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This zine contains a timeline, an analysis, and an interview with participants of the riot. Originally appeared in the Spring 2009 issue of Rolling Thunder.

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The Riots in Greece



The Insurrections to Come

There are two things that are certain about December 2008:

1. In Greek society, two social camps have been created. In the first are the youth and people in revolt; opposite them are the petit bourgeois and the landlords. For a moment, the uprising took the characteristics of a civil war, and it's going to continue. The question is whether the majority of the workers who didn't take a side yet will do so and even the odds are against their bosses.

2. There is no longer the feeling of being the losers that I remember in social struggles over the past 25 years. There is a common feeling that we won, we beat the system. For the first time, we saw that the struggles that had happened without the feeling of winning had managed to change the psychology of our whole society. From now on, the bosses will think harder before they bring new measures against students or workers, and if they try to do so we know that they will be afraid of our reaction. It is going to be difficult to murder one of us again, unless they want to play more with the fire that burned down all of Athens.

The last thing I want to say is mostly a wish; it has to do with the spreading of the uprising outside of Greece. Maybe Greece is an "Eastern" society in a way, but we are also children of globalization: we face the same problems and issues as other European and American youth. The solidarity actions and discussions around the world gave us a lot of confidence to continue. The crazy dream of an uprising that explores worldwide is starting to seem less unrealistic. I am sure that in the eyes of capitalists and politicians this dream is truly a nightmare.

VOID: The riots interrupted the cynicism of the authorities, banks, and corporations, radicalized a new generation in Greece, and enabled us to open a dialogue about the social struggles to come. As the slogan of December and Exarchia goes:

WE ARE AN IMAGE OF THE FUTURE.

Following the police killing of 15-year-old Alexandros Grigoropoulos in downtown Athens, Greece was wracked by weeks of unprecedented rioting. Anarchists and students, supported and often joined by significant swaths of the population, clashed with police, destroyed corporate and government property and occupied government buildings, trade union offices, and media outlets, not to mention universities.



ANONYMOUS: Repression has definitely increased since the student movement of 2006. The cops try to surround every demonstration held by anarchists and anti-authoritarians. They attack first, using tear gas and chemicals, and arrest a huge number of people. Our answer has been massive demonstrations and better security- sticks, helmets, masks- when we are alone in the streets, so we can avoid getting surrounded by the police. There's also a great deal of solidarity extended to those who are arrested: continuous demonstrations outside the courts and prisons, legal help, and so on. Thanks to these solidarity actions, the courts are forced to either to release these people or to convict them with smaller punishments.

I think that during this uprising, the cops lost the ball. At the beginning, after the murder, they had orders only to defend, not to attack- to be careful not to kill someone else or be caught on TV beating students. Consequently it was difficult for them to repress the uprising, especially when there were attacks all around Greece.

Of course, the cops are supported by the fascists, who pose as outrageous citizens who want to protect their property in order to attack demonstrators. Fascists are more difficult to fight because they can do everything that is illegal for the police, such as stabbing people or entering the occupations or the asylum in the universities. From our side, we accuse the state of cooperating with the fascists, and this makes our movement bigger, because of the general antifascist sentiment in Greek society.

What do you think the final result of the events of December will be?

ANONYMOUS: I haven't lived through a major economic crisis or uprising, so I can't speak confidently about the ultimate result of the revolt. I hope the struggle will spread to the neighborhoods and everywhere, and bring people together to change our lives and attack the system. At the same time, I am afraid that the left parties will try to control the movement.

place of equality, freedom, and respect for differences, of love and sharing. We need more “Autonomia” in the insurrectionism of the Greek anarchist movement, to make it shine as a paradigm of a new wave of social life and demonstrate this novel survival methodology in the metropolis.

ANONYMOUS: As I mentioned before, we need more intervention in social issues. The uprising gave us the opportunity to overcome the “adolescent stage” – lots of young people participate in the scene, but when they start to work, they insert themselves totally into the system. Because the anarchist and anti-authoritarian scene does not intervene strongly in labor issues, many workers come under the control of the unions and left parties, which play the same role as their bosses. Consequently, workers cannot self-organize, and instead everybody just focuses on individual survival. I think that the evolution of the movement over the coming months will be all the more powerful because of the economic crisis; it’s important to overcome the sectarian tendencies that existed before the uprising if we want to go in a revolutionary direction.

