# *Anti-Fascism and Prefigurative Ethics*

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**Abstract**

There is a tension between rival anti-fascist praxes: social democratic, orthodox Marxist and indeed some anarchist movements privilege consequentialist approaches because the goal of defeating fascism is viewed as the supreme value, whilst most anarchists and heterodox Marxist approaches have tended to support prefigurative methods. This paper clarifies the concept of prefiguration to illustrate the differences and conflicts between these anti-fascist approaches and the possibilities of a convergence. In doing so it identifies and replies to some of the main criticisms of prefigurative anti-fascism.

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## Introduction

The main theme of this paper is the tension within militant anti-fascism between, on one side, achieving a predetermined outcome (consequentialism) as effectively as possible and, on the other, supporting a prefigurative approach to politics which is usually considered to be incompatible with such instrumentalism (regarding an activity or person as valuable only in so far as it brings about a stated purpose). In analysing this opposition between goal driven politics and prefigurative (anti-)politics, a number of subsidiary issues are explored: first (1), this paper defends ethical approaches to the evaluation of (anti-)political tactics, and in doing so (2) develops a coherent moral framework for making evaluative assessments, based on prefigurative ethics. Then, (3) after identifying a cogent account of fascism, it (4) demarcates different types of anti-fascism, highlighting key differences based on respective commitments to prefiguration or consequentialism. By using an ethical mode of evaluation (5) the paper identifies weaknesses in both the main forms of consequentialist anti-fascism and limited (internal) forms of radical prefigurative anti-fascism; however, an area of convergence is also identified which provides positive examples of goods-rich anti-fascist practice. By "goods" we mean those *relationships* and *characteristics* that have an intrinsic value (such as the virtues of compassion, integrity, wisdom and bravery) as well as resources that assist individual and social flourishing, but are not inherently desirable.

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The final section (6) defends this consistent account of prefigurative anti-fascism against criticisms that it: (i) is incapable of adequately prioritising between competing goals and thus leaves prefigurative activists in a state of stasis, (ii) is capable of supporting fascist actions as they can prefigure desirable social relations and values, (iii) becomes inconsistent with covert "squad" activities – the modes of organisation usually associated with radical anti-fascism, (iv) substitutes elite agents for broader (more traditional) accounts of radical subjects, (v) inconsistently violates rights and (vi) is contradictory in supporting violence. Instead this paper argues that fascism is inconsistent with the virtues, that the squad tactics can be consistent with the virtues and are non-paternalistic nor substitutionalist – and that radical anti-fascism is compatible with a proportionate violation of rights of organised fascisms and in its selective use of violence.

This paper was written in Dumfries, the largest town in Southwest Scotland. Despite a brief period of high fascist activism in the region in the 1930s (Livingston 2013), its location close to the sectarian rivalries in the Six Counties, and significant far-right support just south of the border in Cumbria,[2] organised fascism is not, currently, a significant force.[3] However, in the run up to the 2010 local elections, British National Party (BNP) activists began leafleting in Dumfries and surrounding towns. This followed the BNP's electoral success in England, winning representation in the European Parliamentary elections in 2009 (though one of its members defected to the very similar British Democratic Party (BDP) and representation on the Greater London Assembly. In 2013, the Scottish Defence League (SDL), a smaller and feebler version of the ultra-nationalist English Defence League (EDL), organised an anti-Muslim rally against a proposed extension of use for Dumfries's only mosque (Dalziel 2013). Both these cases of far-right mobilisation ignited debate and initiated counter-action from the small, loose, local network of militants.

In Dumfries, like the rest of the UK, active anti-fascists come largely (but not exclusively), from a wide spectrum of the left, with the more militant sections (those willing to engage in direct confrontation) identifying with variants of Trotskyism, autonomist Marxism and social anarchism. The main anti-fascist bodies tend to reflect these positions. Social democrats tend to support the National Assembly Against Racism (NAAR) and previously the Anti-Racist Alliance (ARA), *Searchlight*[4] and Hope Not Hate. Trotskyists, such as supporters of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) operate through the Anti-Nazi League (ANL) (Renton 2006); and social anarchists, plus a section of dissident Marxists, the Anti-Fascist Network (AFN) (Anti-Fascist Network 2014), its precursor Antifa and formerly the Anti-Fascist Action (AFA) (Anti-Fascist Action 2014; Copsey 2011a, 125). The NAAR and the ANL are involved in United Against Fascism (UAF), a "broad-based national campaign… [that includes] various faith groups, such as the Muslim Council of Britain, the TUC and numerous MPs/MEPs… its original

sponsors included Conservative MPs Michael Howard [and] David Cameron" (Copsey 2011a, 133). Michael Howard and David Cameron as Conservative Party leaders employed electoral strategist Lynton Crosby who successfully deployed anti-immigrant rhetoric for the Australian Liberal Party and now employs similar imagery in the UK context (Muir 2012).

The recent fascist episodes in Dumfries prompted two different forms of reaction from anti-fascists. The first, consequentialist approach, was to drop every other political activity, included a long-planned set of cultural events, in order to concentrate on direct opposition to the "Nazi threat." Countering fascist threats, no matter how minor, was the supreme goal. Within this position there were disagreements on whether constitutional action or direct confrontation was most effective, though usually one was seen as supporting the other.

The second, prefigurative approach, considered that the best way of countering the rise of xenophobic, authoritarian attitudes was not necessarily through always prioritising direct contestation but to further develop radical social practices that were based on different, inclusive and anti-hierarchical values. These activities included union-building and developing community events like free festivals, film and cultural nights with egalitarian socio-economic and multi-ethnic emphases. Ethical analysis is used to identify and assess the differences between prefigurative and consequentialist anti-fascism and to indicate areas of convergence.

## 1. Defence of Ethical Analysis

Ethics,[5] which is principally concerned with how we treat others as well as developing ourselves, and moral analysis which identifies and applies a cogent, inter-subjective basis for making choices, is inherent to political decisions when different tactics are being discussed. Yet there is reluctance by theorists and activists to *overtly* identify that moral criteria are being used in categorising and evaluating anti-fascist methods. Partly, this is due to ethical analysis being viewed as an elite discourse that inappropriately imposes forms of censure and approval from positions disconnected from the lived experiences of those affected. This is driven, perhaps, by the (mis-) conception that religious institutional hierarchies claim morality as their exclusive domain, or that it is a discourse specific to – and supportive of – the elitist institutions and practices of academia.

