here a double-movement that forms an act and ethos of resistance against any form of archist and oppressive mentality. On the one hand, the Greek punks criticise the mainstream society that excluded them, but, at the same time, they refuse it and resist becoming part of it.

In this chapter, I want to shed more light on this anarchic ethos of resistance, which is found in the lyrics of Greek punk. To do so, I am using as my ‘case study’ the anti-police sentiment found in those lyrics and, more specifically, I am focusing on the depiction of the figure of the cop. The acronym ΜΓΔ in the chapter title stands for ‘Μπάτσοι, Γουρούνια, Δολοφόνοι’ [‘Μπατσοι, Gourounia, Dolofonoι’ – ‘Cops, Pigs, Murderers’], a common slogan amongst Greek anarchists (and leftists) and the title of a song (and album) by the Greek punk/hardcore band Ολέθριο Ρήγμα [Olethrio Rigma] (2000). The choice of this specific category of lyrics is based on two interconnected points. Firstly, the oppressive, even fascist, tendencies of the police were hugely influential on the writing of some of the most powerful lyrics in the scene, infused with an ethos of resistance. Secondly, the anti-police position of Greek punk lyrics is compatible with the broad opposition of anarchist groups and theoreticians against the police, the state’s monopoly of violence, and law in general. As such, Greek punk and its lyrics have the potential to contribute to the anti-police discussions in anarchist circles and they can cultivate an ethos of resistance and an anarchic politics which dares to talk seriously and with a powerful directness about the police’s brutal oppression.

The chapter proceeds as follows: the subsequent section discusses the origins of the Greek punk scene and highlights the influences behind its emergence and its subsequent stance against the police. Then, I discuss the stance of anarchist theorists against the state’s monopoly of

violence, law's role in establishing this monopoly, and the police's role in not only preserving this status quo but expanding 'legal' violence, creating a police state and police mentality. The section thereafter offers an analysis of the anti-police lyrics of Greek punk, and the final section concludes by commenting on the intersection points between anarchist thought and the lyrics of Greek punk, discussing the latter's potential to cultivate an anarchic ethos and resistance against police oppression.

'Fight with us, a new hope' (Αντίδραση [Antidراسi], 1991b)

The end of the 1970s was the beginning of what seemed to be a process of liberalisation of Greek society. The regime of the colonels (the junta) that ruled the country for seven years fell in 1974 and the right-wing New Democracy [Νέα Δημοκρατία] government that succeeded them (retaining a lot of remnants of the junta regime) was about to suffer a heavy defeat by the social democratic party, PASOK [Πανελλήνιο Σοσιαλιστικό Κίνημα – Panhellenic Socialist Movement], in 1981. Many of the people who had resisted the colonels' regime became involved in the apparatus of political power or were now closely affiliated with it. This led a lot of the supposed radicals of the past to become supporters of parliamentary politics and of a so-called 'progressive' version of capitalist policies. While the vast majority of Greek society was euphoric, expecting this victory to signify the beginning of an era of progress, prosperity and the death of conservatism, a handful of teenagers sensed that there was something rotten behind this progressive façade. In response, they tried to create something new.

The period of late 1970s and early 1980s witnessed the emergence of the first anarchist-anti-authoritarian cells, and the efforts to form autonomous groups of university students and workers against the worn-out structures of trade unions that remained obedient to a top-down party platform (often against the interests of those that they were supposed to protect). These young people felt sick and tired of the

disciplined programmes of the newly formed social democratic party and the hierarchical structures and pro-Soviet stance of the Greek Communist Party (ΚΚΕ – Κομμουνιστικό Κόμμα Ελλάδας). In 1974, in a demonstration of workers and students, the black flags and the anti-statist, anti-authoritarian slogans made their first dynamic appearance (Σούζας [Souzas], 2017, pp. 70-71). The demonstrators shared leaflets and communiqués denouncing the upcoming parliamentary elections (the first since the fall of the regime) as ‘a political spectacle’ and the politicians as ‘bullshitters’ trying to present themselves as the protagonists of the 1973 student Polytechnic uprising against the colonel’s regime (Σούζας [Souzas], 2017, p. 71). These events were a starting point that led to the initial efforts of young anarchists and anti-authoritarians to form the first anarchist federation of Greece (Καλαμαράς [Kalamaras], 2017, p. 17).