How effective has police repression been in shutting down the anarchist movement? How have people resisted it?

VOID: the dreams and plans of the insurrectionists came true: a huge wave of participation surpassed the anarchists, and for many chaotic days people traveled and fought in the city like ever before, in an unfamiliar time and space. In the same days, of course, they came face to face with the limits of the insurrection. Now people spend hours discussing how to expand popular understanding and invent approaches that will sustain and enrich the struggle. Many people think about ways to link all the different elements of this revolt. The police repression didn’t play a more important role in the conclusion of the riots than physical fatigue. All of us share a feeling of completion and a feeling of beginning, and the police cannot touch those feelings.



workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods. Maybe it's also important that, in contrast to anarchists in the rest of Europe and the USA, we don't live much differently from everyone else our age—we work, we study, we meet each other at bars. My impression of the squats abroad is that most of the people who participate in the movement live a little different than the rest of society.

The other really important thing in the movement is solidarity with arrestees, which makes it more difficult for the state to repress us.

In what ways do you think the anarchist movement in Greece could be better or stronger?

VOID: We need to find more intelligent ways of explaining our ideas to people. We need techniques for communicating with all of society, better ways to frame the struggle in its social context. In a tele-democracy, where politicians are nothing more than tele-vision superstars, our refusal to communicate with or through the mass media “consensus reality” and the propaganda against us. As long as whatever the TV shows “exists” and whatever doesn't appear on TV “doesn't exist,” we will be there with our crazy ideas, dangerous actions, and street fights to break the normality of the TV program, we will use the negative advertisement of our actions to kidnap the fantasies and dreams of the common people. But how can we explain our ideas to everyone? How can we help people to cease to trust the media? How can we come into contact with millions and millions of people?

It will take millions and millions of posters and free pamphlets, traveling from hand to hand in the streets; it will take more free public services in spheres that the government doesn't cover—anarchist doctors and teachers, free food, free accommodation, information, underground culture, and so on. It will also take more and more squats and social centers. If you can start a squat, that is better, but even if it's not possible and put the black or red-and-black flag at the entrance. Start offering the people of your city a living example of a world without racism, patriarchy, or homophobia—a

What things have made the anarchist movement healthy in Greece?

VOID: The separation from subcultural identity politics made people understand that to be an anarchist it takes much more serious participation, creativity, and action than just wearing a t-shirt with the anarchist on it and walking around punk concerts drinking beer and taking pills. Now there is an understanding that to be an anarchist you have to come to demonstrations with banners and black or red-and-black flags, shouting slogans and manifesting an anarchist presence; likewise, you should participate every week in one, two, or three different assemblies to prepare actions or advance struggles. You have to be friends with people you trust 100% to plan anything dangerous; you have to be aware and informed about what is happening in the world in order to decide what the proper course of action is; you have to be crazy and enthusiastic, to feel that you can do incredible things-you have to be ready to give your life, your time, your years in a struggle that will never end. It is healthy not to have expectations, because then you can't be disappointed. You don't expect to win. You are used to appearing, fighting, and then disappearing again; you know how to become invisible as a person and visible as collective power; you know that you are not the center of the universe, but that at any time you can become the center of your society.

ANONYMOUS: The anarchist and anti-authoritarian movement in Greece has been more visible in Greek society over the last few years because it has been involved in more fields of the social and class struggle. In general, even if things are not as ideal as some people outside Greece think, many of us who participate in this movement have the idea that we are no different from the rest of society, we have to face the same problems as those who don't identify as anarchists or anti-authoritarians. They are next to us all the time in our

There is a lot to learn from the uprising in Greece, most of which is not immediately apparent from photographs.