It is true that although the spectre of Nazism looms large in academic, moral philosophy and frames Western ethical thinking (see Glover 2001), there has been a general decline amongst the higher-ranking ethics journals, especially those in the Anglo-American tradition, of discussion of radical political action.[6] Politically-engaged post-structuralism, by contrast, provides the rare occasions

that overt interest in the ethics of anti-fascism is still core to discussions of radical political action. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* has its origins in anti-fascism, as Michel Foucault (1984, xiv-xv) identifies. Borrowing from post-structuralism, the ethical approach embraced here also identifies anti-fascism with the development of anti-authoritarian everyday activities rather than simply a negation of a particular form of totalizing state politics (xv). However, the identification of fascism and anti-fascism with micropolitical everyday life activities, risks losing the specificity of the term.[7] As a result many recent analyses of post-structural contributions to moral theory, even those excavating Deleuze, Guattari and Foucault make little reference to fascism (see for instance May 1995).

As is developed later, the moral framework applied here, like Foucault, concentrates on the construction of identities and goods inherent in lived social practices, from those constructed by practitioners (labour). It is deduced from more general philosophical sources, in particular the virtue ethical tradition associated with Aristotle (1976) and elaborated by Alasdair MacIntyre (1985 and 1988), rather than one based specifically on anti-fascism. The ethical account is developed by reference to debates on direct action, prefiguration and militant action from other disciplines.

One of the strengths of contemporary (post-1973) British anti-fascism is that it is a topic that has been left largely to activists, such as Sean Birchall (2000), Dave Hann (2013), Jim Kelly (nd), Martin Lux (2006), Mark Metcalf (nd) and Steve Tilzey (Hann and Tilzey 2003). There are few notable exceptions, with significant contributions by scholars such as Nigel Copsey (2011a), Mark Hayes (2000) and Dave Renton (2006). It is important to note that the distinction between activist/academic is not immutable: Renton and Hayes, for instance, identify as both. Because contemporary anti-fascist writings often come from an activist perspective, they have an immediacy, vitality and relevance. Their political commitments are more openly expressed, in contrast to the supposedly dispassionate theoretical disciplines that tend to cloak their ideological positions (Freeden 1996, 27-28).

Nonetheless, there is in some activist accounts an implicit or explicit criticism that by introducing ethical analysis, a form of evaluation is imposed which is external to the activity and emanates from privileged social positions. Because this form of analysis has its origins in academia it has an implicit ideological bias that is prejudicial to anti-hierarchical and/or grass-roots perspectives. It is partly for this reason that political activists, from Leon Trotsky (1979, 13 and 15-16) to Class War members, dismiss "moralism" (M. H. 2002). There are a number of replies to this criticism.

First, the perception that ethical principles derived from one social practice, such as those of academic activity, are necessarily elite and limited to these practices ignores the fact that they are often formed from university workers who are not immune from economic oppression (see McLaughin 2010) or the threat of fascism. Academic practices are not isolated (despite the popularity of the metaphor of the separated 'ivory tower'), but intersect with other social practices (sometimes to the detriment of either or both partners).

The second reply is that the dismissal of "moralism" is not a rejection of moral reasoning. Those who rightly reject "moralism," however, such as Trotsky, Class War members or individualist anarchists like Jason McQuinn, a founder of the prominent American radical journal *Anarchy: A journal of desire armed*, are usually rejecting particular meta-ethical positions rather than ethical analysis in total. For Trotsky, "moralism" is associated with spurious claims to universal norms as an ideological (and theological) attempt to obscure differences in material situations. In contrast Trotsky embraces an overt consequentialism based on the defeat of fascism as a necessary condition for proletarian revolution. "Whoever accepts the ends: victory over Franco, must accept the means: civil war with its wake of horrors and crimes" (Trotsky, 1979, 36). For McQuinn (2004-5) the rejection of "moralism" is a dismissal of attempts to impose universal solutions from a totalizing political perspective. However, McQuinn too proposed an alternative ethical system. Initially, he proposes subjectivism (prioritising the judgement of an individual's conscience), but then – and in tension with this – proposes a moral imperative to gain "self-understanding." Subjectivism is problematic: although superficially attractive, it would mean prioritising an individual's own experiences, needs and desires, and thus could justify an individual's commitment to racist or other oppressive beliefs that meet their immediate interests.

However, a more sympathetic reading recognises that McQuinn's anti-universalism also includes a materialist recognition that social practices develop individual identities and values. Similarly, Class War's former members M. H. (2002) and Paul Marsh (2002), whilst disagreeing on organisational changes, use a shared ethical analyses based on virtues theory, to argue for social practices that privilege "co-operation", "trust" and "honesty."

Whilst radicals utilise ethical discourses, especially in debates around anti-fascist methods, their theoretical framework is rarely made explicit. In this paper the theoretical structure captures the features of Trotsky's emphasis on materialism and McQuinn's anti-universalisms, without the dangers of a strict instrumentalism or an individualist subjectivism, both of which can justify any action (so long as it efficiently achieves goals, or is approved by individual conscience). It is best captured, in an anti-hierarchical virtue ethics, borrowing from MacIntyre.

## 2. The Prefigurative Ethical Framework: Practice-based virtue theory

As noted elsewhere MacIntyre's virtue ethics shares strong family resemblances with radical prefigurative approaches (Blackledge 2012, 596; Franks 2010; Swann 2013, 678-79). Prefiguration stresses that means are consistent with or synecdochic of goals. The types of values (virtues) that sustain a flourishing community are achieved by being practised in the here and now.

Virtue theory recognises that stable, but adaptable norms as well as material resources are needed to maintain a social practice and for participants to improve or gain perfection (*arête*) in that social activity (MacIntyre 1985, 187). For instance, playing chess requires some minimal materials (chess-boards, pieces, shared language) and rules and objectives. Thus one can identify not just what makes a move a "good" or a "poor" one, in terms of the goal of the practice (to checkmate the opponent), but also enable the development of positive inter-personal traits, such as patience, analytic skills and good sportsmanship, that enable the practice and adjacent ones to flourish (188). If people were to continually cheat at chess, or face abuse across the board, then fewer would opt to participate and the practice would wither (193).

Engagement in a social practice alters the identity of the subject, developing their social traits (virtues), for instance wisdom, compassion and bravery. Different social practices develop different combinations of virtues, with none universally at the fore. Over time new virtues arise (for instance concern for animals) and others decline in importance (piety, perhaps). So every meaningful social activity necessarily includes an ethic, which is, at least in part, inter-subjective.