All these conditions provided a fertile ground for the Greek punk scene to become more ‘politically mature’ during the 1980s. The punks started seeing their music and subculture as a rebellious response to the pseudo-consensualism amongst the political parties of the left and the right, but also against the culture of consumption, success and careerism promoted by the media. It was also a response to ‘the heroes of the past’ that had betrayed the cause of a radical transformation of society. The punks were mostly disappointed by the ‘sell out’ of the once-radical rock musicians that had by then become the favourite kids of the press and friends of the politicians (if not becoming politicians themselves). More importantly, however, punk was a response to the oppressing, dogmatic rules and morality of the state, the family, the school and the Church, and the state’s monopoly of violence, as predominantly manifested by police brutality (see Vafeiadis, 2013).

The period between 1984 and 1985 was another landmark in the radicalisation of the Greek punk scene and the crystallization of its anti-police stance. In 1984, the French fascist leader of Front National, Jean-Marie Le Pen, was invited to speak at a fascist conference taking place in the Hotel Caravel in Athens. This led to mass demonstrations that brought together thousands of anarchists and anti-authoritarians, including punks. As AG Schwarz, Tasos Sagris and Void Network note: ‘In what might be the first major Greek Black Bloc, thousands of

anarchists attack[ed] the Hotel Caravel in Athens, forcing the cancellation of a far-right conference that had drawn such reactionaries as Le Pen of France' (2010, p. 7). The police response to the events showed their direct sympathy for the organizers and the speakers of the conference. In 1985 the police started 'Operation Areti' [Αρετή – 'moral virtue' or 'righteousness'] with the pretext that the area of Exarcheia was becoming ghettoised, with increased levels of crime and deviant youth causing troubles for the residents. The punks and anarchists who populated the area faced unprecedented persecution, beatings and arrests, with their 'suspicious appearances' being enough to justify the purge (Βαμβακάς and Παναγιωτόπουλος [Vamvakas and Panayiotopoulos], 2014). These encounters with police brutality, the unjustified arrests and the inhumane conditions of confinement are described in the autobiographical song, 'Τα Κελιά της Οδού Μεσογείων' ['Ta Kelia tis Odou Mesogeion' – 'The Cells of Mesogeion Street'] by the band Αδιέξοδο [Adiexodo]:

Βρέθηκες ζάφνου σ' ένα κελί και η δικογραφία σου λέει εξύβριση αρχής. Μία μέρα απομόνωση, και ύστερα με τις χειροπέδες στον εισαγγελέα. Η δίκη σου πάντα αναβάλλεται ... Οι μπάτσοι σε βρίζουν σε εξευτελίζουν.

[All of a sudden you were found in a cell with the charges stating 'verbal outrage against authorities'. One day in detention and then handcuffed to the prosecutor. Your trial is always postponed ... Cops are swearing at you and humiliating you.]

(Αδιέξοδο [Adiexodo], 1986b)

This particular police station was infamous as the centre of tortures during the years of the colonel's regime, highlighting, again, the continuity between the police state of the dictators and the police state of the democrats (see Καλλιβρετάκης [Kallivretakis], 2018).

In response to the purges, the first occupation of the Department of Chemistry of the University of Athens took place between the 9th and the 13th of May 1985 with the participation of anarchists and punks. The police responded in an uncommonly calm way and accepted the demands for the release of arrested participants of the events. But the same year was marked by the cold-blooded murder of the anarchist student Michalis Kaltezas [Μιχάλης Καλτεζάς] by the cop Athanasios Melistas [Αθανάσιος Μελίστας]

Figure 10:3 – Cover of Adiezodo's .38 LP (1986).



on the 17th of November 1985 during the events for the commemoration of the student Polytechnic uprising of 1973. To add insult to injury, Melistas was sentenced to two-and-a-half years at the first court hearing but was later acquitted of the charges on appeal. The event was a ‘turning point’ and the ‘end of illusions’ for a progressive change by the socialist government of PASOK, which had won its second spell in power earlier that year (Schwarz et al., 2010, pp. 11-12). It was now evident that state authorities and the police were ready to kill. Anger

and the demand for revenge against the police and society as a whole dominated the themes of punk songs. However, as we will see below, this call for revenge should be read as ‘an opening’ to ‘a new hope’ (Αντίδραση [Antidrasi], 1991b) – an anarchic way of life that demands the destruction of all the oppressive structures is the hidden message of this call for revenge. Before we arrive at that point, it is important to first examine the views of anarchists on the matter of law, the state’s monopoly of violence and the police. This will enable us to draw some links between these and the way that the police and the figure of the cop are presented in the lyrics of Greek punk songs.

