

# MUNTJAC

ANARCHISM DECOLONISED

HA COMMUNITY SELF-DEFENCE AGAINST  
COMMUN FASCISM AND THE STATE

DEFENCE ASSOCIATION  
ISSUE 1 WINTER '24 LACK  
YOUTH LEAGUE  
BRANFORD

## THE WEEK BEFORE THE RIOTS

The constant intense policing of Brixton and of the Front

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1976: Residents of Southall riot to protest the murder of Gurdip Singh Chaggar. Despite the presence of the influential IWA (Southall), the youth went on to form alternative organizations that believed in militant direct action.

WE WANT  
EVERYTHING!

PART ONE



see as fellow whites take up armed resistance, it is only their right: racial solidarity is naturalised. For anyone else, it's barbaric. The West and the rest has never been so clear.

Wherever you are, and by whatever means necessary, may a thousand intifadas bloom!

3.

to m.,

thank you dear comrade—if u had not left that zine at the infoshop back then, i would not have known i needed to walk out of it the following month.

in steadfast solidarity with all colonised peoples of the world,

p.



*the Lion's Den. And when you are dead, no portraits await you, only us performing Piss Aktion on your grave.'*

– Ravachol Mutt, 'Destruction is the only cultural expression left'  
[newsocialist.org.uk/transmissions/destruction-is-the-only-cultural-expression-left](http://newsocialist.org.uk/transmissions/destruction-is-the-only-cultural-expression-left)

This is a peer critique. The disruption that Ravachol Mutt calls for is sorely needed in grassroots cultural spaces: these, too, can be hegemonic. They're smaller, less bureaucratic, the stakes are lower—and that is exactly why it's more disappointing when people refuse to take risks and cling to what the ruling class wants us to consider normal. Yes, wipe away the coloniser's tears and reassure them! You've just repackaged the same old respectability and whiteness.

I believe we should communicate more violently against colonisation. The failure to do so means our social spaces become like any other: centres for reproducing bourgeois colonial cultural norms. The white anarchist, then, merely becomes a whimsical academic or single-issue reactionary, each in their own way nostalgic for something more interesting than our current modernity, which is harsh, extractive, grey, corporate. It seems their vision of a changed world is a liberal capitalist garden city in western europe, but with improved art schools. How our current modernity and all its objects and relations are nourished through centuries of stolen colonial resources and labour—that is to say, of finely ground human and non-human lives—is not something which figures in their analysis. If we really come down to it, white anarchists are mostly fine with this fundamental structure of their world; they just wish it was all a bit nicer for them (or at least less embarrassing).

So it is no surprise that when the colonised subject revolts, certain white anarchists respond with horror, sympathy, comfort-seeking. Decolonial insurgency is not a viable political consciousness for them. If people they

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## Mutt. - Editorial

**As ever, since the day we arrived here, it's been up to us.**

**The racialized peoples of this hellish archipelago... to defend ourselves.**

Let's take a partial look at our collective histories of struggle...

In 1919, in Cardiff, Liverpool and East London racists targeted Chinese, Somali, West Indian (Caribbean), Malaysian, Egyptian and other racialized residents, many of whom were British colonial troops stationed or demobilized in Britain, the racists also targeted their partners and spouses who were often white women. In response, at various intervals in Cardiff groups of whites that had formed lynch mobs found themselves in shootouts with the racialized people they tried to target.

In 1948, in Liverpool the National Union of Seamen strived to keep Black people out of work, boasting that *"we have been successful in changing ships from coloured to white, and in many instances in persuading masters and engineers that white men should be carried in preference to coloured."* During an extended period of attack, Black sailors armed themselves to stave off attempted massacres by mobs of whites either in uniform or in plain clothes intent on destroying them, the lodgings they stayed in and the clubs they frequented. Often when the police "intervened" in racial attacks on Black sailors they'd simply arrest every Black person in the area.

In 1958, the West Indian community of Notting Hill tooled up to fight fascists who'd been targeting them at night, utilizing ambush tactics and skills many had gained in their time in Britain's colonial armed forces. One ex RAF mechanic, Baker Baron was interviewed years later and said;

## 2.

'Art-making: not as a leisure activity, solely or simply an expression of self, but as the most important medium that we have to communicate. Art-making which hides the seeds of how to be a human stitch in the tapestry again, passed for safe-keeping in the hands of our indigenous. Art-making as a means to mobilize the weapon. If armed struggle is the first action of finding a world beyond colonization, beyond what we can see, culture loads the gun. The role of the artist is to load the gun.'

– Ismatu Gwendolyn, 'The Role of the Artist is to Load the Gun'

[ismatu.substack.com/p/the-role-of-the-artist-is-to-load](https://ismatu.substack.com/p/the-role-of-the-artist-is-to-load) (shared via Isabella K.)

You, the residency cohort, will be sharing your work in the middle of December 2024. You, who welcome the coloniser; you, with no black and white feelings; you, who sit quietly and nod your head.

I wonder what kind of art you thought was possible under such conditions. How can you make art which engages with ownership, property, and social relations of the local area when you have decided that colonial comfort, with its funhouse mirror distortions, is more appealing? I bet you can't even see your own faces, blurred and reflected; I bet you insist that it's different—it's different!—because you don't want to think on your own complicity. How can you speak of magic, play, and care when it's obvious your imaginations are blank due to your predictable willingness to placate racist fragility? What is anarchist about any of this? You are in lockstep with the state as you jingle across the floor with your jester's hat.

*'So watch your treasures closely. Because we refuse your culture. No sonnets but shouts of "SHAME!" at you from across the street. No stinging critique, but the sting of the Wasp's Nest. No lionising the powerful, but rather the roar of*

gives up the majority of historic Palestine to israel, a generosity that allows Palestinians—disarmed, docile, grateful—to live in bantustans. Too many people only object to zionism in its specifically Kahanist form, an overt and gleeful desire to exterminate Palestinian existence through blunt violence. Liberal zionists who are "anti-occupation" / "pro-peace" / [dove emoji] but who mainly mobilise through photo-op demos and saturating the discourse with their complaints about how they feel unfairly targeted for criticism, who analyse everything through internal israeli politics, who fear anything but the most placatory and normalising gestures from Palestinians and their supporters, are very much zionists. They're just being wet about it.

But look at the kind of moment saying something wet engenders: a collective betrayal of anti-colonial values in response to one person crying. You were quickly disarmed by the liberal zionist weapon of choice: the tearful declaration that they are being attacked—that actually, this moment is all about them and their feelings!

Though I am an anxious person who often freezes up, I knew where my comrades were: outside of this room full of people who think Palestinian life is worth less than a moment of their discomfort.

I give you my absence and ask what you think could take its place.

