

A SELF-PRESENTATION

The library as a facility

The library facility is an integral part of the squat. We recognize the squat's facilities not as static, lifeless spaces that offer services, but as dynamic fields of encounter, exchange, and creation. The library provides a beautiful home for many books, brochures, magazines, comics, newspapers, encyclopedias, children's and foreign language books, CDs, and DVDs. These resources help us understand our relationship with ourselves,¹ society, and nature. They tell us stories, enrich our imagination, and offer critical tools that help us distinguish between the traits we wish to keep and those we seek to discard or overcome. As such, the squat's books serve as movement tools and fields of political exchange. We want to read and analyze them together, fostering relationships of camaraderie! Within this framework, the library becomes a space for expression and exposure. Book lending, reading sessions, the printed publications distribution stall, the archive, and events all serve as opportunities to develop relationships with other groups, assemblies, collectives, individuals, and initiatives that wish to engage.

Relationships

The library's community is vital to its existence. We strive to build relationships beyond the assembly, characterized by continuity over time and based on political attributes such as our common oppressions, rejections, interests and needs, as well as solidarity with those who face repression, assimilation, and do not fit into the molds of the present world. Within the squat, we cultivate comradely relationships that actively or passively challenge the socially imposed relationships and roles. Against the home to work and work to home routine, the lifestyle and the petty-bourgeois obligations, the squat, as a building, provides a space for the physical gathering of bodies, within which the relationships that thrive create a distinct social time. Here, we cultivate the conditions and house our visions, carrying out our lives from a perspective competitive to capitalism. As part of the broader anti-authoritarian, self-organized and anarchist squat movement, the discourse and action radiating from the squat builds a network of relationships that acts as a fortification against the power and domination of our lives by the state, capital, patriarchy, the nation, and all forms of exploitation or oppression.

We aim to create a space where all members feel free and safe to express themselves. We seek to promote open, continuous communication that fosters a climate of trust and mutual understanding. Our goal is for each individual to have the space to share their emotions and disagreements, with awareness and respect for the unique status and identity that each person holds. We seek closeness and truly get to know one another.

We recognize that within a group, roles such as organizer, secretary or peacemaker often emerge, which can lead to excessive fatigue or frustration. For this reason, we aim for an organizational

¹ The pronouns in greek are gender neutral as a political choice

model that filters and manages informal hierarchies, favoritism, cliques, or gendered and power dynamics. The relationships that connect us are very important and we want to take care of them.

Why library?

The library gains significance simply through the presence of an organized collection of printed publications within a space. Its unique composition and curation characterizes our collective coexistence and vice versa. People wander through the library and discovering it as if it were a game. They can visit various eras and places, breaking free from the daily time patterns of work hours and productivity. In this way, people can meet again with themselves and connect with each other. The library and the interaction with its books can be both an internal and a collective, social experience. Coexisting with books is potentially a political act, as it creates the conditions for counter-information,² research, politicization, political fermentation and liberation.

Lending & distribution

The lending library and distribution stall operate at every event that takes place in the squat. We aim to keep their content updated (you can bring something too). The “Lending Book”, located in the library space (look for it as well) helps us keep track of which books are available and which are not, in case someone is looking for one. The lending process aims to develop an organic relationship between the library community, the books, and the space itself. The books in the lending library are movement-related material and feel no need to belong to anyone.

At our distribution stall we provide a variety of printed publications by free economic contribution. Free contribution is not some kind of cure-all, but the tool that we think challenges the social relations that structure and are structured around capitalist production and commodity exchange. Free contribution differs from a no cost "opportunity". Apart from removing the class barriers that exchange raises, it challenges each time our established relationship with the products of labour and their exchange. By contributing to the direction of self-organised writing, printing and publishing groups, the distribution of printed publications with free economic contribution promotes a comprehensive critique of capitalism both at the level of the market and that of production and the salary relationship. Eventually, how much does a book cost? The money collected from the stall's fund is returned to the library community and the squat in the form of new publications for distribution, maintenance of the library and to any expenses for events or other political purposes.

We aim in enriching and renewing the lending library's books and distribution stall's publications in a way that strengthens and ensures the longevity of self-organised publishing/authoring/printing groups, collectives and initiatives. Thus, if the material of such a group or initiative is given at a price, we pay for it in advance. Beyond that, if the collective or initiative in question wishes to do so, there is the possibility of a jar for its financial support through free economic contribution.

