



NO SQUATTER IN PRISON !

**ON THE UPCOMING APPEAL OF MATROZOU 45
DECEMBER 2, 2025**

Koukaki Squats Community (Matrozou 45, Panaitoliou 21, Arvali 3) was a housing and political project that, over nearly three years of existence (2017–2020), supported the material and political needs of many people. As part of the broader squatting movement, we placed anti-authoritarian struggle at the center of everyday life. We built relationships with our neighbors while also connecting with other squats, as our involvement in local initiatives went hand-in-hand with broader struggles—such as actions to defend Filopappou Hill from enclosure and privatization, feminist interventions, resistance against migrant detention centers, solidarity with political prisoners, creating an open assembly against the touristification of the neighborhood, and organizing to defend squatted spaces. The community's public character was reinforced by structures of social solidarity —like a lending library, public shower and laundry, and a free clothes' bazaar— focusing on meeting basic needs without exchange or profit. In the same spirit, we met our food needs with surplus goods from local markets and bakeries in Koukaki, where we distributed “*Apatris*” anarchist newspaper and our texts, while also inviting people into the squats for collective kitchen and events.

The choice of squatting allowed us to drastically reduce living expenses, which meant spending minimal time in waged slavery. This wasn't just about having more time to rest—it was primarily about being able to participate more actively and consistently in social struggles. **Today, squatting as a housing solution is more necessary than ever.** In a time when rents are skyrocketing while wages are shrinking, when empty homes and Air-bnb have made it impossible to find a house, when foreclosures of primary residences have become a routine, the occupation of abandoned buildings is not only a necessity—it's a political demand.

In Koukaki, the explosion of Airbnb rentals and tourism has turned the neighborhood into a giant hotel. Many residents have faced massive rent hikes, while most of them have been evicted so their homes can serve the temporary needs of tourists. Numerous small, resident-serving businesses have shut down, replaced by upscale restaurants and cafés that now occupy every inch of public space. Especially over the past two years, there's been an aggressive wave of luxury apartment construction that has drastically altered the character of the area. This shift in the neighborhood's social fabric deeply impacts community relationships, which weaken as permanent residents are replaced by a constant influx of tourists. These violent

transformations, driven by gentrification, are happening all over Greece—from islands and mountain villages to the urban centers. They're the direct result of state policy, designed to serve the interests of international corporations, developers, and owners. Back then, our attempt to resist led to the creation of the *Assembly of Residents of Koukaki and Surrounding Areas Against Airbnb*.

A similar situation is unfolding today in the neighborhood of Exarchia, where the 24/7 militarized police presence, the construction of a metro station on the main square, and ongoing attempts to eliminate political procedures in the Polytechnic University are all part of a state-led campaign to erase the neighborhood's political and historical identity. In response, locals, collectives, and affinity groups are doing everything they can to keep the spirit of resistance alive by any means necessary.

Beyond being a necessity, squatting is also a political stance.

Squats are homes that shelter our struggles and our relationships. There, everyday life is built on the principles of collectivization, self-organization, inclusion and solidarity. Koukaki Squats Community was standing for the unification of life and struggle: our opposition to all forms of authority (gendered, age-based, racial) began within our own homes, highlighting both our collective strengths and shortcomings. By promoting a collective and equal way of life, and a form of social organization far from the dominant ideology of individualism and property, the occupation of an empty building —along with the expropriation of essential goods such as electricity and water— puts at the forefront the idea that our needs and desires should not be commodified.

The squatting movement stands in direct conflict with the irrationality of the capitalist system.

That's why the repression of occupied spaces around the world—whether through slander or violent eviction— is a necessary condition for the uninterrupted flow of capital. The Koukaki Community was no exception to state repression and fascist attacks. More specifically, after the eviction of Matrozou 45 in March 2018 under the SYRIZA government, there were three arson attacks by fascists on Panaitoliou 21. These attacks only stopped when one of the attackers — member of the neo-Nazi organization Combat 18 (C18)— was caught. In December 2019, shortly after Minister Chrysochoidis' infamous "eviction ultimatum", the state, aiming to erase us from the neighborhood, evicted all three of our homes. During this operation, they arrested the squatters from Panaitoliou 21 and Arvali 3, as well as a family that lived in the neighboring house to Matrozou, simply because the police failed to locate the squatters inside. However, we were no longer unprepared. Since the first eviction in 2018, we had been seeking ways to defend ourselves more effectively against future repression. When power shifted hands and a government that openly targeted the anarchist movement came to power, **repression against self-organized structures escalated, aiming to dismantle anarchist movement. The evictions of our community were part of this broader campaign.**

These evictions involved a wide range of repressive tactics: beatings, rubber bullets, and flashbang grenades, chemical weapons, sexual harassment, tortures and humiliation. **But these attacks were met by the collective spirit of resistance and our relationships with one another, leading to the reoccupation of Matrozou and Panaitoliou, thanks to the solidarity of dozens of comrades, who stood both inside and outside our homes.** Despite police attacks on the solidarity gatherings, comrades returned to the occupied spaces, joining their voices with the squatters. While the cops attempted to invade our homes, around 200 people were marching in the neighborhood, another 200 were gathered near Matrozou, dozens approached Panaitoliou, and about 50 neighbors were shouting slogans in support of the resisting squatters, who were emptying the house over the heads of EKAM (Special Anti-Terrorist Unit).