The sociologist Andreas Reckwitz (2002), with reference to Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu, views practices in similar ways to MacIntyre (243). They are stable combinations of resources (materials, technologies), competencies (knowledge, skills, and techniques) and shared meanings (including ideas and values) (249-50). Practice approaches avoid the epistemological and ontological problems of viewing agents as either wholly autonomous or totally determined, recognising how being involved in a practice limits choices and viewpoints, generates particular discourses and identities, but offers the possibility of transcending and altering that practice. Whilst for MacIntyre (1985, 221-22) stable (but reflective and adaptable) practices develop into *traditions*, for Reckwitz (2002), they constitute a *social structure* (256).

However, what is unclear in Reckwitz's account is whether there is an overriding teleology to the generation, sustenance and modification of social practices. For much of MacIntyre's work, benevolent social practices are tied to a universal goal of the good. The MacIntyre scholar and sophisticated Leninist

Paul Blackledge (2012) argues that without a clear teleology, concentration on practices alone could end up in "social dislocation" (596) and "justify some very conservative projects" (597). For Blackledge, to avoid the "simulacra of morality", a teleology based on MacIntyre's earlier (but rejected) Marxism is recommended (599; Blackledge and Davidson 2008, xix). A point which will be returned to, as having a clear predetermined goal becomes the basis of consequentialist political action.

A practise-based virtue approach is consistent with the critical discourse of oppressed groups who frequently use core moral values to describe, evaluate, organise and agitate for more desirable social relations. It is for this reason that anarchists and heterodox Marxists are interested in autovalorisation, the generation and sustenance of non-hierarchical values by agents themselves which are distinct from those of the dominant class. For instance, fascist groups are variously criticised for their vices: cowardice and intemperance, injustice and lack of theoretical wisdom (see for instance "Malatesta" 2009; Class War 2006a). By contrast, radical action is identified with virtues such as compassion, courage and justice (See for instance Q. SHAC in SchNEWS 2009; SchNEWS 2010; SchNEWS 2011).

Ethical analysis is not universally a better approach to more standard, (auto-) ethnographic, political scientific and historical accounts of anti-fascism, though ethics informs, and is informed by, these disciplines. With a topic as formidable as anti-fascism, no singular disciplinary approach is wholly adequate. The use of ethical analysis highlights how moral features – though often overlooked – are already present in activist discourse. An evaluation and systematic application of moral theory can assist in the clarification of debates and the assessment and development of anti-fascist methods.

## 3. Identifying fascism and anti-fascism

In order to discuss anti-fascism, it is necessary to first identify "fascism." Providing a clear definition of fascism is not easy as the label is applicable to diverse movements: from conservative, constitutionalist and pluralist movements to revolutionary, totalitarian and genocidal parties. Since the late 1990s, fascist groups such as the BDP, BNP, English Democrats and EDL have largely concentrated on lawful methods, operating through state-democratic procedures and emphasised "cultural difference" rather than ethnic superiority (Hann and Tilzey 2003, 274; Nigel Copsey, 2011b, 5). These changes have prompted some theorists to use the term "post-fascism" (Griffin, 1996).

Roger Griffin's (1995) solution to such diversity is to seek out a "fascist minimum" to identify appropriate groups. For Griffin the motif of paligenesis, a revitalising myth or rebirth out of collapse is a permanent, identifying feature of fascism (2-

3). However, whilst it is pervasive, it might not be universal, as a fascist party that has gained power for substantial periods, such as General Franco's *Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional-Sindicalista* finds that the myth of national rebirth is harder to sustain. Other movements, too, use concepts of national rebirth, especially after cataclysms, without having the character of fascist movements.

An alternative method is based on Michael Freeden's (1996) conceptual account. Freeden proposes that ideologies are stable, but changing structures of core, adjacent and peripheral concepts (77-78). They are expressed through and constituted by words or other signs (48-49). The arrangement of concepts helps to define one against the other, so changes in the positioning of one concept will influence the interpretation of neighbouring ones (Freeden 2003, 51-53). According to Freeden, certain core concepts of an ideology are "ineliminable." Liberalism contains liberty, progress and the individual as core concepts, not because this is metaphysically ordained but because currently all liberal proponents and critics identify these as core (61-62). However, apparently necessary characteristics can, over time, slip into the periphery. Consequently, Freeden has a more complex account of fascism that is not built on any universal minimum but a set of stable, mutually defining concepts:

> [A]ggressive nationalism at the disposal of the state and its henchmen, a cult of the leader (Il Dulce), terror and physical violence and a myth of regeneration that resurrected the past glories of Rome and promised national rebirth. The German variant, National Socialism, was more methodical both in its ideology and its practical realization. It added to the above a racial myth. (91)

These characteristics are understood in relation to one another, terror operates through, and in support of, the state in order to maintain the power of the leader whose rule is legitimised by the myth of regeneration (the principle of palingenesis referred to earlier by Griffin). In some contexts the racial myth becomes a core principle, helping to provide a pseudo-scientific legitimacy to the social hierarchy and to flesh out the myth of regeneration. In other contexts, such as more recent British fascism, terror and physical violence is (temporarily) less overt with democratic nationalism providing a basis for state rebirth and a marker of ethno-cultural superiority.

Consistent with Foucault's earlier account, fascism seeks to be a totalising force but of a particular kind. It is one that tries to reshape all human activity, whether in public or private sphere, to conform to singular principles and social structure. The state is central to this attempt, as it is the pivotal apparatus for imposing fascist principles onto all social practices and eliminating those which do not or cannot conform. Where totalitarian states are successful, counter concepts,

such as equality, rights or tolerance are wholly excluded from the popular vocabulary, restricting the ways in which subjects can interpret their social world (92).

"Anti-fascism" is a category which is usually defined in a negative-consequentialist manner. That is to say, it judges the rightness of an action insofar as it prevents a bad outcome – fascism – from occurring/persisting. This is the approach of the UAF and ANL, who are largely reactive, responding to fascist movements in whatever guise they take – street mobilisations in the 1970s and 1980s, or constitutionally in the 2000s (Copsey 2011a, 123-24; Copsey 2011b, 2 and 6). However, the approach here is to also see it as a label for political practices which conflict with the core principles and methods of fascism. Thus "anti-fascism" need not just be the deliberate goal but as a set of contrary methods.

Freeden's method, which is also used by Copsey (2010, xx), can be used to counter the instrumentally of standard accounts. Copsey, too, rejects Griffin's minimum and regards "anti-fascism" to have multiple forms and meanings dependent on the subjects' identification. Anti-fascism can be constitutional action for control of the state or physical confrontation but also "passive" forms: debates and promotion of literature. Whilst Copsey (2010, xvi) draws on Julie Gottleib's (2010) work on feminism and anti-fascism, it is only its overt confrontation with fascism which constitutes anti-fascism. However, it is possible to see, contra Copsey, that other feminist practices, which are based on notions of equality, generate spaces which are antipathetic to fascist discourses. Feminist traditions, whilst not primarily intended to be "anti-fascist" (fascism might be just a peripheral concern at the time) nonetheless constitute a form of micropolitical "anti-fascism." Anti-instrumentalist approaches recognise that the production and maintenance of social practices based on principles incompatible with fascism, even if they are not constructed primarily with this intention, can also be considered a form of anti-fascism.