Anarchists on the law and the police

The multiple anarchist groups, theoretical traditions, and schools of thought are, perhaps, united by a shared principle. That is their critique of the state's monopoly of violence and law's ability to justify and legalise the state's violence while condemning any non-state violence (that is, the sort of violence which does not serve the purposes of the state) by excluding it from the sphere of legality. The multiple Greek anarchist groups are no exception to this rule. On the contrary, due to constant 'witch hunts' and violence by the police, Greek anarchists acknowledge the institution of the police and the legal

Figure 10:4 – Alexis Grigoropoulos and Berkin Elvan memorial at the corner of Mesolongiou and Tzavella streets, Exarcheia, Athens (photograph by Christos Marneros, 24th of June 2020).



system as their most fierce enemy. While their stance against the police is not usually supported by a particular theoretical framework of anarchist thought, such views are closely related to the writings of anarchist theorists, belonging to different schools of thought (for example, in this chapter, I bring together the thought of Max Stirner, who is usually associated with individualist anarchist circles, and those of Mikhail Bakunin and Pyotr Kropotkin, who are usually associated with anarcho-communism) and which I examine below.

As Max Stirner rightly puts it, ‘the state practices “violence”; the individual should not do this. State behaviour is an act of violence, and it calls its violence “legal right”; that of the individual, “crime”’ (2017 [1844], p. 209). Mikhail Bakunin even suggests that the main characteristic that defines someone as an ‘anarchist’ is the demand for the absolute abolition of juridical law:

In a word, we reject all legislation – privileged, licensed, official, and legal – and all authority, and influence, even though they may emanate from universal suffrage, for we are convinced that it can turn only to the advantage of a dominant minority of exploiters against the interests of the vast majority in subjection to them. It is in this sense that we are really Anarchists. (1964 [1870], p. 271)

Thus, law becomes a powerful weapon in the hands of the state and authorities, enabling it to distinguish between the ‘good citizens’ who respect the state’s monopoly of violence and the deviant subjects who question that monopoly.

But beyond being an ‘unworthy hoax’ that justifies and legalises the ‘brutish’ acts of the state (Bakunin 1964 [1870], p. 136), law also becomes an insurmountable barrier. It fetters any potential towards living a life characterised by spontaneity and revolt against state power, and, to that extent, it limits or terminates the ability of human beings to confront and resolve their everyday problems without being attached to the commands of the state. They may be ‘enabled’ by the law in principle, but are hindered in reality. According to Pyotr Kropotkin, people become:

perverted by an education which from infancy seeks to kill in [them] the spirit of revolt and to develop that of submission to authority; we

are so perverted by this existence under the ferrule of a law, which regulates every event in life – our birth, our education, our development, our love, our friendship – that, if this state of things continues, we shall lose all initiative, all habit of thinking for ourselves. (1975 [1900], p. 27)

People are unable to respond, engage or *create* because they expect to receive all the answers to their problems from the archivist authority of the laws of the state. So, this blind obedience to rules (in this case, to the law) becomes a habit that turns us into obedient subjects who are unable to respond to the challenges that we face in our everyday lives, even if the law does not offer us any solution, because we expect every answer by the law. In the remainder of his ‘Law and Authority’ essay, Kropotkin explains how we became so

Figure 10:5 – Graffiti in memory of Zak Kostopoulos/Zackie Oh! in the Exarcheia area, Athens (photograph by Christos Marneros, 1st of August 2019).



accustomed to obedience and the need for ever-expanding laws that we cannot do without them. Thus, we accept any restraint to our freedom in the name of security, in the name of avoiding a Hobbesian ‘threat’ of the state of nature, leading to the ultimate pacification of our social and political instincts and the degradation of our spirit of revolt.