*"[...] black people were so frightened at that time that they wouldn't leave their houses, they wouldn't come out, they wouldn't walk the streets of Portobello Road. So we decided to form a defence force to fight against that type of behaviour and we did. We organized a force to take home coloured people wherever they were living in the area. We were not leaving our homes and going out attacking anyone, but if you attack our homes you would be met, that was the type of defence force we had. We were warned when they were coming and we had a posse to guard our headquarters.*

*When they told us that they were coming to attack that night I went around and told all the people that was living in the area to withdraw that night. The women I told them to keep pots, kettles of hot water boiling, get some caustic soda and if anyone tried to break down the door and come in, to just lash out with them. The men, well we were armed. During the day they went out and got milk bottles, got what they could find and got the ingredients of making the Molotov cocktail bombs. Make no mistake, there were iron bars, there were machetes, there were all kinds of arms, weapons, we had guns.*

*We made preparations at the headquarters for the attack. We had men on the housetop waiting for them, I was standing on the second floor with the lights out as look-out when I saw a massive lot of people out there. I was observing the behaviour of the crowd outside from behind the curtains upstairs and they say, 'Let's burn the niggers, let's lynch the niggers.' That's the time I gave the order for the gates to open and throw them back to where they were coming from. I was an ex-serviceman, I knew guerrilla warfare, I knew all about their game and it was very, very effective.*

*I says, 'Start bombing them.' When they saw the Molotov cocktails coming and they start to panic and run. It was a very serious bit of fighting that night, we were determined to use any means, any weapon, anything at our disposal for our freedom. We were not prepared to go down like dying dogs. But it did work, we gave Sir Oswald Mosley and his Teddy boys such a whipping they never*

*come back in Notting Hill. I knew one thing, the following morning we walked the streets free because they knew we were not going to stand for that type of behaviour."*

In 1959 Kelso Colchrane, a Black Antiguan resident of Notting Hill was stabbed to death by whites, in response Rhaune Laslett, Claudia Jones, Amy Ashwood Garvey and other revolutionaries put on an indoor Carnival to empower the besieged Black communities of Britain. With time, these gatherings grew so large they out-grew the halls they were held in and were the groundwork to what is now a cultural institution for the West Indian communities in Britain. The Notting Hill carnival.

In 1968, Trinidadian revolutionary Frank Crichlow opened the Mangrove restaurant which quickly became a hub for Black people to seek shelter from the racist hellcape around them and organise their fight back against the British state. In fear of this, the police raided and shut down the restaurant a dozen times. Attacks like this against Black community centers, cafes, clubs and even daycares were surprisingly common.

In 1970, 150 Black radicals protested against the police's war on the mangrove and were met with a force of over 600 police officers, who assaulted the marchers leading to the arrest and trial which would later be known as the *Mangrove 9*. They won in court after a long trial and the police's assault on the Mangrove carried on until the 80s, in 1988 Frank was framed after riot police raided the restaurant and 'found' drugs. After a trial he was acquitted and was awarded damages in 1992.

Throughout the 70s the Bengali Housing Action Group, the Black Panthers & Race Today collective squatted homes to house immigrants in spite of the racist local government & landlords.

refusing cultural or material complicity in zionism and any other form of racism? Anyone may wear a cute little Palestine badge and go on an A-to-B march while avoiding any critical self-reflection about how to relate to the colonised world and its peoples, I suppose for fear of "black-and-white thoughts" that may result in the political discernment required to see zionism for what it is and reject it instantly.

This was a situation that required a refusal of the nonviolent communication we had just been practising. Those rules don't apply in this situation as all forms of white supremacy must be run out of our spaces, not coddled and validated. Refusing to understand that white supremacy currently takes the form of a multicultural project which is sustained through the active invitation of racialised and ethnicised people is what underlies this normalisation of zionism in social spaces.

We must contextualise israeli identity as we do british, american, australian, and other colonial identity categories. If we see zionism as colonialism and adherence to colonialism as a form of whiteness (no matter the identity of the speaker), then this allows us to see the shocking amount of racism permeating our spaces. The tools, tactics, and emotions are familiar to many of us: upon encountering anything critical of the colonial project with which these people still deeply identify, they cry white tears, centre themselves, act like the victim, whine about being unfairly judged, and insist they have reason to fear for their safety while everyone else in the room sits in quiet sympathy. This normalises colonialism by reproducing the idea that "both sides" just need to come together and talk because everyone's feelings are equally valid, or whatever vapid bullshit liberals throw out like a cosy blanket over their desire for order and quiet.

In the case of liberal zionists, their vision of "peace" is merely a more capacious settler colony, a continued apartheid ("two-state solution") that

We were all in that same room at that moment, which I acknowledge was abrupt. I understand responding under pressure is difficult. However, you cannot simply explain this fulsome affirmation from *the whole group* as merely an imperfect stress response, a poorly thought-out and emotional moment in group dynamics. I believe what I witnessed was a severing of politics from care where the group defaulted to comforting someone who should have been further challenged. Perhaps you refused to create this challenge because you think of yourselves as nice people: I have no such delusions about myself.

I needed to leave the room in order to interrupt this moment. I just said, 'I'm out.' I got up and walked away.

With comical timing, one of the white facilitators called out to my retreating back– 'I think we can still hold space for this!'

For what? For whom? A white colonist throwing a tantrum is by definition refusing to hold space for anything else.

The only space I am holding is for Palestine and all colonised peoples of the world, and I find in June Jordan's words a ballast:

YOU SAY YOU LOVE ME AND I COMMIT  
TO FRICTION AND THE UNDERTAKING  
OF THE PEARL

– Intifada Incantation: Poem #8 for b.b.L.

I am curious about whether you think the cause of Palestine, and by extension the struggle of all colonised peoples across the world, is merely your little branding exercise. Do you understand the necessity of actively

Brixton was a borough plagued by policing and constant searches under the racist 'Sus' laws, enabling the police to stop and search people whenever the hell they felt like, this tactic was paired with arbitrary raids, beatings and surveillance. This was responded to in a myriad of ways; Black power organisations set up infoshops and educated their peers as part of a broader campaign against police harassment. Some squatted in buildings to drink smoke and listen to reggae in spite of the police. Some would intervene with the police when they began to harass someone.