The consequentialist account of anti-fascism is a thin category that can include authoritarian movements. As a result, problems arise when oppressive secular and theocratic movements appear on anti-fascist mobilisations. Reactions to their appearance vary. Some regard these autocratic parties as: 1) just another face of totalitarianism which need to be equally confronted; 2) an evil but of locally less significance than European fascists because of their lack of actual or potential material support or, 3) a position associated with brands of state-socialism, a potential source of allies (see for instance the discussion at Libcom 2005; Class War 2006b).

Fascists point to the totalitarian sections of their opposition, as a way of portraying themselves more favourably (BDP 2013). The far-right is also dismissive

of anti-racist policies of democratic liberalism, which tolerates gross social and economic inequalities (Imnokuffar 2013). Thus in order to demarcate a contemporary radical anti-fascism, it is first necessary to recognise and distinguish it from forms of anti-fascism that replace one totalising, hierarchical myth with another, including those tied to economic-liberal principles.

## 4. Identifying Anti-Fascism

In Dumfries in 2010, it was largely the anti-state radicals who initially began the debate on anti-fascist tactics, with orthodox Marxists and social democrats quickly contributing. A division, though fluid in terms of membership, between the state-centred social democrats and orthodox Marxists on one side and more heterodox Marxists and social anarchists on the other mapped neatly the division between the consequentialist and prefigurative anti-fascists.

The latter subgrouping, identified as radical, because of their scepticism (and indeed opposition) to statist mediation is usually distinguished from more conventional political positions through its adherence to four core principles, those of: (i) being anti-state, which demarcates it from Leninism and social democracy; (ii) rejecting capitalism, which distinguishes it from neo-liberalism; (iii) having a fluid, social view of the self, in which one's identity shifts in response to material context, including how other subjects respond, which distinguishes it from subjectivism; and iv) having a commitment to prefigurative methods. Prefiguration involves using means that are in accordance with the goals, creating in the present desired for features of the future (Quail 1978, x; Franks 2006, 12-13). Alongside and consistent with these four principles is a fifth: (v) scepticism of universal claims to knowledge, as demonstrated by McQuinn's (2004-5) anti-universalism, but also found in the more popular socialist anarchist traditions following Michael Bakunin (1970, 32). Claims to authority based on knowledge can be justified in demonstrable contexts, however as there is no position in which universal knowledge is discernible, there is scepticism towards groups claiming to know what is always best for others. This leads to a general critique of representationalism (31-33).

Prefiguration has become one of the core features of contemporary analysis of radical movements (Shukaitis 2010, 62; Gordon 2007, 34-36), it is a core principle in making preferences on tactics and organisation forms. It is the commitment to the principle of prefiguration that unites autonomism and anarchism (Gautney 2009, 478). It marks a division between standardly anarchist, tactical approaches and the consequentialism of orthodox Marxism. For Trotsky, like Lenin, considered there was a significant division between revolutionary means and revolutionary ends, which anarchists and autonomists have tended to reject (Lenin 1963, 149; Trotsky 1979, 36).

Prefiguration does not reject the importance of external goods to social practices. Activities like cooking have external goods (completed dishes) which can become resources to other aligned social practices. However, the benefits of a culinary education are not reliant on the production of external goods alone. A cooking experience that was intimidating and cruel would not be justified solely on the basis that it generated attractive dishes. As MacIntyre (1985) explains, the virtues are those inter-personal qualities that are desirable in-themselves but also generate other types of good. Even though it is likely that the development of virtuous practices will generate good outcomes, these consequentialist goods should not be the sole motivation for acting virtuously (196). Instrumentalism undermines goods-rich social relationships (198-99).

There are a number of conflicting interpretations of prefiguration, which have confused the debate. Marianne Maeckelbergh (2011) points to a number of competing definitions, initially defining prefiguration as a type of epistemology:

> Prefiguration is not a theory of social change that first analyses the current global political landscape, develops an alternative model in the form of a predetermined goal, and then sets out a five-year plan for changing the existing landscape into a predetermined goal. Prefiguration is a different kind of theory, a "direct theory"… that theorizes through action, through doing. (3)

This could be a very amorphous definition, as almost anything can constitute a "doing"; even the abstract, goal-driven theorising that Maeckelbergh rejects is a type of rule-governed activity. However, it is clear from the examples Maeckelbergh draws from the anarchist anthropologist David Graeber that it is a method akin to an immersive practice-based analysis consistent with Reckwitz's method. It is through engagement in an activity (or a closely aligned one), understanding its norms, skills, resources and values, that provides expertise in that area and allows for experienced practitioners to potentially transform that practice.

Maeckelbergh's epistemological account, which echoes Bakunin's account of the limits to legitimate authority of knowledge, includes the rejection of identifying a single universal goal, which legitimises all political action (Bakunin 1970, 30). However, Maeckelbergh (2011) is critical of accounts of prefiguration which reject strategy. It is mistaken, she argues, to regard strategy as necessarily involving the pursuit of a singular goal, despite this being a standard definition of strategy (6). Instead, she rightly recognises that radical prefigurative politics has broad anti-hierarchical social goals, which are multiple and irreducible (9-11) and embodied in their forms of organisation, decision-making, tactical development and employment (what Maeckelbergh refers to as "process") (6-7). In this respect her account is similar to other autonomist-anarchist accounts

that view the ways in which means and ends inform each other as dynamic (Garland 2012).

Maeckelbergh's stress on the importance of identifying goals in order to recognise whether the means accurately prefigure them, helpfully assists in distinguishing two rival prefigurative approaches. Internal prefiguration concentrates on developing practices that are consistent with anti-hierarchical norms and it is found in certain individualist- and post- anarchisms (referred to by some as "lifestyle anarchism") (Bookchin 1995), such as Crimethinc (2008), in which the identification of explicit social goals is rejected (42). Instead, as Uri Gordon (2007) explains, the priority is for the individual to have non-coercive experiences in the here-and-now (39). Commitment to internal prefiguration is sometimes considered synonymous with self-indulgence or hedonism (Bookchin 1995, 27). The second, external prefiguration (based on James Guillaume and Bakunin) identifies specific goals, which emerge from and are constituted by anti-hierarchical social practices, such as confrontation with oppressive state or discriminatory structures, and ensures as far as possible that the methods used embody anarchist principles.