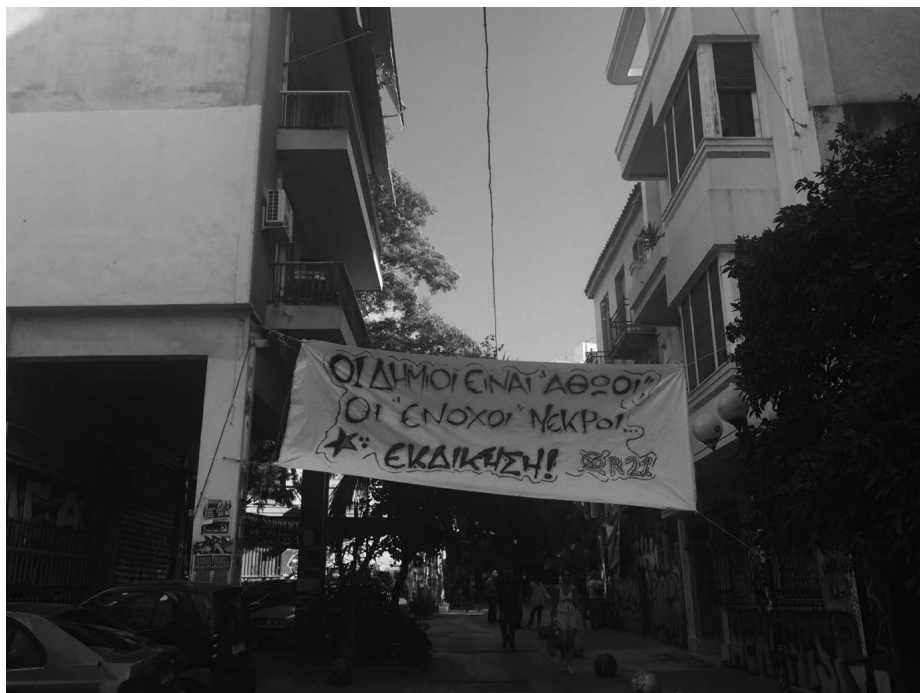
The police have a powerful double-role in preserving but also expanding and creating anew this repressive status quo. Walter Benjamin may not ordinarily be identified as an anarchist thinker, but anarchic themes are readily apparent in his discussion of ‘suspension of the law’ and ‘abolition of state’s power’ in his ‘Critique of Violence’ (1986 [1921], p. 300). Elsewhere in this celebrated and enigmatic essay, he makes a distinction between two kinds of violence (amongst others), namely violence which is law-making and violence which is law-preserving (Benjamin, 1986 [1921], pp. 284-287). While the law-preserving category contains violence used in order to enforce existing laws, the law-making category, in the absence or indeterminacy of existing laws, comes to introduce new laws and rules in order to fill the vacuum (Benjamin, 1986 [1921], pp. 284-287; Newman, 2016, p. 83). Yet, these two kinds of violence are often indistinguishable, or their distinctions are blurry leading to ‘a kind of a spectral mixture’ (Benjamin, 1986 [1921], p. 286). Benjamin suggests that the key example of the combination of these two kinds of violence in the modern state is the institution of the police.

The police use violence to enforce the laws of the state, for example, when they physically incapacitate individuals by handcuffing them. This is a situation where the institution of the police uses violence in order to *preserve* or supposedly protect the pre-existing laws of the state. There are, however, many situations where there is ambiguity as to the limits of the law – in these situations, the ‘legal means’ of law enforcement are non-existent or open to multiple interpretations. For example, in many situations the police are free to determine how to apply its ‘legal violence’ in the process of incapacitating, arresting or ‘stopping and searching’ someone. We have witnessed numerous times how, in the name of protecting ‘the good citizens’, police have brutally assaulted protesters, killed suspects, sexually and racially harassed people, using the pretext of their ‘stop-and-search’ powers. It is in these ‘no man’s land’ situations that the police, acting by using *law-making violence*, become even more powerful not only as an institution but, more importantly, as a mentality, a way of thinking that engulfs the *psyche* of every citizen. To this extent, the