In 1976, an 18 year old engineering student, Gurdip Singh Chaggar, was stabbed to death. The Indian Workers Association [Southall] organized a meeting on facism, but the youth attending the meeting grew frustrated with the "timid" bureaucratic, lobbyist approach of their elders and the lack of a concrete response to Chaggar's murder. Opting instead for direct action, they left the meeting to protest against Southall's police for its inaction, and in the process ended up throwing stones at a Jaguar who's driver called them "black bastards". Shortly after, they launched the Southall Youth Movement (SYM). In the days that followed, they organized a number of protests, attacked white motorists who chanted racist slurs at them and when their comrades were arrested, surrounded the police station demanding their release. These new formations would be later described by Race today as "breaking through the solid wall of Asian organisations which maintained the status quo"

August, 1976, police assaulted Black attendees of the Notting Hill Carnival and they defended themselves and injured over 300 police officers, damaged 35 police vehicles and looted shops. The repression that followed led to the arrest of 60. Rasta Billy, a former steel pan player at Carnivals commented that;

*"Carnival became the first opportunity that many of the black youths born in Britain had to express their anger on a national basis and to confront the police and let them know the forces of black anger."*

In 1980 Akhtar Ali Baig was brutally murdered on East Ham high street by a gang of white, skinhead youths aged 15 to 17, who first verbally abused him before spitting on him and eventually stabbing him. Paul Mullery, the one who stabbed him exclaimed in front of eyewitnesses “*I’ve just gutted a paki!*” He was soon arrested, In response 150 Asian and some West Indian youth marched to Forest Gate police station, the police claimed it wasn’t a racially motivated attack. Later 2,500 people marched through Newham in a protest organised by Newham Youth Movement, they planned to march to Forest Gate and West Ham police stations and then return to the murder location, the police tried to re-route them towards West Ham Park but the youth broke through chanting “*Here to stay, Here to fight!*” and “*Self Defense is no offense!*” On reaching the site of the murder spot, the march stopped to pay its respect to Akhtar. A mullah chanted some prayers from the Koran There were 29 arrests and in response the youths met with the Steering Committee Of Asian Organisations to drum up support and put on a second march, 5,000 people attended, Black workers from Ford’s downed tools and (in a rare, minor, piece of middle class racial solidarity) shopkeepers shut their shops for the day.

April 10th, 1981, the boiling tension following the racist mass murder of 13 Black teenagers in the firebombing of a house in New Cross into an anti-police insurrection, Michael Bailey, a Black man who had just been stabbed in Brixtons ‘frontline’ was being kneeled on by police for over 20 minutes. People nearby intervened and forced the cops away from him and took him to hospital, they then fought with the police reinforcements that had been sent in. The following day, the police lined the streets every 50 meters with vans, rather than their usual foot patrols. Word got round that Michael had died in hospital, no small part due to the police allowing him to bleed out for so long. At 5pm a plainclothes cop was bricked for trying to search a Black man’s car, police attempted to arrest the bricklayer but eventually battle lines were drawn. By the end of the night

## p.n. -AN ARTIST LOADS THE GUN

### I.

To the White Creative Residency Facilitators and Slightly Less White Residency Cohort at 56A Infoshop,

Understand that this letter is not a pleading missive intended to change your hearts and minds but is a form that lets me use the accusatory 'you.' Those of you who make claims upon radical pedagogy and anarchism, openness and discomfort, care and complaint: why do you normalise colonialism by prioritising the comfort of israelis?

Why did you feel the need to collectively waft soothing noises at one person who cried over a 'Globalise the Intifada' zine and was frightened by the phrase 'From the river to the sea'? When this person complained it was easier to say they were argentinian rather than israeli in certain spaces, I heard someone say 'I bet!' in reassuring tones. I wonder what possessed them. Why did you take pains to reassuringly say that israelis are welcome in that space and that "we" were behind them 100%? Why did you appear so very sure that everyone in the room thought with one mind, one heart?

Distantly through my rage I heard someone say that she 'did not have black and white thoughts on what was unfolding', with a little hiatus near the end of that sentence, and I wonder: what values and relations did you think that space was capable of supporting? One that refuses to name genocide and whiteness, it seems. It is therefore unsurprising that people were willing to make expressions of anti-colonial resistance into a problem, rather than be accountable to the Palestinian struggle.



and provides opportunities for individuals to distinguish themselves through bravery, skill, speed, and cunning, with those who demonstrate exceptional prowess in battle earning the favor and admiration of other individuals within their community. At times, armed struggle also serves as a way to define (or usurp) social roles and hierarchies within certain communities, by community members. Armed struggle is a means of creating shared experiences and memories which often end up binding communities together and sometimes even defining communities and their trajectories. The collective trauma and suffering inflicted during conflict can create a sense of solidarity and mutual understanding among individual members of a community, as they come together to mourn their losses and rebuild their lives. In this way, armed struggle can also be a catalyst for social cohesion, rather than only a destructive force and cycle of retribution that simply tears communities apart.

The militant individual is not merely an aberrant or deviant figure, not a "villain", but rather an unextinguishable component of the human social fabric. The desire for autonomy and self-expression is not a personal whim, nor a simple act of spite, but instead, sometimes a necessary condition for the survival and flourishing of a people.

Zhachev

*Zhachev is a 35 year-old Palestinian born in exile in the southeastern United States. He currently lives and writes from the southern Blue Ridge Mountains.  
substack.com/@zhachev*

there were 279 injured cops, 50+ destroyed police vehicles and several buildings and shops burnt out and looted.

July 3rd, 1981 three coachloads of white skinheads from the East End arrive in Southall for a gig at a bar called the Hambrough Tavern, on the way there they attacked shopfronts run by Asian people and assaulted one Asian woman, in response Asian and West Indian youth struck back, the police came in to defend the skins but by the end of the night the skins were sent packing, several police officers were injured and the Hambrough was burnt to a crisp. The youth said to the media the following day;

*"If the police will not protect our community, we have to defend ourselves."*

Throughout July 1981 There were further anti-police and anti-racist uprisings in Toxteth, Moss Side, Chapeltown and again in Brixton. There were so many I'd run out of space if I covered them all properly.

1982, The Sari Squad, a group of radical South Asian women began their campaign in solidarity with Afia Begum who had been deported to Bangladesh after her husband died in a fire. They established a social center in London's Brick Lane. The following year they would tie themselves to the railings outside the home secretaries home, they were later arrested and sexually assaulted by the police.

In 1983, a collective of diasporic South Asian women founded Mukti magazine, with the intention of creating a publication to address the under-discussed concerns of South Asian women in the (politically) Black movement of the time. Topics such as deportation, citizenship, sexual fulfilment, lesbianism, arranged marriage, incest and child sexual abuse were presented in 6 different languages. They had a wheelchair accessible office and hosted meetings for groups like the Incest Survivors

Group, Asian Women Youth Workers Group, and Aurat Shakti exhibition group.

September 1985, armed cops had gone to Cherry Groce's home, in Normandy Road (Brixton), to find her son, Michael, who was wanted for armed robbery. Mrs Groce said the cops rammed down her door and then ran at her pointing a gun, she moved backwards and they shot her. She was paralysed and confined to a wheelchair by her injuries. In response people mobilized outside Brixtons police station and a group of Black women cussed out the police, it wasn't until the police wheeled out a 'community leader' and a Black priest intended to deescalate the situation that the molotov cocktails began to fly.

December 13th 1995, another Black uprising took place after the murder of Wayne Douglas, in police custody. Black lumpen and their mates fought back against police, ransacked shops and burned cars for five hours.