Rather than being entirely discrete positions, there are areas of convergence. For instance, the Situationist International (1981) promoted a strategy of generating ever greater series of happenings (situations) that embody radical principles. As the number and extent of the situation grows they confront and replace the state, without revolutionary goals being the sole justification for the action (Gordon 2007, 39-40). As the generation of anti-hierarchical, autonomous action rounds into conflict with totalising forces, this generates goals or narratives of contestation and liberation which in turn produce new forms of prefigurative practice. Desired goals in the shape of preferred types of social organisations, practices and relationships (and the values embedded in these forms) are a necessary feature of prefiguration, for without them there is nothing to prefigure.

Radical prefiguration is, thus, viewed by exponents as incompatible with fascism; however critics, largely from consequentialist backgrounds argue otherwise. Sometimes, such criticisms are due to commentators, like the orthodox Marxist John Molyneux (2011), confusing the advocates of external prefiguration with a small minority of advocates of internal prefiguration and thus regarding all advocates of prefigurative direct action as promoting these methods just for personal pleasure (68). For others, there are more substantial criticisms based on the inadequacy of prefiguration to deal with overt and totalising threats.

## 5. Prefiguration and Anti-Fascism: The areas of conflict

There is a clear conflict between instrumentalist orthodox Marxists and prefigurative radicals over tactics and organisation. Blackledge (2010), citing his Party comrade Chris Harman, explains why Leninism rejects prefiguration in the struggle against capitalism. For Leninists there is one universally privileged area of conflict, the battle against capitalism, and a disciplined organisation is required to bring about the revolution. Only after the revolution can virtuous social-relationships develop.

> Because socialism will be achieved once the divisions within the working class and between it and other oppressed and exploited groups are overcome, there will be no need for revolutionary parties in a mature socialist society. By their nature therefore revolutionary parties, as opposed to other forms of solidarity, cannot prefigure socialism: they are rather a (necessary and transient) instrument in the struggle for socialism. (Blackledge 2010; see also Lenin 1975, 7)

Here Blackledge follows Trotsky, who similarly rejects prefigurative methods in dealing with the totalising threats of fascism and capitalism. It is necessary to use methods which embody social ills like "lying" and "violence" in order to defeat these threats (Trotsky 1979, 36). (Whether violence is always a vice is discussed later). Anarchists, by contrast, tend to be committed to prefiguration. Whilst recognising capitalism as a major, and in most contexts the major form of oppression, they argue that prefigurative methods, whilst also good in-themselves, are also the most likely to avoid the recreation of oppressive social conditions (Bakunin 1984, 37-38; Franks 2006, 258-59).

### 5.1. Consequentialist Approaches

The dominant forms of anti-fascism are often consequentialist: from the parliamentary methods of Hope Not Hate to more confrontational methods of the ANL. This normative approach uses as the supreme value opposition to fascism. It endorses any methods and supporting organisation that most effectively meet this overriding goal. For instance Labour MP John Cruddas and Nick Lowles (2008), then with the anti-fascist *Searchlight* magazine, conclude:

> The rise of the BNP is not a passing phenomena [sic]. We must now debate new strategies for organisation and policy, counter-organise on the ground and deal with the material issues that lie behind its popular support. Nothing is more important for this movement.

Negative consequentialism concentrates on avoiding bad outcomes, rather than advancing specific good goals, so it supports anything short of fascism that

restricts or prohibits fascism. In Cruddas and Lowles case it meant revitalising electoral support for the British Labour Party. This basic minimal approach provides the basis for broad coalitions such as the UAF.

The strength of negative consequentialism, when applied to challenging fascism, is that it rightly identifies fascism as a serious harm, which seeks to incorporate all social practices under its hierarchical principles. This will result in distorting or eradicating many social activities and marginalising and even eradicating subject identities that do not fit into the fascist image of the nation-state. As such this negative target allows for the development of effective, broad coalitions. However, there are substantial problems with this approach.

### 5.2. Problems of Consequentialism

There are three main problems with consequentialist anti-fascism. (1) It identifies the wrong goal; (2) by making anti-fascism the supreme value it has an inadequate account of risk; (3) consequentialism damages social practices rich in internal goods.

An example of the first type of criticism comes from the left-communist Jean Barrot (Gilles Dauvé). He argues that contesting fascism as the primary goal identifies the wrong target. For Barrot (1992), fascism is an epiphenomenon of capitalism; it is "a *tendency* of Capital which materializes whenever necessary" (7). It is a current which becomes stronger when the proletariat's autonomy is reduced (15). Anti-fascists as a result, by using and defending the capitalist state as an instrument against fascism, generate the conditions for right-wing nationalism to develop and support fascist-like methods (10-11).

Leaving to one side Barrot's particular diagnosis of the causes of fascism, and whether there is just a singular set of objectively-identifiable causes, his critique highlights some problems with consequentialism. An anti-fascism which is based just on reacting to and nullifying fascism leads to co-operation with the most effective forces that can be deployed against the totalitarian opponent, even if these forces are themselves authoritarian. As Copsey (2011a) argues, this form of anti-fascism does little to undermine the social forces that brought fascist movements support. The "'anyone but fascists' [policy]…does little to address the underlying concerns of a growing minority of disgruntled and alienated BNP voters" (135).

Secondly, as the ultimate goal is confronting fascism, and nothing is more important, then there is a tendency that a small fascist gathering becomes the primary focus of action at the expense of all other activities. Attempts by AFA, to move beyond just militant anti-fascism by setting up the Independent Working Class Association (Hayes and Aylward 2000, 81-82; Copsey 2011a, 132), were

marginalised as consequentialist anti-fascism supports the political opponent most likely to outpoll fascist parties (invariably the Labour Party). Alternative constitutional movements split the anti-fascist vote (Copsey 2011a, 132). Similar radical activities, such as cultural events and protests over welfare issues – which might have the foreseeable but not intentional outcome of undermining fascist sentiments – have been side-lined by targeted anti-fascism, even when the fascist presence was minor.

The alternative has been to restructure all radical activity through adherence to the supreme principle of anti-fascism. However, this can distort social practices, which have other important shared goods, and are based on other anti-hierarchical norms and values. A radical film society that shows cinema with a range of narratives, themes and aesthetics, becomes didactic and limited if its sole goal becomes confronting fascism, especially when that threat is minimal. In general the reorientation of a social practice to meet primarily external goals, rather than promote internal goods, fundamentally alters that activity. For instance playing a sport for the pleasure of competition, comradeship, health, skill-development and self-discipline, alters once it is played primarily for the totalising goal of profit.