TIMELINE

December 6: Police shoot and kill Alexandros Grigopolous, a 15-year old student, during a minor confrontation in the Athens neighborhood Exarchia. Exarchia is the center of Athens' anarchist community and a frequent site of clashes with police. Within hours, 10,00 people fill the streets of Exarchia, including many anarchists, and begin burning banks, stores, and cars and erecting flaming barricades while fighting riot police; 24 officers are injured the first night. A police station near the Acropolis is attacked and severely damaged. Ermou Street, a strip of posh boutiques, is attacked by enraged crowds, including some from local bars and clubs, who smash windows and loot goods. Anarchists occupy the campus of Athens Polytechnic as a base for organizing; Greek police are barred by law from entering universities, making them frequent sites of occupation by anti-authoritarians. The nearby Schools of Law and Economics are quickly occupied as well. Riots also erupt in the northern city of Thessaloniki, where anarchists attack City Hall, two police precincts, several shops, and a bank, as well as Greek television channel vehicles.

December 7: In an attempt to calm the rioting, the police officers responsible for the shooting are arrested and condemned by Greek politicians. That afternoon, tens of thousands of people pour into the streets all around the country. In Athens, three banks, a supermarket, and dozens of shops are attacked with Molotov cocktails and destroyed, while dozens of other symbols of capitalism—including 17 banks, a favorite target of Greek, anarchists—are damaged during an afternoon march intended to reach police headquarters. Police respond with rubber bullets and tear gas, splintering the marchers, who continued targeting corporate business as they retreat. Riots also erupt in the western city of Patras, where a police officer is beaten by students. On the tourist islands of Crete and Corfu, three banks are damaged by Molotov's, and is a city hall, and a spontaneous marches fill the streets. Everywhere, police attempt to control the crowds with massive volleys of tear gas.

December 8: In Athens, hundreds of high school students gather in front of police headquarters to protest the killing. The students march towards the city center, with one group attacking a police station and overturning police cars. A demonstration is called by the Law School occupation for the early evening in the city's center. About 20,000 people gather and some of the most severe rioting of the entire month begins almost immediately. Dozens of shops, banks, and luxury hotels have their windows smashed and are subsequently burned as youths fight running battles with riot police. Rioters torch the massive Christmas tree in central Syntagma Square. In Thessaloniki, hundreds of masked youths hurl rocks and Molotov cocktails at storefront and riot police, who respond with tear gas. In Athens, rioters surround a fire truck as it tries to extinguish a blaze, smashing the truck's windows and setting it alight. Elsewhere, rioters loot a store selling hunting weapons and swords. Burning barricades also light up the night sky in the city of Larissa in central Greece.

What role have subcultural groups such as punk and squatting played in making the uprising possible?

VOID: After '93, there was a strong initiative in the Greek anarchist movement-accompanied by many internal conflicts-that eliminated the influence of "subcultural" styles inside the movement. This means that there is no punk, rock, metal, or any other subcultural identity that defines the Greek anarchist movement; you can be whatever you like, you can listen to whatever music you like, you can have whatever style or fashion you like, but that is not a political identity.

In the street fights of December, many "emos" participated, together with the hippy freaks and ravers, punks, heavy metal boys and girls, and also trendy, "normal" kids and students who like Greek music. It has to be social and political consciousness, social critiques and collective understanding that bring you to participate in the anarchist movements, not fashion. Of course, for at least the last 19 years, the Void Network and similar collectives have played the role of offering a cultural introduction to radical political spaces. Such groups organize many cultural and political events, festivals, and parties every year and have the power to attract thousands and thousand of people to underground cultures. But even the Void Network doesn't create subcultural identities or separate different subcultures; instead we try to organize events that involve most of the underground cultures. It's true, though, that the majority of the people in the scene attend and participate in most of the events of the d.i.y. underground; many events are organized every month in liberated spaces.

ANONYMOUS: In Greece, the music subcultures-punk and hip hop-are the same as in the west. Housing squats are not very common, because most young people live with their parents until their 30s, more or less. Of course, the subcultures influence the political thinking of the youth.

Many actions, like the attacks on supermarkets and the free distribution of stolen products, have become popular and accepted. The attacks on banks, especially following the economic crisis, are also accepted, and the attacks on police stations have been adopted and utilized by high-school students around the country. IN one way or another, we have been the first subject on the news for the last 15 days [as of late December]. Generally speaking, with our participation in students' or workers' struggles and also in ecological struggles, every week some action offers visibility to the anarchist movement. This doesn't mean that "anarchism" is taken seriously by the majority of Greek people; most people still believe the media portrayal of us as "masketeers" and criminals, and don't have any idea how an anarchist society could function-that includes most anarchists, also, who refuse to address this question! But our actions and ideas have a strong influence now on left and progressive people. It's no longer possible to say that we don't exist, and our existence is radicalizing the majority of the younger generation.

