



## **BALKAN ANARCHIST BOOKFAIR 2025, THESSALONIKI 15-18 MAY OPEN CALL FOR PARTICIPATION**

On the 7th of July 2024, during the general assembly of the participants of the Balkan Anarchist Bookfair in Pristina, there was a proposal that the next BAB take place in Thessaloniki. The collectives and individuals from Thessaloniki who were present asked for ten days to think about it and respond. After a meeting of the Thessaloniki collectives that have worked together within the BAB framework and the Balkan Solidarity network, the answer was yes: **The 17th Balkan Anarchist Bookfair will take place in Thessaloniki, from Thursday 15 to Sunday 18 May 2025.** It was also decided that the organizing assembly would be formed after a call to all collectives of Thessaloniki, but also to collectives from other cities (Athens, Ioannina) that have also worked together within the BAB and the Balkan Solidarity network.

The Balkan Anarchist Bookfair has never just been about books. We have always understood it as one more tool that strengthens our collectives, organizations, relations and networks on a local, a regional and an international level, as a space where we exchange our ideas and plans and also bring together our practices, organizing models and experiences of struggle, our participation in social movements. In September 2024, in a joint assembly held in Thessaloniki with all the collectives of the city that responded to the invitation to participate in the organizational assembly, we set the goal of bringing together the largest possible number of comrades from all over the Balkans in order to **discuss, in an organized way, our agreements and disagreements** and to **make concrete proposals for common struggles and actions.** We agreed to have as an initial agenda for BAB2025 the common topics discussed at the Ljubljana and Prishtina bookfairs (2023 and 2024) and started to set up the different working groups.

We also agreed that our first joint action would be the participation of Thessaloniki in the days of anti-war action against militarism and nationalism that were decided at the BAB assembly in Pristina for the first ten days of October 2024. In this context, an open event was held in a square in a working-class neighbourhood in Thessaloniki with the participation of an anarchist army objector from Tel-Aviv and a demonstration in the city centre, with the central motto "Fight war not wars".

### **Topics of BAB 2025**

The initial agenda of BAB 2025 agreed in September 2024 includes the following broader topics, for which respective working groups have been set up in order to prepare for organised discussions:

- Capital, State, war and anarchist responses,
- Gender oppression, resistance to patriarchy and anarchoqueer feminism,
- Borders, migration, resistance to Fortress Europe,
- Climate Crisis, Capitalism and Struggles for Land and Freedom,
- Anarchist prisoners and solidarity,
- Anarchist squats and autonomous social centres,
- Anarchist media, publishing infrastructures, movement archives.



Following a proposal by collectives from Thessaloniki and Athens, a further topic was also added:

- Libertarian education/self-education.

The list is open to more proposals. Also, in addition to the common topics, there will be presentations, workshops, concerts, exhibitions, screenings, sports meetings/exercises and an anti-capitalist, anti-state, internationalist anti-war march. You can send your proposals at: [bab2025@riseup.net](mailto:bab2025@riseup.net)

## **Coordination groups and working groups**

As far as topics are concerned, we felt that it would not be productive to attempt to come up with common and homogenized texts by the respective sub-groups under the organizing assembly, that would round up positions in a way that would not allow different approaches to be expressed, especially on issues where we know there are disagreements.

**We strongly believe that common points of analysis and action can best be found when points of disagreement are respectfully and clearly reflected upon and discussed.** Thus, we propose the creation of coordination groups for the different topics which will ensure:

1. that the organized events will present all the different political approaches in a fair, clear and equal way and with the broadest possible participation of speakers from all Balkan geographies,
2. that there will be sufficient time for discussion,
3. that the main positions of the presenters will already be posted, in English translation, on the BAB2025 website well in advance of the Thessaloniki Balkan Anarchist Bookfair.

In addition to these coordination groups, several working groups have been set up in order to coordinate and anticipate issues of hospitality, catering, accessibility, children's activities, website management, translation, graphic/printing, cultural activities, info-point, etc. Notably, **the organising assembly wishes to assist in cases where visas are required for the participants to get to Greece**, as well as to contribute financially to the travel expenses of participants who cannot pay.

For more information, please contact [bab2025@riseup.net](mailto:bab2025@riseup.net)

Detailed invitations of the political topic coordination groups and the working groups' announcements will be gradually sent to the Balkan Solidarity list, and will also be posted on the website

**<https://bab2025.espivblogs.net/>**

In this initial call for BAB2025 we include the general framework for discussion proposed by the respective coordination group for each political topic:

### **Capital, state, war and anarchist responses**

We are watching war becoming normalized, yet we have failed to build an internationalist, anti-capitalist, anti-war movement. The absence of a coherent and internationally oriented intervention of the anarchist/anti-authoritarian movement against this dystopian present and future may point to the fact that we have entered a new era, and the analytical tools of the past cannot interpret it: It is neither the bipolar world of the Cold War, nor the unipolar world dominated by the West that succeeded it, but a new world system under formation, building power alliances and destroying lives, societies and entire regions in a global environment of crises and 'crises'.