ever-pervasive formless presence/absence of the police is there to repress anyone and anything that questions the state's monopoly of violence, by preserving its legal violence but also via their unique ability to create new law in situations of 'indeterminacy'. This leads to complete submission and it inaugurates a 'security ideology' (Newman, 2016, p. 83) or a police mentality. The 'good citizen', living with the constant fear of becoming the Other, the deviant or the delinquent, is ever ready to overzealously support the violence of the police and law, condemning the victims as 'dangerous anarchists' or 'punks' who threaten the sacred morals of society (thus, they 'had it coming'). The Greek 'good citizens' and the media are always ready to support the police and condemn the victims. We saw that happening with the murder of Kaltezas, Alexis Grigoropoulos [Αλέξης Γρηγορόπουλος] (another teenager murdered by the cops in Exarcheia in 2008), and more recently with the broad daylight killing of queer activist and drag performer Zak Kostopoulos/Zackie Oh! Zackie was accused of trying to rob a jewellery shop (something which was proved to be untrue – not that it matters) and she was beaten to death by a mob including the shop owner, other 'good citizens' and the cops. (For further information on Grigoropoulos' murder see Schwarz et al., 2010. For Kostopoulos' killing see Weizman, 2019). As Stirner puts it: '[t]he people go utterly nuts, sending the police against everything that seems immoral, or even only unseemly, to it; and this popular rage for the moral protects the police institution more than the mere government could possibly protect it' (2017 [1844], p. 253). As a result, a police state is formed with the support of the citizens who simply 'do not want to get into trouble' – they hate anything and anyone that questions the status quo consensus or threatens their peaceful lives.

Greek anarchist groups, despite their multiple and different ideological influences, share this hatred of the police as the main manifestation of the state's monopoly of violence, along with the view that the police institution maintains and recreates the oppressive nature of the law. They also share the aforementioned views on how the general public, the 'good citizens', are accomplices to the police's brutality. These positions are highlighted in the political communiqués and position pamphlets of Greek anarchist groups. In these we read that anarchists 'do not fit in the society of captivity, the police checks of our identification papers, the supervision of security guards, the laws of the judges, the locked doors of prisons' (Conspiracy of Cells of Fire

Figure 10:6 – Banner produced by anarchist fans of AEK Athens FC with lyrics of ‘38 Χιλιοστά’ by Αδιέξοδο (1986a): ‘The executioners are innocent, the guilty ones are dead. Revenge!’ (Photograph by Christos Marneros, 1st of August 2019).



[Συνωμοσία Πυρήνων της Φωτιάς – Synomosia Pyrinon tis Photias] 2015, p. 3; see also Loadenthal, 2017, pp. 67-85). We also read that the role of the riot police is ‘to terrorise the streets every day ... beat demonstrators, and [its] sole mission is the violent repression of social struggles’ (Gournas, Maziotis, Roupa, imprisoned members of the ‘Revolutionary Struggle’ [‘Επαναστατικός Αγώνας’ – ‘Epanastatikos Agonas’], 2010). As such, Greek anarchists, being ‘at war with [such a] democracy’ (Sect of Revolutionaries [Σέχτα των Επαναστατών – Sechta ton Epanastaton], 2010), aim to attack the terror of the state and its institutions by ‘work[ing] towards creating more communities that celebrate self-determination, that do not welcome the police’ (CrimethInc., 2021).

For anarchists, then, the only viable way out of the archist mentality of the state, its monopoly of violence and the police mentality is the total

destruction of the juridical system and law (Bakunin, 1972 [1869], p. 152). As Kropotkin characteristically writes: ‘No more laws! No more judges! Liberty, equality, and practical human sympathy are the only effectual barriers we can oppose to the anti-social instincts of certain amongst us’ (1975 [1900], p. 43).

As we will see in the next section, these views on the police, police state and police mentality are reflected in the lyrics of Greek punk songs. As I aim to demonstrate, the punks with their directness, vitriolic irony and humour not only manage to contribute to this anarchistic anti-police critique but take it a step further. This is because they manage to convey this message to the youth who are not necessarily actively engaged with anarchist theory and politics. Thus, punk manifests an ‘educational’ dimension that has the ability to politicise and cultivate an anarchic ethos.