ANONYMOUS: Those who are politically active recognize anarchists and anti-authoritarians as part of the movement, because this scene intervenes in a lot of fields around Greece: workplace initiatives, self-organized spaces in schools and the universities (the "stekia," which increases in number after the student movement of 2006-2007), neighborhood and environmental issues including free spaces in the neighborhoods, supporting immigrants, and fighting sexism. Before the December uprising, a lot of commodity expropriations from big supermarket chains were carried out by groups of anarchists and anti-authoritarians. Groups would enter a supermarket close to a street market and take as much of the basic foodstuffs as they could-oil, bread, cheese, and cleaning products. The re-appropriated goods were then distributed for free to the people at the street market. Society supported these actions. Consequently those who previously formed their opinions from the media were forced to think differently, and with the spread of this revolt some of them have changed their minds.

December 9: The funeral for Alexandros Grigoropoulos, in a southern Athens suburb, is attended by 6000 people. Police fire tear gas at the crowd when mourners refuse to disperse after the ceremony; an afternoon of street fighting ensues. Locals gathering the streets, shouting at the police to stop firing gas in the residential area. As midnight approaches, those occupying Athens Polytechnic set the surrounding streets ablaze with firebombs as they target police who again respond with tear gas. In the western port of Patras, 500 youths lay siege to the police headquarters during the evening; approximately 100 of them subsequently make for the sanctuary of university buildings, where clashes continue. Anarchists also occupy a local TV station to broadcast their own message.



By December 12, police had used over 4600 capsules of tear gas, and were seeking more from Israel and Germany.*

December 10: A general strike planned by the country's main business union prior to the start of the riots paralyzes the country. Foreign and domestic flights are grounded, banks and schools are shut, and hospitals run on emergency service as hundreds of thousands walk off the job. Clashes break out at Athens' main court complex, where the two police officers accused in the fatal shooting are testifying. Youths hurl Molotov cocktails at the courts and police fire tear gas. The protesters also attack and damage a television satellite truck. Members of a fascist organization attempt to suppress ongoing riots and occupations going on in the city of Patras with the tacit approval of police. The Greek consulate in Paris is occupied; solidarity actions also take place in Frankfurt, Moscow, Istanbul, and many others cities.

December 11: 35 Police stations are blockaded in Athens by high-school students and their parents; students also attack the entrance of a prison. A mix of anarchists and local residents occupy a town hall in the suburbs of Athens and hold an evening assembly. The number of school occupations around the country increases in spite of the efforts of the communist party's youth wing to prevent protesters from entering campuses.

December 12: Despite heavy rains, several hundred protesters erect burning barricades in Athens and attack police with rocks and flares. Riot police respond by firing tear gas and chasing the protesters through parts of the city, who chant "murderers out" and use laser pointers to attempt to obscure the vision of police.

So the 20,000 anarchists in Greece started it, and continued it when everybody else returned to normality. And we have to mention that the fear of returning to normality helped us keep up the fight for ten days more, putting ourselves into great danger, as acts of vengeance for the assassination of our comrade were transformed, in our fantasies, into preparations for a general strike. Now European society knows once and for all what a social insurrection looks like, and that it is not difficult to change the world in a few weeks.

But you need everyone to participate and play a role. The young people of Greece have sent an invitation to all the societies of Europe. We are now awaiting their response.

ANONYMOUS: People see the role anarchists and anti-authoritarians in initiating and maintaining the uprising, while the media talk about "youth" in order to separate the political scene from the rest of society. One positive thing is that the media has ceased using the dismissive term "Koukouloforos" ("the hooded ones"); at this point everybody has realized that the riots aren't just the work of ten people in sweatshirts.

How much visibility do anarchists have in Greece in general? How "seriously" is anarchism taken by the majority of Greek people?

VOID: You could say that it has only been three or four years now since anarchists started to take ourselves "seriously." It is only in the past few years that we have succeeded in expanding beyond the limitations of the anti-police strategy that characterized our efforts for 25 years. In that strategy, we would attack the police, that would arrest people, and we would do solidarity actions, over and over again. Of course, the anti-police attacks continue, and the prisoner solidarity movement is stronger than ever, but the anti-social element inside the anarchist movement is under conscious self-control and we can speak and act for the benefit of our whole society now, using tactics that can be comprehended by at least part of that society.

tions as a means of struggle. The same goes for other small non-governmental parties.