December 1999, five Chinese restaurant workers, who had had to defend themselves against a white attack in London's Chinatown, were themselves arrested. (This incident is a repeat of what happened in a similar attack in the same restaurant 13 years prior)

June 5th 2001, in Harehills, Leeds the South Asian community stood up to the police who had beat a South Asian man for having a "faulty tax disk", they organised an ambush using a hoax 999 call, ironically reporting that a police officer had been struck with a molotov cocktail, the police arrived and the insurgents threw molotov cocktails and stones at them and fought the police into the night for their friend.

In August 2011, a young Black woman initiated the Mark Duggan Rebellion by throwing stones at a crowd of police who were looming

In some cases, the experience of limitation can be particularly acute, like in situations where certain groups or communities are extremely marginalized and repressed. The sense of self of militant individuals might also be shaped by things like the struggle for simple recognition, or a chance at prosperity, as they seek to challenge the dominant culture and societal structures that attempt to silence and erase their voices.

The desire of the militant individual for autopoiesis and free expression is often driven by an intense sense of urgency, as they recognize that time is never in their favor in life, and that any opportunity to assert individuality is likely to be fleeting. This sense of urgency can manifest in a variety of ways, from spontaneous outbursts, to acts of civil disobedience, and even to more focused and deadly forms of violence. Ultimately, the desire of the individual for self-expression and autopoiesis is an all-too-human desire, one that cannot ever be completely silenced or suppressed, and by extension the same can be said about militancy. It is at the barest a cry for recognition, a demand for dignity, a command to be heard and seen as an individual with potentiality and subjectivity, no matter how different or unique.

The desire of the individual for autopoiesis and self-expression, especially through armed conflict, is not only part of the personal journey and development of the militant individual, but a fundamental requirement for the survival and cohesion of the larger group. In many traditional and tribal communities, armed struggle and conflict are seen as a necessary means of maintaining and ensuring the well-being of all individual members of the community. Armed struggle serves as a way to resolve disputes, redistribute resources, and reconstitute social bonds. In many societies (especially those originating prior to the era of modern, mechanized, total war), warfare is not simply a brutal and destructive act, but rather a crucial mechanism for maintaining social harmony and equilibrium. It allows for the release of tensions and pent-up energies,

## Zhachev - Please Stop Demonizing Militancy

*"The rifle has revealed itself, but the lion has not."*

— "Tallat el Baroudeh", Palestinian folk song

The phenomenon of militancy is shrouded in controversy and misconception. Upon closer examination, the context in which militancy generates and emerges reveals a complex web of factors that contribute to its presence. The erosion of traditional ways of life, the global imposition of Western cultural values, broad economic disparity, social marginalization, and disruption of social norms can and often do all play a role in shaping the dynamics that sustain militancy. Engaging in armed struggle, militants are not only fulfilling social obligations to protect their people and preserve their culture, but they are also self-asserting a reconstituted subjectivity, a militant individuality, actualizing their unlimited potential as creative individuals, becoming unmoored from the mires of resentment, through action.

The militant individual is often one who has experienced either a strict limitation or a total denial of their individual subjectivity. This suspension can stem from a variety of sources, including: traumatic experiences, societal expectations, cultural norms, political regimes, and many more. In some cases, the sense of self of the militant is forged in opposition to historical realities and other definitive constraints, some or all of which may be imposed upon them non-consensually. This leads to deep-seated resentment and desire for resistance. The experience of external restraint can also be internalized, with individuals being socialized to conform to certain societal norms and expectations. The pressure to adhere to these norms can be overwhelming, leading to feelings of suffocation, and a desperation for change. The desire of the militant for self-affirmation, self-expression—for autopoiesis—becomes a means of reclamation, a means of asserting their desires, existence, and individuality.

around at a vigil for Mark, the police responded by beating her and the crowd rushed fight them off, the crowd, in control of the streets started to loot shops, that summer the whole country burned. Only after a police crackdown of an unimaginable scale combined with meddling leftists & the Black liberal counterinsurgency did the flames die out.

In 2016, London Black Revolutionaries and the Malcolm X Movement released insects into a Byron Burger restaurant in response to the Chain conspiring with border force in a sting operation which led to the deportation of 35 migrant workers from Albania, Brazil, Egypt, and Nepal.

In 2021, a collective of radical Black squatters called House of Shango, inspired by the legacy of Black revolutionary and squatter Olive Morris distributed free food and clothing every Sunday in Windrush square.

In 2022, the government warned of a coming economic crisis of their own creation, in response Autonomous Black Queers distributed free guides on shoplifting, fare evading and electric-meter tweaking.

On top of all of this, we can't forget the prison rebels who fought against racism on the inside in our past like Biba Sarkaria or the countless more that have carried on the tradition since. There are of course, daily little resistances, fights, scuffles, people slacking off at work, stealing from the businesses robbing us of our money and time.

On the 18th of July this year, in Harehills, Leeds; children were kidnapped from the home of a Romani family by police on the orders of social workers. In response the community came out and fought the police demanding the children be returned, into the dead of night, successfully fighting off riot police. Bonfires were lit to obscure the police's line of sight, though one was extinguished by Mothin Ali, a green party politician who actually mentioned his uncles getting repressed following the 2001

harehills uprising as the reason why he and his cohort acted as a counterinsurgent force. The following day the parents went on a hunger strike and days later the children were released back into their care.

In November last year, viral misinformation following a stabbing was spread on telegram by fascists in Ireland, raising the temperature just enough that the pre-existing racism, anti-blackness and Islamophobia amongst the white Irish lumpen, working, middle and ruling classes could boil over into an attempt to stalk the city center, jumping anyone darker than a sheet of paper. They failed, with the 2nd night going out with a whimper, rather than another bang.

In England, Cornwall, Wales, Scotland and “Northern Ireland” we weren’t as lucky. Starting in Southport, then spreading to other towns and cities. This wave of white violence resulted in assaults on racialized people, stalking of racialized people, the destruction of buildings used to house refugees, personal and private property belonging to racialized people from homes to shopfronts, cars to community fridges and numerous attacks on mosques.

The British state, under supercop Keir Starmer’s “patriotic” & “left wing” leadership, gave us ever increased police powers, the further criminalization of self defence, mask bans and the familiar high speed court processes Kier was a part of as a prosecutor during the Mark Duggan Rebellion in 2011 leaving antifascists with little time to defend themselves in court and the use of the charge of ‘Affray’ which was created to curtail anti-police street militancy by the Black communities of London has been utilized again to a great extent as a tool of repression.