## 6. Prefiguration: Criticisms

Radical anti-fascists face criticism in relation to their professed commitment to prefiguration. These are: (i) whilst external prefiguration promotes methods consistent with goals, because it recognises that there are no singular universal goals, activists cannot deal with plural goals when they come into conflict, especially if the conflict is between overcoming fascism and some other social ill, leading to a situation of paralysis or division; (ii) a prefigurative approach which emphasises the production of internal goods cannot avoid supporting oppressive practices, including those of overt fascist groups, that also produce internal goods; (iii) covert organisation, a frequently used method of radical anti-fascist groups appears to conflict with prefigurative egalitarian principles; (iv) radical anti-fascism substitutes small group action for collective action and thus is elitist in contravention of prefiguration; (v) radical anti-fascists violate important rights of free association and free speech for racists and thus violates prefigurative commitments to liberty, and (vi) radical anti-fascism is often violent and as such is incompatible with eventual radical, pacific goals.

### i. Inadequacy

There are problems with goal-pluralism, as Thomas Swann (2010a) and Blackledge (2012) identify and discuss. Namely, how do activists deal with conflicting goals and – related to this question – how is a decision taken on prioritising goals, if pluralism is the aim? This is a problem which MacIntyre (1988)

also identifies with apparent goal pluralism (347-48). Further, if there are plural goals, on what basis can conservative or fascist *telē* (final targets) be excluded? If a single telos is epistemologically suspect and produces bad outcomes, how do activists deal with plural goals when they come into conflict? As Swann (2010a) identifies, if there is no single over-riding *telos*, how do competing sections of the same movement know whether to prioritise environmental campaigns or anti-racist ones?

> If the universalist is right … they will be able to measure the conflicting goods against this objective yardstick and decide which good takes priority at that time. However, without such an external guide, deliberation seems meaningless. If the first group claims in support of their position that it measures up to the contingent telos that solidarity should be primarily with the animal rights movement, and the second group claims that theirs measures up to the telos that solidarity should be with anti-racism, then there is no way for agreement to be reached. (10)

There are a number of possible replies. First, the answer might be found in analysis of the actual virtues generated in prioritising one over the other. If there is a clear racist threat that would cause a significant social cleavage that radical practices are substantially undermined, then to concentrate on animal rights would be inconsiderate and irresponsible. If, there is no major racist movement and formerly oppressed groups have successfully intervened to transform previously discriminatory practices, whilst significant institutions engage in callous and cruel treatments of non-humans, including substantial habitat destruction, then virtue is most likely to be generated in pursuing the second.

In addition, there will be times when there is no definitive answer, as in different locations (historical and geographical) there will be different oppressive forces in operation, impacting on different practices and their participants in distinct ways. Thus, recognition that different agencies engaged in different practices might not have shared priorities in particular moments, does not necessarily result in "social dislocation and fragmentation" (Blackledge 2012, 596-97) but a feature of modesty where one does not assume the goals, norms and identities of one practice necessarily supersede those of others.

Blackledge argues that a socialist teleology is necessary otherwise conservative ends could be a part of goal pluralism and thus there are no final grounds for advocating radical practices (597, 599; see also Swann 2010b, 240-41). However, anti-hierarchical social relations are more likely to generate the virtues than reactionary ones (wisdom is the sharing – not the monopolisation – of knowledge; liberality (generosity without profligacy) is incompatible with selfishness). Recognising that there is a possibility of plural goals being generated

by structures of consistent anti-hierarchical social practices is not the same as promoting any goal, or that some goals may be more prominent and pertinent in specific situations than others.

There are possible areas of convergence between the pluralist, prefigurative approach and Blackledge's consequentialism. For instance, if there is a significant totalising threat, such that any social practice risks being subsumed, then each potentially oppressed subject has a shared objective. There may well be times when liberal capitalism or organised fascism is such a threat. Indeed it is hard to identify a location in most Western societies where capitalism does not present such a menace. However, it is not always the main or sole oppressive force, and thus the promotion of a universal goal is inappropriate and producing counter-totalising organisation merely recreates the oppressive social relations that radicals are attempting to transcend.

### ii. Brave Nazis

One of the most frequent criticisms made of prefigurative approaches, that emphasise the generation of internal goods, is that fascists too act courageously and (at least amongst themselves) collegially (Rachels 1993, 164; Hinchman 1989, 653-54). As a result, a commitment to supporting prefigurative attributes would allow for brave Nazism, and thus prefigurative, virtue approaches are inadequate for responding, and providing an alternative to, fascism. However, the criticism overlooks the main feature of the virtues in general is that they cannot be isolated, but must be seen in relation to the other virtues. Thus fortitude, if it lacks compassion and justice and is based on intellectually facile grounds, is bloody-minded, rash and petty -- not magnanimous or courageous.

A bully is not brave, unlike someone standing up to a tormenter. The aggressor maintains structures of domination, undermines the development of socially and individually-enriching social relationships and access to good-rich practices. The person who stands up to discriminatory aggression, so long as it is proportionate and well-targeted, is practising solidarity and compassion. Radical anti-fascism is primarily concentrated on opposing and negating organised groups who have the material forces (in terms of numbers, financing and/or technological resources) and intention to intimidate and coerce, promoting irrationality and vindictiveness, and undermining diverse social interactions based on mutual respect, trust and solidarity.

Practising the virtues, like external prefiguration, produces good outcomes: a flourishing individual engaged and promoting further goods-rich activities (though this is not necessarily the main intention) (MacIntyre 1985, 190-91). As MacIntyre points out, oppressive actions by contrast, undermine virtuous practices (193). They discourage initiative and undermine collegial, social

interactions; thus fascist activity – even if carried out at personal risk – is not virtuous.

### iii. Covert Organisation

Anarchists and orthodox Marxists have longstanding and sustained critiques of the others' organisational methods. Anarchists condemn Marxist, centralised and hierarchical political structures, but, Marxists point out that Bakunin used secretive and conspiratorial organisation, which is even less accountable and thus more oppressive (Molyneux 2009). Similarly, Antifa and AFA, whilst being open to members (see Hann 2013, 327-29) organise activities covertly, in tightly disciplined small groups, to target fascists. In the early 1980s, the ANL split between the SWP leadership who opposed such groups and a small group of anti-fascist militants who supported them (Copsey 2011a, 125-26).