What was the role of anarchists in starting and continuing the actions? How clearly was their participation seen by the rest of society?

VOID: Over the past few years, anarchists have created a network of communities, groups, organizations, squats, and social centers in almost all the major cities in Greece. Many don't like each other, as there are significant differences between groups and individuals. This helps the movement, though, as the movement now can encompass a variety of approaches. Many different parts of the anarchist movement and, all together, push each other- in a positive, if antagonistic, way- to communicate with society at large. This communication includes creating neighborhood assemblies, participating in social struggles, and planning actions that are relevant and meaningful to a wide range of people. After 30 years of anti-social anarchism, today's Greek anarchist movement, despite all its problems, limitations, and internal conflicts, has the capability to look beyond the anarchist microcosm and take actions that improve society at large in ways that are readily apparent. Of course, it will take a lot of effort to realize this in practice.

As for the role of anarchists in starting and continuing the actions, especially at the beginning- Saturday and Sunday, December 6 and 7- and also in the continuation after Wednesday, December 10, anarchists constituted the vast majority. In the middle days, especially on Monday when the destructive Armageddon took place, students and immigrants played a very important role. But the vast majority of students found it easy to feel satisfied after one, two, or three days of smashing, and then went home or attended demonstrations with a more pacifist atmosphere. Likewise, immigrants had to face a very strong backlash from locals, and were afraid to return to the streets.

December 13: Youths firebomb a police station near Exarchia, where a silent vigils marking one week since the murder was broken up by riot police earlier in the day. Rioters in Athens also smash cash dispensers and shatter dozens of shop windows, carting off mobile telephones, watches, clothes, and computers. Dozens of youths attack a police station in central Athens, at least three banks, several stores, and a government building with Molotov cocktails and broken paving stones.

December 14: During the day, four major radio stations are occupied by protesters who broadcast their views, read communiqués, and call for more people to participate in the protests; additionally two radio stations in Athens and one in Thessaloniki operate from within the occupied universities. Also in Thessaloniki, firebombs and home-made incendiary devices are used to attack the offices of the Greek communist party (KKE), which at first attempted to co-opt the riots and then denounces them.

December 15: In Larissa, youths are met with tear gas as they hurl stones at the city's main police station and then retreat to the occupied medical school. In the northwestern Greek city of Ionnina, groups of young protesters take over the municipal radio station after attacking the offices of the local newspaper. In Athens, more than 4000 students hurl eggs, oranges, and flour at officers outside the main police headquarters and block one of the capital's main avenues, where they chant slogans, set fire to dumpsters, and throw projectiles at riot police who eventually respond with tear-gas. In the afternoon, a coordinated attack on a police station by anarchists occupying Athens Polytechnic leaves ten police cars destroyed and six cops slightly injured across the country, students are reportedly occupying nearly 600 school buildings in protest.

December 16: Protesters hang giant banners from the Acropolis, calling in multiple languages for resistance and demonstrations across Europe. A dozen anarchists on motorcycles set fire to a police bus in central Athens; no one is hurt. In Thessaloniki, a bank and a local government office are firebombed before dawn.

December 17: A group of anarchists storm a supermarket in Thessaloniki, filling shopping carts with food before charging past the checkouts and distributing the booty to passerby. In Athens, 5000 protesters swamp riot police outside parliament; a breakaway group attempts to breach a cordon guarding the central Syntagma Square complex, and police respond with teargas. When the initial attack at the parliament is repelled, protesters return with a hail of ranges before setting cars, dumpsters, and furniture from outdoor cafes ablaze as they retreat towards Athens Polytechnic. Meanwhile, the headquarters of the country's largest labor union- the bureaucratic General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE)- is occupied by insurgent workers; and open workers' assembly is hosted in the building.

December 18: 7000 students and other protesters march through central Athens. A group breaks away from the peaceful march to hurl rocks and firebombs at police and buildings near parliament, overturn a car, and set fire to dumpsters; they also splash police with red paint. Firefighters and police rush to prevent another group of protesters from burning down the city's main Christmas tree, which was replaced after the first was torched.