Labor and Green party politicians and their supporters attended some protests with the sole purpose of preventing anything other than newspaper sales happening. After all, for many of them it was the first

expelling ethnic and religious minority groups is the definition of a pogrom. The anger of the racists has been stirred up by the lies of the media, influencers and politicians from New Labour, the Tories and the far right, looking to scapegoat and distract from the oppression of the entire working class by our ruling elite. If Keir Starmer now goes ahead with his planned sweep of mass immigration raids then he will be rewarding the racist rioters, showing them their actions lead to results, and ordering the mechanisms of the state to take part in the pogrom and expulsion of the most oppressed and targeted section of our society. For now our mass community resistance nationwide may have halted the riots but we may need to utilise our networks and come out with the same strength to stop the colonial racist state from launching deportations and carrying on the pogrom of the racist rioters.

*This was written by a member of Harrow Antifascists, a community based anti fascist network which helped organise the local defence group who came out on in anticipation for attacks by fascists. This was first published on the Inquilab blog.*

Unable to have a mob riot the local fash have resorted to tactics they're describing as "guerrilla warfare". Reports have been coming in the past few days of a liquid being thrown on a hijabi woman by a white man which may have been acid, cars of white people driving round shouting racist abuse and death threats at POC, bottles thrown over the fence of a school holding a summer camp and a white van driving around Wembley with a man throwing acid at Muslim women, white men in balaclavas being arrested by police in Harrow on their way to riot and an Indian student fatally stabbed in a possible racist attack. The school has been contacted and confirmed there was an incident, other reports such as fighting in Wealdstone are unconfirmed and can fly around at these times but we know what is taking place.

Aside from a handful of potential spotters and livestreamers too frightened to film, a Hindutva fascist and confused desi Tommy Robinson supporter called Tirbhuwan Chauhan showed up, and a lone Polish fascist started shouting racist abuse in the middle of the crowd and stamped on the foot of a man with his leg in a cast before the fascist was rescued by police. But instead of arresting him the police guarded him in numbers before bundling him away into a getaway car. Another car drove past and a racist punched a protester out the car window before speeding off but the police did nothing about this. Instead the police decided to focus on trying to enforce the section 60 they'd put in place and harass anti-racists into removing their face coverings. The police couldn't get their heads around the fact that the section of society they're so used to criminalising and stereotyping were the ones who were out to protect our community and prevent a riot. However people looked out for each other and refused to remove our face coverings and despite threats, the police failed to arrest any anti-racists or enforce the section 60.

Violent riots nationwide, co-ordinated racist attacks by lone individuals and small groups and arson attacks on homes aimed at massacring or

time "the left" were in power during a period of unrest and of course, we can't upset the police when they're 'on side' right?

The extra-parliamentary Left complemented this with the near-immediate Trotskyist-led dampener on resistance, a well-rehearsed program of peace policing, often going as far as standing between the police and militant demonstrators, standing in front of targeted buildings for photo-ops and then bailing when the fascists turned up. Leading people the wrong direction (both literally and figuratively) selling newspapers while projectiles were being lobbed at them, a counterinsurgent politics culminating in a collaboration with a group of washed up social democratic politicians hosting a '*resistance festival*' of white people patting themselves on the back for spending weeks bussing themselves into London to talk to the police.

Finally and in the most depressing, but not at all surprising display of all, Many "radicals" in the "POC, BAME & ESEA" organising circles joined forces with the assimilationist middle class in advocating 'staying at home' and staying "safe" and working with the police to utilize hate crime legislation to encourage even more police into our neighbourhoods.

The antifascist response to the race riots this summer was sluggish in places, most were blindsided by the sheer number of whites willing to march around in broad daylight chanting racist & islamophobic slogans and how many white youth were willing to smash the windows of people's homes because they believed the residents weren't white enough. However once the ball got rolling, the fightback that 'organised' autonomous anti-fascists and racialized communities across the country put back were awe inspiring.

Crowds of teenagers ignoring the warnings from the peace policing 'community elders' donning what is essentially black bloc and

confronting fascists in the streets, traveling to support communities in other towns in response to fascists announcing plans to march in towns all over the region. People forming networks of support for vulnerable members of their communities, providing each other with transport and even seemingly trivial things like checking in on each other on the regular.

However, former Black Panther, JoNina Ervin's comment in an interview a few years ago about how antifascism can't just be event based if it's going to become part of the culture has stuck with me. We have to deal with how people are facing daily racism and daily policing. We have to create survival programs to help people live with the crushing living costs here.

Following the dying down of this round of race riots, radicals got to work supporting those arrested for defending themselves, for example; After this year's Notting Hill Carnival, radicals, in the spirit of the original carnival, put on a fundraiser at an illegal rave, which raised £4000 in donations despite police repression.

Weeks ago Romani and Irish Traveler youth were targeted by Manchester police in a racially motivated operation and forced onto trains out of the city center. Soon after this, the Kurdish community in London were targeted by police repression with a community center being raided and dozens of people being arrested.

Bashar Al-Assad was overthrown days ago and in response the British state & states elsewhere are looking to deport Syrian asylum seekers into an active war zone as the civil war and genocidal campaign against Syria's ethnic minorities, aided and backed by the Turkish state and its fascist proxies is nowhere near over.

## **Harrow Antifascists - Report back from Harrow 07.08.24**

Around 400 anti racists came out last night in North Harrow while the fascist rioters failed to show up at their announced location. If they had shown up they wouldn't have stood a chance.

Around 100 people joined a protest with speeches and chants called by the local TUC, PSC & Counterfire. On the other side of the junction around 300 people lined every shop in the high street as part of a community defence group put together at 2 days notice. All of the local man dem came out and stood alongside the shopkeepers. There was a very strong turnout from the local Tamil community as well as brothers from Mahfil Ali Mosque and many Hindus and Sikhs coming out in unity and the community defence stayed out long after the protest finished. Many of us planned to travel to Brentford or Hounslow if fash didn't turn up, but they failed to show up there as well! There was a huge sense of joy among everyone there that our community had come out in such numbers and represented, and that the racist riots we've seen across the country weren't happening on our patch.

The protest was mostly white and the Community defence was mostly Black and Asian but the whole community was united. Only a handful of people linked to the activist scene travelled from other parts of London to support and their support was very much appreciated. This is because most people from the scene were in areas closer to them like Finchley, Walthamstow, Stoke Newington and Croydon, and people up for travelling north west mostly decided to go to Brentford instead where numbers were more needed. Elsewhere in Harrow over 100 brothers stood guard around Harrow Central Mosque late into the night and the fascists came nowhere near.

leftists use it to justify right-opportunism with the ranks of the ruling class on the basis of nationalism against imperialism. This is how national democracy acted as the left wing of the Rodrigo Duterte's fascism. Decolonial anarchism can and should be specific to context, but it must not be dazed by parochial illusions.

Decolonization for those neither Indigenous and settler in the Philippines, then, is an anarchy that is specific to our nature. It is one that is cognizant of our history and post-coloniality, one that moves beyond the nation-state system and restores the cosmopolitanism and hybridity and overcomes the parochialism of the nation. Decolonial anarchism is one indigenized and creolized to fit the specific circumstance and context of the people. Decolonial anarchy is one that works hand-in-hand for land-back for those with homelands and ancestral domains, and one that restores our relationship with the land without succumbing to appropriation.