### **Gender oppression, resistance to patriarchy and anarchoqueer feminism**

We understand patriarchy as an integral part of the State and Capital that nevertheless retains its relative autonomy as a system of power in our lives. In recent years, the gender issue has established its visibility in the public sphere, as documented incidents of gender violence – from femicides to attacks and murders of queer people – have been rapidly and blatantly increasing, while at the same time our reproductive rights are constantly being targeted by state policies and religious rhetoric. The rise of nationalism brings about



more institutional conservatism: our bodies are reduced either to objects of violence or to reproductive machines to feed the voracious appetites of militarism and war. In such a condition, the need to collectivize our struggles and our projects on a transnational level transcends the specificities of each locality and calls us to merge our perspectives and synthesize our actions.

### **Borders, migration, resistance to Fortress Europe**

For some time now we have seen that policies against immigration have been taking up more and more space in the public debate. Anti-immigration rhetoric has the power not only to topple governments, but also to shape the dominant perception of human life and determine its value. As states engage in fierce competition and are driven into new wars, the traditional racism of Fortress Europe (i.e., the policies of 'integrating' migrants as an undervalued workforce) is being transformed into policies of outright dehumanisation and extermination. At a time when larger and larger parts of populations are being deemed expendable, we as a movement have to analyze and speak out against these policies, to develop all the possibilities that exist for communities of struggle of locals and migrants together.

### **"Climate crisis", capitalism and struggles for Land and Freedom**

The climate crisis, mainly due to human activity, is now one of the most important problems of our time. Over the last few years there has been an unprecedented plunder of natural resources. In various geographies across the Balkans, large-scale disasters are occurring more and more frequently, with growing intensity. Mountains are being encroached upon, forests are being cleared, rivers are being polluted and disastrous projects are being granted environmental permits overnight, in the name of the green progress. Against a model of continuous development and profiteering that does not respect ecosystems and life as a whole, it is more than urgent to set our own terms and our own proposals for a life worth living by all and for all in terms that are equitable and truly ecological.

### **Anarchist prisoners and solidarity**

We owe utmost solidarity with those who are imprisoned for their political activity and/or identity. This group discusses and coordinates practices of support for political prisoners in the Balkans and addresses organisational deficiencies.

### **Anarchist squats and autonomous social centres**

In the context of the capitalist crisis and intense repression, we watch our cities submitting to the business of tourism and increasingly accommodating activities mediated by commodities and profit. This is a form of enclosure of public space, that displaces people from the cities. Squats are being evacuated and it is becoming increasingly difficult to secure our material conditions of existence for social centres. Yet the existence of social centres is vital for the sustainability of relationships of solidarity between people trying to breathe in a suffocating world. We consider it necessary for such projects to meet and exchange experiences and thoughts, as well as to create networks on the basis of mutual support.

### **Anarchist media, printing and publishing infrastructures, social movement archives**

In the current context of a multifaceted capitalist crisis and intense repression, the existence and strengthening of movement (anarchist, anti-authoritarian, self-organized) infrastructures is extremely important. More specifically, the aim of BAB2025 is to highlight and support publishing projects, printing presses, counter-information media, social movement archives, self-organized radio stations, as well as digital infrastructures and hacklabs from Balkan geographies.

### **Libertarian education/self-education**

In a capitalist, patriarchal, racist society, Roma, refugee and immigrant children are being marginalized and excluded from the public education system. We recognise the autonomy of children and childhood and try to coexist and communicate with them through equal relationships, building and reproducing the collective culture we want to live by. We consider it essential to exchange experiences on self-organisation and the creation of structures related to education, be they projects for children or adult self-education collectives.

## **BAB2025 is not just four days in May 2025, it is an ongoing process!**

At the moment, the State is abolishing the social contract and is fully withdrawing from its supposed obligations to society, limiting itself to the role of policeman, oppressor and prison guard, and overtly serving the interests of the market. Parliamentarism, allegedly a way of exerting pressure in order to obtain new social benefits or to defend old social and class rights, is clearly on its way out, since the powers that be nowadays are now counting on people's fear for their reproduction, rather than on election promises of a better future. The world system of exploitation seems willing to engage in an endless series of wars, seeking a new equilibrium through destruction and more capitalist profiteering. In the meanwhile, there are obvious signs of a real crisis, the environmental crisis, which overshadows all other successive 'crises' of recent years.

Self-organization is no longer a slogan. It is a social necessity. The months leading up to the Thessaloniki Balkan Anarchist Bookfair, are an open bet, a process of fermentation for our common ideas and the joint creation of a meeting place for the organization of solidarity, resistance and struggle. A place where disagreement will be met with comradely attention, respect and mutual understanding, where we will share and recompose, where the richness, beauty and vitality of anarchist ideas and practices will dissolve indignity, intolerance and inhumanity: A thousand black roses against resignation and social cannibalism..

An old motto goes: "Let us fight for the impossible before we are faced with the unthinkable". Well, the unthinkable is already here, utopia no longer seems impossible. It is the only realistic option.

The detailed invitations of the coordination groups, as well as information on the general assemblies, procedures and working groups will be made public in the next few weeks. We ask you to translate this call into your own languages, publish it on your media platforms and publicize it through your communication channels and networks.

BAB2025 Organizing Assembly, December 2024