² Anti-establishment information and knowledge.

Finally, we seek to ensure that the material of the library and distribution stall is not determined exclusively by us but is in constant dialogue with any project, individual or collective that wants to exhibit its material in the squat. By regularly renewing it we try to maintain a direct relationship with these projects. At the same time, we want to give space to political conflict and fermentation. Thus, we promote material that is contradictory or even with which we disagree. The library hosts a wide range of publications trying to highlight issues of theory, history, movements and struggles, literature, poetry, art, etc. It is our will the library's material not to be limited only by the greek-language and experience (feel free to bring multi language publications).

Why are we interested in other media of expression (CDs, DVDs, Comics, magazines)?

Basically, for inclusion reasons. Books are a solution for some people, but for others they are not an option. We seek to make a critique of our privileges by promoting new forms of expression and reading. In terms of academia, we recognize that the knowledge produced by the academy presents reality in a characteristic and purposeful way. Nevertheless, we resort to them, as they cover in range and depth a variety of topics of our interest. In the domination of our lives by the state, the capital and patriarchy, the academy is also involved. Furthermore, we reflect on the privileges that arise from the dominance of ableism. Some people may be facilitated by the electronic or audio medium, as it is more in tune with their lives and daily routines. At the same time, we choose to provide materials for children so that our community is accessible to all ages. In the same vein we desire an electronic archive, which will create a variety in the way we approach texts, posters, pamphlets, etc.

Archive

Our archive hosts the imprint of the social movement experiences expressed through collective and individual discourse. The archive narrates the stories of the groups and individuals, who have felt or feel the need of keeping a part of themselves here. Of the beginning, the continuity and the social antagonism in which the squat is involved, of the neighborhood of Chalandri, of the Athenian northern suburbs and of downtown. The archive narrates the struggles and resistances of different social contexts and circumstances; the opposition to prisons, local struggles, solidarity with migrants, gender and queer struggles, the political (diss)continuity in times of quarantine. The social relations we create take space and are practically reflected within society, writing their own history, competing the establishment's narrative. By archiving we can learn about and narrate our different origins and destinations, our collective and personal experiences. Wandering through a constellation of different modes of expression such as posters, pamphlets, texts, stickers and banners gives us the opportunity to understand our historical path, to look back on past mistakes and successes, to exercise self-criticism and to overcome ourselves. The squat's archive preserves, maintains and organizes our material aiming at our collective empowerment. It thus resists the repression that seeks the historical discontinuity and necrosis of our relations.

Assembly procedure

The heart of the library beats at its assembly! We seek to politicise personal experience. We want our procedures, decisions and resolutions to suit us all, without majorities and minorities. Assignment is a ghost hovering over the squat...we want to make it our friend, understand it and overcome it. We don't want our "inclinations" to create conditions of exclusion. In doing so, we seek to deconstruct hierarchies that stem from the notion that there are "excellencies" and "experts" who manage certain parts of our lives. We promote horizontality and self-organisation. Horizontalism is implemented through our efforts to recognize the privileges and hierarchies that exist, and self-organization is implemented through our efforts to share responsibility among all members of the assembly to organize the procedure, to create and carry out our decisions. Through our collective processes we promote self-management moving against tactics and "solutions" generously provided by the state, capital, patriarchy and any source of exploitation or oppression. We build relationships based on our shared experiences, our common oppressions, our need for collectivisation, our political needs and agreements.

To whom do we address?

Through our address, we want to form a community. The facility and the events of the library are addressed to the broader neighbourhood of the squat, the community of the anarchist, self-organized, autonomous political scene and to related social movement's facilities. Participation in the library group requires quite a lot of availability, considering that it involves a weekly assembly, participation in reading sessions, taking care of the distribution stall, the lending library and the archive. In any case, however, there is the possibility of some flexibility and the creation of more complex dynamics beyond zero and one hundred, as long as there is interest and proper updates, willingness and understanding of the difficulties and different speeds.

Don't hesitate to approach us. We would be very happy if we came in touch either directly during an event or indirectly, by e-mail at:

praplibrary@espiv.net

self-organised library group of prapopoulos squat

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