But decolonial anarchism and anarchy is still a project in flux, not just in the Philippines, but across Southeast Asia and the global south. These notes are only one part in the continuing conversation on its indigenization and creolization.

Throughout the history of the struggles of racialized people here, there has been an insurgent tendency who have rejected the pacifistic stewardship of middle class & reformist political groups who constantly have worked with the police and the government to assert themselves as self-declared 'leadership' of their respective cultures and nationalities.

Our aim as a group is to amplify the voices of this tendency, with the race riots this summer and the response to it being a catalyst for us to come together. Many of us are either one of the few anarchists in our culture's diasporic radical community or one of the few people who aren't white in our local anarchist scene and as such there's a need to create something without both of these restrictions, without having to water down anarchist texts into the often vague language used by sectors of the Asian and Black radical movements or to have our thoughts filtered through the all white editorial boards in charge of the majority of anarchist publications here. Are you doing cool shit, have something to say, knowledge to share? Let's work together and burn Babylon once and for all.

Mutt, Muntjac Magazine  
13/12/24

*"Mutt." is a pen name of a Bajan Mulatto anarchist. [linktr.ee/muttworks](https://linktr.ee/muttworks)*

## Sunwo - The Forgotten so-called Race Riot.

In 1958, at a pub in St. Ann's, Nottingham, police were called in response to a disturbance. Eyewitnesses reported that it all kicked off over the refusal of service to an interracial couple, sparking a brawl. Some say over 1,000 people were involved; others put it in the hundreds. Either way, chaos filled the streets. If you look at the newspapers from the time, it's all about "Black violence" and how many white people were injured. But here's the thing—the evidence points to much of the violence being led by a white mob.

Let's be clear: this wasn't a race riot like they like to call it, this was a fascist attack, a pogrom. Black people who were there say white individuals from outside St. Ann's showed up, forcing the community to fight back and protect themselves. The participation of potentially hundreds of white individuals was historically downplayed. Only through community accounts and extensive archival research has it become possible to uncover a clearer picture of what really went down. Another overlooked aspect is the prolonged police presence—sticking around for weeks afterward.

A few days later, another uprising happened in Notting Hill, some say that this uprising was spired on by the happening in Nottingham, where black forks had managed to fight off a racist mob. These encounters with white reactionary violence mark a pivotal time in the black experience in Britain.

This happened ten years after the first voyage of the Empire Windrush. The early immigrants of color in the UK tell a story of exclusion. Caribbean immigrants faced serious barriers to housing and employment, despite being invited to Britain to address labor shortages after World War II. They ended up making homes in cramped Victorian terraces,

Importantly, we do decolonial anarchy \*as creoles\* and \*as post-colonized subjects\*, not appropriative of Indigeneity. Our creolized cultures may have the traumatic scars of colonialism and Christianization, but it is not something \*merely\* the product of colonial state-building. It is also reflective of a cosmopolitan past as the gateway to China and the Americas and a resiliency of spirit that persists despite the weight of Empire upon it.

Anarchism and anarchy may have its roots in the European and Atlantic proletarian milieu, but it has walked around the world even before Lenin did. Creoles like José Rizal, Isabelo de los Reyes and Lope Santos engaged with and took bits and pieces from anarchism to inform their militancy against colonial authorities. Like how creolized colonial populations would indigenize Christianity, anarchism was similarly indigenized and creolized. Rizal would take point from the Proudhonist tradition, de los Reyes and Santos would take point from Malatesta (and Marx). Decolonial anarchism in the Philippines would mean continuing the indigenization and creolization of anarchism.

Furthermore, creolized colonial populations would practice marronage to leave the colony to create rebel peripheries free from the state. One such act of rebel marronage with the Dagohoy rebellion founded creole communities in the boondocks of Bohol that lived free from the Spanish colonial state for 75 years. Even the Maoists continue this tradition of marronage with their own rebel peripheries, though they are not without problems as they want "national democracy" with their own state.

However, sketching this decolonial anarchy on our own creole post-coloniality is not the same thing as Maoism's and national democracy's nationalism and desire for a national state. While we cannot, of course, dismiss nationalism out of hand, given nationalist decolonial struggles for common and communal dignity, we cannot also dismiss how



did to us. They still want “national democracy,” therefore a state, police, prisons, wage-labor, all things instituted by colonization. They argue for “national liberation” of a Maoist type where the imperialists and their compradors are kicked out and a national-democratic state oversees national industrialization, with nationalized industry, wage-labor, police, prisons... Decolonization is not this or that group in charge of the state and capital.

But neither is decolonization for post-colonial creoles the appropriation of Indigeneity. Of course we need to reinstate our relationship and connection to the land and bring land-back for those who are Indigenous. Nor is decolonization \*merely\* our current society but without the state, wage-labor, police, prisons, et cetera, but keeping in place the anti-ecological political-economic extractivist apparatus and ways of living.

Nor is decolonization a vulgar romantic primitivism or localism. As creoles, our blood not only contains the marking of trauma, but also of cosmopolitanism. We have roots from China, America, Ilocos, Cagayan, Cebu, Zamboanga, and Manila. Decolonization in the context of this cosmopolitanism would also mean the reaffirmation of \*interconnection\*, especially as a hybridity liberated from the insular enclosure of borders and the nation-state system.

It is here that we can then sketch what a decolonial anarchism is for post-colonial creoles: not just the land-bank for Indigenous communities, but also liberation from the structures and institutions that colonialism has put in place and all that entails. Specifically for the Philippines and Southeast Asia, decolonial anarchism means restoring the cosmopolitanism of the sea-routes and opening the national enclosures.

originally built for mill workers. While the country relied on immigrants, they were treated like outsiders, unable to access social spaces freely, unable to participate fully in society.

The Colour Bar in Britain worked like an informal apartheid, denying Black and brown people decent jobs, housing, and public spaces. It lasted in one form or another into the 1980s. Beyond that, they struggled just to have a normal community life.

And then there were the Teddy Boys—a racist gang emerging from white working-class youth culture. They harassed Black and Asian immigrants, making it dangerous to access certain areas. People who lived through it say this kind of intimidation carried on into the '80s. Let's face it: that same culture seeped into the punk scene of the 1980s. If you've ever seen This Is England, you know what I mean.

Through self-defense and resistance, Black and brown communities carved out their own safe spaces. They stood up against violence and refused to accept their assigned place in a racist hierarchy. It is not a coincidence that the conflict arose from the refusal of service of a interracial couple. It's obvious that reactionary violence is tied to the insecurities of white working-class social conditions, tools used by those in power to spawn hate against marginalized groups. For black and brown people in the UK, Self-defense and rebellion became liberatory tools—to protect the community, to demand better treatment, and to push back against structural barriers enforced by the state.