December 19: Thousands of youths demonstrate as anger flares following the shooting of another 17-year-old student in the western suburbs of Athens. Students holding a banner reading "Their Terrorism Will Not Work" march through the streets to protest the shooting, which many see as an a police station in central Athens, at least three banks, several stores, and a government building with Molotov cocktails and broken paving stones.

ANONYMOUS: With uprisings, protests, demonstrations, and occupations people are coming closer and meeting in the streets and in buildings that were formerly only places where commodities were transferred. Revolt enables people to develop an idea of a collective and communal life. Another slogan that expresses this situation is "Call your loneliness or go out again to the street of fire," mostly used after the end of the student movement of 2006-2007.

Did political parties succeed in co-opting energy from the uprising?

VOID: In "real" numbers [as of late December], the Socialists increased their lead over the right wing government, gaining an 8% lead in the polls; the "European Social Forum communists" lost 1% even though they helped the revolt, but still they are in third place with 12%; the Communist Party has 8%, the Nationalist neo-facists 4.5%, and the Green Party is holding steady at 3.5%.

It is also interesting that the leader of the Socialists appears now to be regarded as the most "capable of governing the country" after many years of being less popular than the right wing minister. The riots had a great effect on the political scene: the political parties seemed unable to understand, explain, or react to the massive wave of violence and participation from every level of society. Their announcements were irreverent to what was really happening. Their popularity decreased dramatically among the younger population, who don't see themselves in the logic and the politics of the political parties and don't feel repressed by them.

ANONYMOUS: SYRIZA, one reformist alternative party of the left- it can be compared with the green parties- increased significantly in popularity after the student movement of 2006-7, because it addressed the "700 Euro generation" [the younger Greeks from whom the average salary is 700 Euro a month] and the fight for a free education. Also, it is the only party that supports those who are imprisoned, in contrast with the communist party KKE that always insists resistance is only the work of the provocateurs. Now it is difficult for SYRIZA to co-opt energy from the uprising because they support peaceful demonstra

What other motivations, besides rage against the police and the economy, that inspired people to participate?

VOID: The personal and collective need for adventure; the need to participate in making history; the chaotic negation of any kind of politics, political parties, and “serious” political ideas; the hatred of any TV star, sociologist, or expert who claims to be able to analyze you as a social phenomenon, the need to be heard as you are; the enthusiasm of fighting against the authorities and ridiculing the riot police, the power in your hear and the fire in your hands, the amazing experience of throwing Molotovs and stones at the cops in front of the parliament, in the expensive shopping districts, or in your small silent town, in your village, in the square of your neighborhood.

Other motivations include the shared feeling of planning an action with your best friends, making it happen, and later hearing people tell you about this action as an incredible story that they heard from someone else; the enthusiasm of reading about some action that you did with your friends in a newspaper or TV program from the other side of the planet; the feeling that you are responsible for creating stories that will become examples for the future struggles. It is also the great celebrative fun of smashing shops, taking products and burning them, seeing the false promises of capitalism smoldering in the streets; the hatred for all authorities, the need to take part in a collective ceremony of revenge for he murder of a person that could have been you, the personal vendetta of feeling that the police have to pay for the death of Alexis across the whole country; the need to send a powerful message to the government that if police violence increases, we have the power to fight back- that they have to take us seriously because we are everywhere and we are going to change everything.

December 20: Hundreds of rioters battle police in central Athens following a memorial gathering at the site where Alexandros was murdered. The rioters emerge from Athens Polytechnic to launch coordinated attacks against police, throwing rocks and petrol bombs and erecting roadblocks. In the evening, masked assailants break into the offices of a credit reporting agency and set it on fire; all of its records are destroyed before the fire is extinguished. 1000 people attend a solidarity demonstration in Hamburg, Germany.

December 21: Six police vehicles are torched by hooded assailants in the west Athens district of Nea Philadelphia in the early morning; the vehicles were parked outside the police accounting department, which is also damaged. Around the same time, clashes with police continue around Athens Polytechnic, with protesters lobbing petrol bombs. An anti-racism rally in Syntagma Square leads to another violent confrontation between protestors and riot police when a group tries to deposit bags of rubbish at the foot of the new Christmas Tree; police use tear gas to disperse the protestors. A solidarity march in San Francisco enters and upscale mall, where a small riot ensues after police attempt to arrest marchers.