Even though the police acted swiftly, their plan to evict all squats was halted for about six months, thanks to the diverse and widespread resistance of squats across Greece. From posters and stickers to burned-out tourist vans, demonstrations, interventions and court solidarity gatherings, **the movement proved that it can defend its structures and is not willing to back down** (e.g. the militant defense of Ntougrou squat [Larissa], Prosfygika squat[Athens], and the rebuilding of Libertatia squat [Thessaloniki]).

Five years after the evictions

Five years after the evictions, our homes remain cemented, shut and useless to society. The walls of Matrozou are rotting, while the buildings of Panaitoliou and Arvali are being sold to become luxury apartments near Philopappou Hill. **But beyond the evictions, the judiciary has come to complete the puzzle of physical and psychological violence, in the means of guilty verdicts.** Perceiving courtrooms as yet another battleground, we defended our actions and our relationships in every trial we faced. From acquittals for the eviction of Arvali and the reoccupation of Panaitoliou, to the convictions so far —12 months at first instance for the first Panaitoliou eviction (2019), 4–18 months finally upheld for the first Matrozou eviction (2018), and 77 months at first instance for the third Matrozou eviction (2020)— we now stand in front of this last incarceration. More specifically, on October 29, 2024, the first-instance trial for the reoccupation of Matrozou 45 (2020) concluded -while the trial for the comrade who was a minor at the time is still pending.

The comrades were sentenced to 6.5 years in prison, with the sentence to be actually served, not suspended, though it has suspensive effect until the appeal. The charges were as following: a)aggravated bodily harm, b)damage to property (for police equipment and a cop's watch). It was a trial where state interference was obvious from the start —from the unsuccessful attempt by the police to appear as civil plaintiffs with lawyers -including ND parliamentary candidates-, to the disgraceful TV reports that depoliticized our actions and the newspaper articles leaking our personal data. A hostile climate was deliberately created against squats and those who defend them. The state's media mouthpieces had already convicted us from the beginning,

assisted by police unionists, ministers, and the prime minister himself, whose primary goal was to imprison us on felony charges. State intervention continued inside the courtroom as well: the bench's refusal to grant mitigating circumstances and the reappearance of the previously excluded civil plaintiffs in the room revealed a pre-decided ruling of harsh punishment.

A sentence of 77 months, delivered after nearly five years, aimed to restore the lost prestige of the police state.

A sentence not based on evidence, but solely on the contradictory testimonies of police officers, once again reinforcing the notion that "whatever the police say is considered as fact." But beyond the obvious vindictiveness of this decision, we see an effort to terrorize the wider squatting movement. Recent reoccupations in Chania, Athens, Heraklion, Thessaloniki, Patras, alongside new squats (Exostrefis[Exarchia], Occupied Rectorate[Chania], Rasprava[Exarchia]), alarmed the state, which attempted to halt this momentum. Yet this effort failed. Zizania[Athens], the Ano Kato Patission social space[Athens], Evangelismos[Heraklion], Rosa Nera[Chania], Parartima[Patras], Utopia A.D.[Komotini]—have all been reoccupied once again.

Imprisonment hanging over our heads like the sword of Damocles, is a demonstration of power by the state, which seeks to impose fear on anyone who acts outside the suffocating frameworks of legality. Playing with the possibility of imprisonment, the state attempts to socially neutralize segments of society that resist and act through illegal means. This outcome of the first-instance trial, with its harsh punishment, adds to the judicial repression of many comrades, to the imprisonments based on weak charges, to the abductions, home invasions and preventive detentions. We believe that such an outcome will shape the future, paving the road to prison for squatters who fiercely defend their struggle spaces and their existence on the streets. Such a possibility fully aligns with the new Penal Code(2024), which suggests imprisonment even for misdemeanor charges that until now were given with suspension. The tightening of the Penal Code has a punitive and vengeful character, further exacerbating class and social inequalities. It's yet

another weapon in the state's arsenal, expanding the imprisoned population, lengthening sentences, and worsening detention conditions.

The fact that it has not yet been fully applied in cases related to anarchists' trials proves that the state, even if it dreams of prisons for those who resist, at the same time takes the anarchist movement into consideration, weighing social reactions. And the reactions are increasingly growing: against foreclosures of primary residences, targeting of doctors and teachers, burying case files (e.g. Tempi case), increasing incidents of police violence, anti-labor laws, covering up state murders, child rapes, political and economic scandals, and the relentless exploitation of nature. Against "Law and Order" doctrine of neoliberal management, collective action and defense of those under attack must be our primary goals.

The appeal for Matrozou 45 will take place on December 2, 2025 - almost a year after the first-instance trial. Solidarity, by any means, can serve as a barrier to state vindictiveness, proving that we do not leave any comrade alone.

10-100-1000 (RE)OCCUPATIONS

VIOLENCE AGAINST THE VIOLENCE OF POWER

SOLIDARITY WITH THOSE DEFENDING THEIR STRUGGLES

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EVERYONE TO THE APPEAL COURT ON DECEMBER 2, 2025

**ALWAYS IN OUR HEARTS AND STRUGGLES, OUR COMRADE
LARY (THANASIS) ARMAOS**

* Campaign for Financial Support for Our Legal Costs:
<https://www.firefund.net/koukaki>