So maybe we need to rethink the language we use. Instead of calling it a “race riot,” we should recognize it as a form of uprising, a rebellion, a moment of resistance. “Race riot” plays into the same old narratives that pit both sides against each other. Let's call it what it was: an act of resistance.

*Sources:*

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But outside these settler-colonial zones, what is creole decolonization? Historically speaking, creole decolonization was the transfer of sovereignty from a colonial overlord to a creole state. In the Philippines, this creole decolonization manifested when the United States of America formally gave the Philippines its autonomy and later independence. As anarchists and abolitionists, however, we recognize that the new creole state continued to reproduce many colonial institutions and features: the centralized state apparatus, the police, the prisons, the settler-colonies, the plantation logic.

Before colonization the state and its appendages simply did not exist. Creole decolonization was merely the replacement of a colonizer head with a creole head, all institutions of colonization still in place.

The project of decolonization is woefully incomplete as long as the state apparatus, creole settler-colonialism, and other colonizing patterns continues to exist. The archipelago so-called as the Philippines is not “decolonized” by virtue of having Filipinos in charge of the state—especially if we see colonization as an explicit process of state-building. In this sense, decolonization for the creoles of Metro Manila is the *\*undoing\** of the state, *\*undoing\** of wage-labor, the *\*undoing\** of the police and prisons. Colonization imposed these things upon us, so decolonization means the doing away of these things. This does not mean that decolonization is the return to an Eden before colonization, which is impossible. We can never go back. Rather, decolonization is the recognition that the structures instituted by colonization are not permanent or inevitable features of society and thus struggle for a way out.

The national democrats and other leftists in the country still misunderstand what decolonization is—the undoing of what colonization

wholesale colonizers like White people, but we are not Indigenous either. Although this does not mean that post-colonized creoles do not have the capacity to *\*become\** settlers—we absolutely can when we enter in a colonizing social relation with Indigenous peoples such as being settlers in Indigenous land like with Christian settlers in Mindanao or in the Cordilleras. But the point is that we are also not colonized to the same extent as Indigenous communities. In places such as Metro Manila where there are no Indigenous communities, however, we cannot characterize ourselves as settlers without being in relation to Indigenous communities.

As post-colonized creoles, we cannot posit Indigenous anarchisms. By extension, Bas Umali cannot posit an Indigenous anarchism by virtue of a colonized ancestry. While his concept of *\*pangayaw\** is rooted in Indigeneity, my comrade noted Bas Umali is still divorced from an Indigenous context and takes *\*pangayaw\** from Indigenous cultures without giving back to Indigenous communities. (This, however, does not invalidate the value that Indigenous anarchists such as those in the Indigenous Anarchist Federation (IAF-FAI) find in Umali's work.)

So then, what does it mean to be a post-colonized subject? What does it mean to be creole? What does anarchy look like in a post-colonial/creole context? What are the prospects of decolonization for the post-colonized creole? More than just a critique of Bas Umali's appropriated indigeneity, these questions have serious implications for anarchism in the post-colonized and underdeveloped world, particularly for the so-called Philippines and Southeast Asia.

When in contact with Indigenous communities, creoles become settler colonists. In this sense, the ideas of decolonization as land-back is quite applicable. Decolonization in this regard is the creole respect of Indigenous lands, the cessation of colonial logic on Indigenous peoples and their lands, and recognizing Indigenous stewardship.

## Micelio - Untitled

To the rhythm of the spontaneous glissando of the clarinet in the Gershwinian rhapsody, buildings appear on the horizon of what one soon imagines can be no other thing but Manhattan. An anonymous worker enters the scene alongside the characteristic muted trumpet, and the workday begins. His first action is, naturally, to check his watch: permanence and internalisation of time, reminding him of its scarcity and disturbing the everyday routine from the first minute of the day, slicing time itself and transforming it into something that, like any other commodity, is consumed.

A newspaper flying through the streets reads "jobs scarce," while a white-collar worker in a diner can't pay his bill. A zoo of people moves through the monster-city to a rhythm set by clocks and metallic instruments. A century after its debut, the Rhapsody in Blue has evolved along with its audience. From its first listeners in the now-defunct Aeolian Hall to the first frames of Woody Allen's Manhattan, and into various generations through Disney, in a short film that, while celebrating the history of one of the most iconic cities for bourgeois societies, highlights the working class as the economic and driving force of change, contrasting their role in the production of wealth, both material and cultural, with that of the bourgeoisie.

This constant bombardment of images and slogans is no coincidence. The media through which the bourgeoisie disseminates an ideology that generates a sense of defeat and powerlessness in the face of economic forces have accompanied state apparatuses since the origins of bourgeois societies, disabling worker agency by shaping individual perception into one that feels powerless in the face of the labour market's blows, halting the formation of groups that could confront the mechanisms by which the gap between social classes widens.

In Latin America, processes of late industrialization at the beginning of the 20th century were surrounded by the creation of an institutional framework centred on labour exploitation. In several Latin American countries, large extraction companies were established in regions favourable to mining activities. Management began to instil an industrial capitalist ethic of time and work, and one of their main strategies was to promote the traditional family structure. Under an extractivist and patriarchal logic, neighbourhoods, schools, roads, and recreation spaces were created so that new generations could serve the extractivist capitalism that mostly benefited the U.S. It was in these working-class communities that struggles to balance working conditions within production centres arose, and a marked tendency to defend the right to unionise spread throughout the 20th century, same which has declined with the neoliberal turn and is now in crisis in many countries. History gives us an example from 1974: the Cinsa-Cifunsa strike in Saltillo, capital of Coahuila, on the Mexico-U.S. border. The company employed 10,000 workers, representing 10% of Saltillo's population at the time and, as often happens in Mexico, had a protectionist union aligned with the government under the Confederation of Mexican Workers (Confederación de Trabajadores de México, CTM), which helped simulate any contractual regulation and protect its own interests. Led by 23-year-old Salvador Alcaráz, factory workers rejected the collective labour agreement with the CTM and called for a strike, demanding a 35% wage increase. Initially, they achieved victory, that in the medium term, due to pressures from the government, in collusion with business owners, the church, and the media, got undermined. After the movement was dismantled, Saltillo became a city where it is common practice for foreign automotive companies to invest and abuse the economic and political power granted by the Mexican government and phoney unions.

Filipinos. But what are most Filipinos if we're neither Indigenous nor settler? Clumsy importation of American terminology cannot do for our purposes.