December 22: On the resort island of Crete, in the early morning hours, assailants throw petrol bombs at a bank, which is completely destroyed in the ensuing blaze. The arsonists attack another bank before moving on to a car dealership. In Athens, the administration of Athens Polytechnic gives Greek police the authority to raid its grounds. The occupation of the GSEE headquarters ends voluntarily.

December 23: More than 3000 protesters chanting “Cops, Pigs, Murderers,” which has become the unofficial slogan of the youth protests, march through Athens, during which a group of youths overturn a police car; the march keeps many stores in downtown Athens closed. A group of high-school students stage a rally in front of the education ministry, which they announce will be their last before the holidays. Meetings occur at Athens Polytechnic to discuss the future of the occupation; it is decided that it will end voluntarily at the end of the week. Earlier, shots are fired at a riot police bus passing the Athens Polytechnic campus, although none of the police on board are injured. The attacks assumed by many to be the work of provocateurs attempting to create a justification for police to raid the campus.

December 24: On Christmas Eve, about 700 protesters march peaceful through Athens’ main shopping district to demand the release of arrestees. At the city’s main cathedral, protestors chanting “Priests, thieves, pedophiles” spray paint slogans and anarchist symbols on the 19th century building’s marble columns and tear down a Greek flag; cathedral officials cancel a scheduled Christmas Eve service after the vandalism. Riot police cordon off the central Syntagma Square to protect the capital’s main Christmas tree. An anarchist group calling itself Nocturnal Arson Insurrection claims responsibility for a blast targeting the offices of a far-right political party earlier that morning; the homemade device, comprising several gas canisters, caused damage but no injuries.

December 25 and on: Christmas day is mostly quiet in Greece. The riots wind down as the holidays send many home. But the following day, a government official’s car is firebombed in front of his house in Athens, while assailants target a bank with a Molotov cocktail and another group attacks a police car. The struggle continues over the following weeks.

On the other hand, it is true that because of the economy Greeks between the ages of 25 and 35 cannot start families. Greece is the most under populated society in all Europe. But here we don’t talk about that as the cause of the revolt. Young people are angry and they hate the police, capitalist cynicism, and the government in a natural, instinctual way that doesn’t require explanations or a political agenda. The local media avoid speaking in depth about social conditions here the way the English, French, and US media have. Local corporate TV stations attempt to pass off lies about chaotic “masketeers” with no ideas and no social identity because the moral influence of anarchists is so strong now that if they start to talk about our ideas seriously on television society could explode. With the exception of some TV programs and newspapers, most of the mass media are trying to keep economic issues separate from the revolt.

Even the leftists of the May ’68 generation, when they speak to the media, say that the riots are not political expressions of the needs and hopes of the people- that anarchists and a young people don’t have the ability to express a political agenda, and the people need other kinds of political representation. Of course, all this has little influence on the young people who will participate in the social struggles of the future, as after this struggle there is a lot of tension and a great distance between younger people and any kind of political leadership or authority.

ANONYMOUS: The economic crisis is obvious in every aspect of our lives at the moment. There are intense layoffs and the Greek state is close to declaring bankruptcy. Greece has the lowest salaries in Europe, the highest percentage of unemployed young people, and the greatest number of people living under the poverty line. There is a general feeling that the majority of society is working just to make the banks richer. The politicians, media moguls, and priests are all involved in scandals involving billions of Euros, which come from the wealth we produce. When all this is happening and the government says it is going to give 28 billion to the banks because of the economic crisis and we’ll have to work more for less money to save the banks, then it is a logical that a huge number of people will support attacks on banks.

December 2008. In 1944, the agreement of Varkiza was signed by the communist party, leading the partisans to surrender all firearms. From then until the dictatorship there was a repressive state supported by the right wing and fascists.

VOID: In 1973, the young people were the only ones who took the risk to revolt against the seven-year-running dictatorship; even if this was not the only cause of the end of dictatorship, it remains in the collective memory that the students saved Greece from the dictators and the domination of the US. It is a common belief that young people will put themselves at great risk for the benefit of all, and this produces a feeling of hope and a tolerance of their actions. Of course, this is an old story, and though it influences the context of the confrontations, it is not mentioned in reference to them.