There are three defences of covert organisational arrangement. The first is that such squads are rarely as closed or secretive as critics present. Indeed the groupings that construct them are open, public-membership organisations, which generate temporary alliances of activists (affinity groups). Supporters participate in accordance with their interests and the degree to which they find others to share their goals. Membership of the formal organisation (AFN, Antifa or AFA) and in particular the affinity groups they produce are fluid and provisional.

Second, unlike the vanguard party, the anti-fascist squad is restricted to a local, not universal function. Whilst, the revolutionary party is the universal essential organisation, mediating between the client class and the informed leadership (Lenin 1963; Blackledge 2010), the anti-fascist squad is localised, specific and intersects with other different groups, creating a network of co-existing organisations operating on different norms depending on the social circumstances. The myriad types of activities that construct confrontational anti-fascism allow for autonomous engagement in different forms, from being a member of a direct action squad, to intelligence gathering to propaganda and cultural activities (Hann 2013, 347).

The covert squad is autonomous and primarily accountable to its members and those involved in adjacent practices, rather than answerable to a central authority. It is this lack of accountability to a hierarchical authority, rather than a general refusal to reflect on their own operations, which led orthodox Marxists, like the SWP leadership, to reject "squaddism" (316-17). Looking to universal, centralised democratic accountability for all actions would be damaging to all sorts of legitimate behaviour, undermining the development of responsibility and encouraging participants to please the central manager rather than co-participants.

The third defence is that given the situation of state surveillance and localised strength of fascist groups, on occasions the only way to effectively respond to fascism is through covert practices. The alternative is remaining quiescent or subject to arrest (and thus being subject to even greater hierarchical treatment). In such circumstances such secretive practices are the most prefigurative available. Therefore, the use of limited, covert methods is not incompatible with the promotion of other social virtues.

### iv. Substitutionalism

Orthodox Marxists have tended to be critical of direct action because it is seen to substitute minority action for mass action. Prefiguration, argues Blackledge (2010), "is liable to reinforce rather than challenge the propensity to elitism and substituionalism: the tendency of activists to substitute their activities for broader social movements" (Direct Action and the State). This is because Blackledge argues, quoting a supporter of prefigurative approaches, it involves a "small part of an entity represent[ing] the whole thing" (Direct Action and the State). Thus, for Blackledge, the small part replaces or subsumes the larger goal.

Blackledge (2010) is right to warn of the dangers of the immodesty of small groups believing that their actions and those of intimately linked collectives, alone are responsible for the success of anti-fascism. This leads to paternalism (even dictatorship) (Direct Action and the State). However, prefigurative direct action is not substitutionalist in the way he describes. Blackledge's criticism usefully highlights some of the differences between anarchist accounts of agency and more orthodox Marxist approaches.

For Blackledge (2010) there is one universal agent of social change, the industrial proletariat, with a settled identity, and an objectively analysable revolutionary consciousness (Direct Action and the State; Jacobinism, Blanquism and Marxism). The successful, democratic revolution is one in which the proletariat act as a conscious majority to contest and overthrow capitalism (Jacobinism, Blanquism and Marxism). Therefore, direct action which promotes localised affected agents taking effective, immediate action to (at least partially) resolve or challenge oppressive practices, prior to the democratic revolution runs the risk of substituting this minority's actions for the majority action of the industrial working class.

However, in radical prefiguration there is no singular fixed revolutionary identity, no unified whole to be substituted. This is not to deny that the proletariat are an oppressed class who must overthrow capitalist oppression to be liberated but that working class identities are fluid, diverse and contextual (a worker in one situation can be imposing the law of value in another). In addition, not all oppressions are necessarily reducible to capitalist oppression alone. Thus, in

different contexts different groups are the subjugated who should take the primary role in contesting oppression. In radical anti-fascism there is the acceptance that ethnic groups that have been specifically targeted by organised fascists can and should self-organise in defence. For instance, the Jewish self-defence groups, like the 43 Group that organised against Oswald Moseley and his followers, are an inspiration to non-Jewish radical anti-fascists (Hayes and Aylward 2000, 56).

Similarly, when an advocate of prefiguration refers to it as a "small part of an entity represents the whole thing", he is not suggesting that the "small part" replaces the entirety (as substitutionalism requires). Instead, as the explanation in the rest of the paragraph the quotation comes from explains, the small incidents of prefigurative practice are a synecdoche, not a replacement, for greater radical actions. Prefigurative action, whilst being a practical response to oppressions in a particular locality, is also a "symbol of the larger vision of social change" (Franks 2006, 118).

### v. Rights and Anti-Fascism

A different set of criticisms arise form Matthew Wilson. He argues that there are inconsistencies in radical anti-fascist goals and methods. One of these irregularities is that radical anti-fascists explicitly deny freedom of speech and assembly to organised racists – and sexists and homophobes – (Wilson 2010, 123-24) yet anarchism is apparently predicated on a commitment to freedom (116-17).

Whilst Wilson might be right that in general there are inconsistencies and lacunae in radical writings on issues like rights (few significant ideologies can avoid some irregularities), he may be mistaken in seeing an inconsistency here. Rights are not principles that operate in isolation. Radical principles of freedom, as Freeden's analysis suggest, have to be understood next to the other core concepts. For militant anti-fascism these include principles such as the contestation of social and economic hierarchies and these take place in – and through – social practices.

Thus, the construction and distribution of spoken or written texts are not dispassionate exercises in communication but types of action (Phil 2013). Racist speech-acts marginalise and exclude sections of society and mark geographical regions as restricted to privileged groups. Allowing racists opportunities to extend their discriminatory practices would conflict with radical principles of contesting hierarchies. Countering fascism can help to develop social institutions based on different norms.

## vi. Non-violence

Some, conservative commentators have suggested that there is an equivalence between fascists and militant anti-fascists because of the latter's willingness to use violence (Daily Mail quoted in Hayes and Aylward 2000, 56; see also SWP quoted in Kelly nd, 11). The question of the role of violence, and potential justifications has long been an area of contention in radical movements, and subject to recent thoughtful re-formulations (see for instance Balfour 2013). In general, anarchist-pacifists reject the use of violence as incompatible with anarchist goals (see for instance Martin 2008; Ostergaard nd), whilst other anarchists consider it as necessary and/or desirable (Gelderoos 2007; Churchill and Ryan 2007; Lux 2006).

Pacifists, like Brian Martin (2008), point explicitly to the prefigurative principle in their rejection of force. As Martin explains, "if the goal is a society without organised violence, nonviolent action has all these prefigurative advantages", whilst violent methods "clash with the goal of a nonviolent society" and provide "training, experience and legitimacy to violence" (239).