Let's start with the low-hanging fruit: Who in the Philippines are Indigenous and who are settlers? Perhaps more than fourteen million Indigenous peoples live in the Philippines subdivided into more than a hundred languages. Many of these Indigenous peoples live on their ancestral domains, have a connection to their land, and are actively still threatened by continuing colonization that threatens their lives, cultures, and lands. Many of these Indigenous peoples live alongside Filipino (Christian) settlers from elsewhere in the country. These settlers may perhaps be Ilocanos and Tagalogs gentrifying Baguio and its environs, or perhaps Ilonggo or Visayan settlers in Mindanao. These settlers are unambiguously settler-colonial, their settlement as a project of state-building to settle "Christian" Filipinos across unruly and untamed frontiers by the Spanish, American, and later post-colonial state apparatuses. Settler colonialism also played a part in defeating the first communist insurgency: rebels were offered free land to settle in Mindanao where they became the shock troops for genocide and state-building, especially against Moro (Muslim) and Lumad (neither Christian nor Muslim) peoples and tribes.

With those who have clear positions social relations of Indigeneity and settler colonialism, identifying settlers and Indigenous communities are somewhat clear. But what about me and many other Filipinos whose ancestors *\*were\** indigenous but have become Christianized and colonized?

I posit that most of us so-called Filipinos are post-colonized subjects, specifically *\*post-colonized creoles\**. We bear the trauma of colonization in our collective memory and even in our mixed blood. We are not

## **Simoun Magsalin - Notes towards a Decolonial Anarchism for those Neither Indigenous nor Settler**

In the archipelago so-called as the “Philippines,” the anarchism of the older milieu characterize their anarchism in terms of indigeneity and decoloniality. This milieu, represented by their foremost theorist Bas Umali, appropriate indigeneity and combine it with primitivism and deep ecology. As Umali says,

> Decolonial processes do not tell you to adopt indigenous culture, but they do not stop you from doing so either. The most essential in this process is awareness. If someone takes action it should be their decision. (\*Pangayaw and Decolonizing Resistance\*, 2020)

As such, this milieu believes that they are entitled to Indigenous culture by virtue of having descended from indigenous ancestors. This is not without controversy. A comrade of mine criticizes this line of thinking saying that this appropriation of indigeneity is unjust, especially given that Umali’s book profited off Indigenous culture without bringing it back to Indigenous communities. In this I agree, but what was more thought-provoking was how they initially characterized Bas Umali as a settler.

Now wait a minute, Bas Umali, like myself and many others, are Manileño, that is, we live in Metro Manila. The Philippines *\*does\** have settler colonies in many places in Mindanao and the Cordilleras, but Manila *\*itself\** has no Indigenous people on its land. Or perhaps to say it in another way, the indigenous peoples of what would become Manila were systematically colonized and have become alienated from their relationship to the land. Indigeneity is first and foremost a social relationship to land and colonization. Indigenous peoples continue to exist in the Philippines, and they exist in relation to colonization by

From a classical Marxism perspective, unions are seen as having political potential capable of undoing the progress made by employers and providing a platform that, in seeking the association of the working class, offers means to fight for the suppression of competition in the market, driven by commodified labour sold to corporations. After all, wage labour rests on the competition workers have among themselves within the market, and the pattern of industrial progress paradoxically creates conditions for workers to unite in groups that advocate for shared goals. The optimism with which unionism has been viewed is, however, nuanced within the same Marxist tradition: the nature of wage labour generates struggles that seek to improve the sale of their commodity (their labour power) without having revolutionary power to combat capital. The spontaneity that union movements may or may not claim is subordinated to bourgeois ideology and is therefore criticised for deepening workers’ ideological enslavement by the bourgeoisie.

It is important to nuance the different theoretical readings of the importance of union movements as engines of radical change with the field experience in multiple locations. There is no simpler way to explain the formation and importance of unions than by understanding the need workers have to organise and defend their rights, to push for their own interests, which are opposed to those of factory managers. No bureaucracy, reformism, or state coercion has removed the right to unionise. The fact that unions nest in production points gives them a fundamental tool in their battles against capitalism. While not all demands can be won within the jurisdiction erected by bourgeois society, even the most bureaucratic union can create cracks that shake employers, generating circumstances that clash with the imperatives of a capitalist state. In unionism lies a communal union in spirit, unable to be fully integrated into the society of which it is a part.

Setting aside any theoretical debate about the effectiveness of unionism as a revolutionary force, the reality is that class domination in modern societies can be (and is) challenged by collective experiences in the struggle to defend our rights. In this context, the axis of action in the workplace is revealed as a vehicle through which collective power can not only change the material conditions of those who offer their labour power but also revive the collective imagination around better possible worlds, introduce new myths that allow us to move toward them from multiple fronts, and defeat current narratives of progress that plunge people into a defeatist nihilism, obscuring the structural causes of social, economic, and environmental collapse.

In Colombia, for example, working women organised to expose the false "labour peace" and perpetuation of gender roles. In February 1920, four hundred women and one hundred men from Colombia's largest textile factory, the Medellín Textile Company (Compañía de Tejidos de Medellín), went on strike. After twenty-four days of striking, the demonstrators won recognition of their demands: a 40% wage increase, the reduction of the workday to nine hours and fifty minutes, the regulation of the fine system, and better hygiene conditions. They also succeeded in firing supervisors accused of rape and administrators hostile to the workers. In Mexico, during the 70s, a group of Maoist workers within the Volkswagen (VW) factory in Puebla managed to break away from a corrupt industrial union tied to the CTM. They formed an independent, democratic union, with regular elections and collective bargaining that improved their working conditions.

In September 2024, this very same union achieved a 10.59% wage increase. In the same month, VW announced the closure of its factories in German territory due to internal costs, putting more than 300,000 workers' jobs at risk and shifting labour costs to cheaper markets, showing the neocolonial nature of modern industry.

Among unionist movements, there are various currents that today seek to rebuild the class consciousness that neoliberalism has eroded. For different collectives, the urgency of reclaiming the historical causes of the workers' struggle has become clear: reduction of working hours, dignified working conditions, collectivization of labour, redistribution of profits, etc. In the search for new horizons of struggle, it is necessary to rescue the historical vehicles of resistance while undermining the mechanisms that have allowed the bourgeois state to reinforce a production system that not only exploits workers but also spreads a subjectivity that seeks to render us inoperative in the face of systemic injustices.

Not all struggles against labour precarization on the periphery arise from coordinated union movements: we know that the state and employers have co-opted many unions, that the union figure, in its current form, is a conduit for workers' demands but also a brake on their resistance. We also know that thousands of workers fight from their daily routine, individually or collectively, and that on the margins of unionism, they explore, weave, and form various strategies to build movements that allow them to reclaim their workplaces. Increasingly, cross-border solidarity networks are emerging as vital forms of resistance and support for clandestine struggles and direct action. We call on every worker to not let go, to not lose the dream of creating independent unions that break free from corporate powers.

The spirit of communal union knows no borders, and through solidarity we will be able to resist the storms to come, and find platforms to reimagine ourselves.

*Micelio are a small collective collaborating with independent industrial unions in northern Mexico. You can follow them on twitter @MicelioRojo & on Instagram @micelio\_rojo*