‘Kill the cop inside you’ **(Αρνάκια [Arnakia], 1993)**

In this section, I aim to demonstrate how the depiction of the cop in the lyrics of Greek punk is very close to the anarchistic views discussed in the previous section. In Greek punk lyrics, the cop is always depicted in a negative, oppressive manner (and justifiably so) but this figure is, nevertheless, multifaceted. The cops are ‘the faithful servants of the state’, they are the ‘pigs and murderers’ (Ολέθριο Πήγμα [Olethrio Rigma], 2000) that beat up random people without needing an excuse, they are in a position to ‘fuck up our self-esteem’ (Αντίδραση [Antidrasi], 1991a), and, at the same time, they are the buffoons that ‘chase stray dogs’ (Panx Romana, 1999). But more importantly, this oppressing figure is able to operate freely due to Greek society’s ‘silence’ over, or even support for, this exercise of physical and psychological violence upon the society’s Others – and this is because the figure of the cop has become a part of our own ‘sinister selves’ (Αρνάκια [Arnakia], 1993). The figure of the cop is something that lurks inside us and there is always the potential for it to prevail, as has happened in Greek society with the triumph of a police mentality and the police state.

As discussed earlier, Kalteza's assassination was a turning point that shattered the illusion of a 'progressive, welfare state' that might end the police state of the right-wing governments and the regime of the colonels. The groups that were 'othered' by the political powers and by society as a whole knew that they were an easy target for the police's brutality. The anger of the youth and their cry for change took the form of a call for 'revenge'. However, this call should not be read as something negative, but rather as a cry for the imminent need to destroy all the rotten values of a dying society, and to create anew. This anger was encapsulated in the lyrics of the song '38 Χιλιοστά' ['38 Hiliosta' – '38 Millimetres'] by Αδιέξοδο [Adiexodo] (1986a) – the title is in reference to the gun used by Melistas to kill Kaltezas. In the song, we can observe the polarized perceptions of the cops, on the one hand by 'the good citizens' and (legal) authorities, and, on the other hand, by the punks. For the courts, the wider justice system, the media and the 'good citizens', the cops are, ironically speaking, 'innocent' because they merely performed their duty, exterminating 'the dangerous anarchist' Kaltezas who was participating in the riots – 'the executioners are innocent, the guilty dead' as the song says

Figure 10:7 – Graffiti in the Kypseli area of Athens. The graffiti refers to the death of the urban guerilla Christos Tsoutsouvis [Χρήστος Τσουτσουβής] on the 15th of May 1985 in Gyzi, Athens (photograph by Christos Marneros, 3rd of June 2021). Tsoutsouvis engaged in an exchange of fire with cops, killing three before his death. The slogan is widely used by anti-authoritarians and anarchists as a way of mocking the cops. Εκτός Ελέγχου [Ektos Eleghou] in their song 'Κανείς Δεν Είναι Αθώος' ['Nobody Is Innocent'] praise Tsoutsouvis' actions stating that 'he was right'. The song is included in the re-issue of their 1994 homonymous album, released in 2012.



(Αδιέξοδο [Adiexodo], 1986a). For Greek society's 'Others', however, the cops are 'the executioners' of young people. Yet, importantly, as the lyrics of the song state:

Δεν ήταν μόνος αυτός που πυροβόλησε είχε μαζί του κι άλλους αφανείς δήμιους. Είχε μαζί του τους ενάρετους. Είχε μαζί του τους έντιμους. Είχε μαζί του τους ηθικούς. Είχε μαζί του τους δίκαιους. Είχε μαζί του τους φιλήσυχους.

[The person who shot (the fatal bullet) was not alone. He had by his side, other self-effacing executioners. He had by his side the virtuous ones. He had by his side the honourable ones. He had by his side the moral ones. He had by his side the righteous ones. He had by his side the peaceful ones.]