Part of the problem, as advocates and opponents of pacifism recognise, is often over definitions. To use Vittorio Bufacchi's (2005) useful distinction, pacifists tend to use a *minimal definition* of violence (MDV), identifying it with "physical force deliberately used to cause suffering or injury" (197), and thus associate violence with: "imprisonment, beatings, shootings, bombings and torture" (Martin 2008, 237), whilst property destruction is reduced to being "at the boundary between violence and nonviolence" (237).[8] Non-pacifists draw definitions differently, seeing many actions omitted by MDV as violent. They use an account which is closer to Bufacchi's *comprehensive* definition of violence (CDV). It identifies violence with psychological as well as physical harms and violation of rights (positive as well as negative) (Bufacchi 2005, 197-98). CDV can also include omissions to act as well deliberate actions. Thus actions approved of by pacifists such as sabotage against property (without intending loss of life) are identified as non-violent, whilst for non-pacifists property destruction is a type of violence, though a potentially justifiable one. It is for this reason that Reinhold Niebuhr (1980), who admires Gandhi's methods and goals, thinks it is wrong to describe Gandhi's tactics as non-violent, because they economically damage and psychologically harm his opponents (247).

CDV seems to omit too little such that any sort of violation can be considered a type of violence, losing what is specific about the use of force (Bufacchi 2005, 197 and 199). It does however point to potential defences of forcible action. If existing practices are part of a tradition or social structure that systematically humiliates and excludes social groups, and a minor of act of force disrupts this, then the aggressive intervention is the lesser violent option.

For pacifists the prefigurative principle states that violence should be rejected as a means because it is not a desirable goal. However, certain forms of consensual violence (such as mutually agreed sado-masochism, or proportionate amateur martial arts) could be part of a set of desirable, future social practices. Indeed, the goal might be better thought of as minimising hierarchical violence rather than the complete eradication of violence in all its forms. The reassertion of anti-hierarchical principles identifies the difference between the violence of the oppressor from the violence of those resisting such violence but would not permit force that simply replaced one dominating group with a new master.

A part of the pacifist criticism of violent anti-fascism is that it includes a structural sexism as it prioritises physical confrontation and therefore largely (but not exclusively) male attributes of brute strength (Hann and Tilzey 2003, 241; See also Kelly nd, 11 and Lux 2006, 73). Whilst some in AFA and Antifa did consider direct confrontation to the primary method but point to the inclusion of women in physical confrontation (Kelly nd, 11), many instead saw physical confrontation as one important method amongst many other radical practices, which require different attributes, and thus did not privilege men over women (Hann 2013, 347).

A further criticism, such as that from Escalate (2011), who unlike Blackledge tend to favour prefigurative organisation, justify violent action, but not on prefigurative grounds.

> When we organise in those groups we try to prefigure the world we want to see in our forms of co-operation – we have consensus-based meetings, we adopt specific vocabulary, we work to avoid accidental subordination of participants. Our direct action, however, is of a different sort: we don't want to live in a world of smashed glass and burning barricades, but these are necessary means for political advance. The trashing of Soho is our "transitional demand", not our utopic end-goal. (9)

Whilst organisational forms should be prefigurative, Escalate argue that necessarily violent action, whilst justifiable, is not consistent with prefiguration. However, it is not the smashed glass that prefigures the desired objectives, but the values of the social relations that are formed and challenged by its destruction that are synecdochic of future practices. Bravery and social solidarity is found in confronting hierarchical institutions and contesting exploitative relationships and sometimes this takes the form of breaking glass.

## Conclusion

For reasons of economy, this paper did not differentiate all the specific perspectives from within radical movements or distinguish between varieties of social anarchism and left-communism or the array of Leninisms. Similarly, it has not been possible to discuss the full range and distinctions between other tactics. Nonetheless, this paper draws out some of the important features of the debate between radical anti-fascists about the concept, role and epistemological implications of prefiguration. It demonstrates that ethical theory is not separate to the debates within radical anti-fascist coalitions but is a significant feature of their reflections.

The Leninist tradition, which in contemporary times, largely identifies with Trotsky, is based on negative-consequentialism. It dismisses prefiguration as inadequate to deal with the threat of fascism. However, the pertinence of prefigurative practices has been demonstrated here by showing how "anti-fascism" is not just the direct and intentional opposition to totalitarian-nationalism but also includes the development of radical, goods-rich social activities that are based on principles that are incompatible with fascism.

Consequentialist critics usually identify prefiguration in just the internal sense, with a rejection of goals, a form which is inadequate to deal with major threats. However, as Maeckelbergh points out, prefiguration usually has external, plural goals, with means embodying these desired values and relationships. Plurality of goals, does not mean that a situation of stasis arrives or that some goals, such as anti-fascism cannot be identified as more pressing in a particular context than alternative anti-hierarchical narratives.

There can be convergence between consequentialist approaches and external prefigurative ones when the totalising threat of fascism is so great that it risks encroaching on a vast range of social practices. In these circumstances, skilled practitioners would recognise the threat to their – and adjacent – activities and develop appropriate mutually-assisting counter measures. The difference between consequentialists and radical (prefigurative) responses is not that the latter reject violence or the violation of racists' rights – as these can be consistent with prefiguration – but that for radicals there is no single central authority that can legitimately identify a universal goal and sole form of organisation to structure appropriate responses.

## Endnotes

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[2] In April 2013, the British National Party (BNP) scored 40% of the vote in Maryport South, missing out on a council seat by just 95 votes (Cumbria County Council 2013).
[3] Leaked BNP membership details show that Dumfries has lower than average fascist activism. However, a former BNP supporter, who past affiliations were made public by the press, was elected to the local council in 2012. It is unknown as to whether his fascist past or his disavowal of it impacted electors' decisions.
[4] For some of the troubling aspects of *Searchlight*'s interaction with police agencies that also target the radical left see O'Hara (1993) and the magazine *Notes from the Borderland*.
[5] "Morality" and "ethics" are used interchangeably. Whilst in some versions *ethos* (individual character) is distinguished from *mores* (general principles of right and wrong), the practice based virtue approach adopted here (see later) regards the value of inter-personal relationships to form – and also constitute – productive social activity.
[6] Using JSTOR archive as the basis, between 1961 and 1973, there were 14 published articles that were dedicated to philosophical analyses of "civil disobedience"; in the period 2001-2013, despite the rise in the number of philosophy journals there were just two articles with civil disobedience in the title
[7] Foucault elsewhere identifies differences as well as similarities between totalising discourses and how, for instance they embody racism, (see for instance Michel Foucault 2003, 82-83).
[8] Morris does raise structural violence in a footnote, n4, 253.

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