(Αδιέξοδο [Adiexodo], 1986a)

With the blessings of the Greek society and the help of certain 'snitches', the cops always find the excuse that they need in order to act for the preservation of law and the protection of the 'good citizens'. Under this pretext they are, then, free to impose 'their own moral virtue', as Εκτός Ελέγχου [Ektos Eleghou – Out of Control] ironically note in their homonymous song (1994). Of course, the cops' imposition of moral virtue is achieved by the sound of 'music of the batons striking down on [random] heads' and by arresting any they can get their hands on in order to 'justify next month's salary' (Εκτός Ελέγχου, 1994).

In this gloomy situation, the punks' message becomes clear. There is nobody and nothing that can fight for a change in society. All the promises by the self-proclaimed 'messiahs' are hollow. If we want real change, we must do anything that is possible to get rid of those in positions of power, to get rid of the dominant archist mentality (Αντίδραση [Antidراسي], 1991b). This mentality is 'rotten' (Αντίδραση [Antidراسي], 1991b) because it hierarchises beings and creates the 'deviant Other' who must accept the pseudo-consensus promoted by these 'messiahs' or be exterminated. But resistance and the cultivation of a new, anarchic way of life is a difficult enterprise and the punks seem to be aware of that, as evident in their lyrics – nevertheless, they are not

ready to accept that this is impossible. The difficulty lies in the fact that the state's police mentality has become a part of ourselves, engulfing every aspect of our psyche. As such, as Αρνάκια [Arnakia] state, we need to 'kill the cop inside us before it is too late' (1993).

Conclusion: intersecting points between anarchism and Greek punk

It should be evident by now that Greek punk's lack of direct reference to an anarchist theoretical framework or close affiliations with anarchist groups does nothing to render their anarchic ethos of resistance lesser than 'mature' anarchist politics. On the contrary, Greek punk has a lot to offer in the fight against the archist mentality of power, and the dogmatism and conservatism that prevail in our societies. This is manifested by the shared ideas, aims and ethos of anarchism and punk's anarchy (that is, punk's fundamental opposition to any form of hierarchy). Greek anarchists and Greek punks, while keeping their distinct identities intact and without trying to assimilate one another, often fight together for multiple causes and against old and new threats. Recently, in the context of mutual aid and cooperation, anarchists and punks have collaborated in the organization of gigs and other events in order to inform against the fatalistic, neoliberal agenda, and to oppose the emerging fascism in Greek politics and the growing 'fascisation' of Greek society. They have also been supporting anarchist political prisoners by bringing bands together to generate financial assistance for the trial expenses (see, for example, the Firefund campaign by the anarchist collective Masovka [Μασόβκα], where multiple punk bands, but also antifascist black metal bands, such as Yovel, contributed parts of their Bandcamp earnings in April 2021) and raising funds to help those who are in a dire position as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Against this backdrop, the Facebook page 'Greek Punk / Crust / HC and more' has been very active. In August 2021 they brought together 120 bands from all around the globe to release the online compilation *Punk Means Solidarity* (Various, 2021) to support the needs of those affected (humans and animals) by the devastating fires in Greece.

In this chapter, my aim was to demonstrate these intersections by highlighting the very similar views of, and shared opposition to, the state's monopoly of violence, especially as manifested by police brutality and the generation of a police mentality that 'haunts' society and ourselves. As discussed, both anarchists and Greek punks recognise that the role of the police is not to protect but rather to preserve and extend the oppression of the state. Furthermore, anarchists and Greek punks both make the important point that the police is not merely an institution, but rather a mentality. Thus, the 'good citizens' are accomplices to police beatings and murders, as observed by both Stirner in his writings and by Αδιέξοδο [Adiexodo] in their songs. More importantly, both anarchists, of multiple 'trends', different ideological and organisational tactics (from individualist, syndicalist, anarcho-communist groups and so on) *and* punks believe that radical change is the only viable solution to escape this repressive police mentality. This change must be radical because it demands the total abolition and dissolution of the state, law and the police – as can be seen in the writings of Kropotkin and Bakunin *and* in the lyrics of punk songs by Αντίδραση [Antidراسi], Αρνάκια [Arnakia] and others. Its radicality also lies in not shying away from pointing the finger towards ourselves and the 'cop' that lurks inside. The directness, sharpness, irony and humour of Greek punk lyrics can cultivate an anarchic ethos of resistance which dares to talk seriously about the abolition of the police, not only as an institution but also as an oppressive figure.

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