Another influence comes from the student struggles of 1991 and 1995 against the privatization of education, which forced the government to change plans and preserved the public education to the present day. Granted, the revolt of December 2008 was probably the apex of the anarchist movement in Greece thus far, as it appeared all around the country and with a great deal of influence on the actions and ideas of a general part of society; but the earlier student struggles, especially in Athens in 1991, were more visible and more generalized.

Do you think the economic crisis was as influential in setting the stage for the uprising as the corporate media alleged?

VOID: Young people from the wealthy area of Athens also attacked police stations in their neighborhoods, so even the class war Marxists are at a loss to explain why this is happening. The separation of the rich and poor doesn't seem to matter as much as long-existing solidarity and participation in the fight for equality and justice.



A memorial at the site where Alexandros was murdered.



the revolt, and many of them were beneficial for our cause; some were probably trapped by their need to participate in the spirit of the time, while others were using the situation as an opportunity to honestly express their real ideas. The “general public” is angry about the murder of a 15-year-old boy by a police officer and they hate the police much more than before; anyway, nobody liked the police in the first place. The majority of “normal” people in Greece don’t trust the right wing government or the past (and probably future) socialist government, and they don’t like the police, expensive shops, or banks. Now a new public opinion is appearing that includes all of the social and ethical justifications for revolt. If it was difficult to govern Greece before, now it will be much more difficult.

ANONYMOUS: A great part of society supported the young people, for many reasons: the murder of the child, the economic crisis, the general decadence of the Greek state. The general consensus was something like “no more,” “the children are right.” On the other hand, the conservative/fascistic part of the society—which is not so big here—focused on looting and damage to property, alleging that the workers would have to pay for it.

How important to the context of these events is the legacy of the dictatorship in Greece? How does it influence popular opinion?

ANONYMOUS: In general, 19th century Greek history was characterized by repressive regimes rather than social peace and consent. The last example of that was the dictatorship. Since then, there have been 35 years of social peace. During these years, police repression and brutality have continued: state murders, torture, cooperation between police and fascists. This has been highlighted consistently in anarchist and left propaganda to reveal the parallels between democracy and dictatorship.

A common slogan in the uprising was “the agreement of Varkiza broke up,” relating the events of December 1944 to

Did any conflicts emerge between participants in the uprising?

VOID: The Communist Party separated itself from anarchists and leftists, organizing separate demonstrations. Also, the announcements that the Communist Party published, their statements in the corporate media, their speeches to the parliament, and the negative propaganda that they carried on against all leftist organizations prove that they area a real enemy of social change.

ANONYMOUS: Some little problems occurred in the squatted places with people addicted to heroin or who stole things from the squats. There was a lot of discussion about eh commodity expropriation, when it was used for personal profit by selling stuff on the black market. Leftists tried to stop these actions, arguing that the people who do this are only thieves. In the end they didn't manage to stop them. Also, leftists unsuccessfully tried to stop the clashes and attacks by making chains separating the demonstrators from the rioters.

What is the opinion of the "general public" about the actions?

VOID: What is called the "general public" during a period of tele-democracy is something that demands a lot of consideration.

Generally speaking, the "general public" feels fear when the TV says that we were "burning the poor people's shops," but the people know well what kind of shops are in the expensive districts where the riots took place; they feel fear when the TV says that angry immigrants came out to the streets and looted, but they also know that the immigrants are poor and desperate, and that it was only a minority of them that came to the streets. Many artists, theoreticians, sociologists, and other such personages offered explanations about

Trouble in Paradise: Economic Crisis, Social Upheaval, and Anarchist Infrastructure

Greece is no longer ruled by a dictatorship, as it was until 35 years ago. According to the common sense of our era, there is no reason to riot in a democracy, Even if an employee of the state accidentally kills someone in the course of carrying out his duties, such misfortunes are simply an unfortunate side effect of the necessary role of the authorities in keeping the peace. When rioting does break out, it must be the work of a criminal minority not mature enough to understand the benefits and responsibilities of democracy; if it spreads, the only possible explanation is that a temporary irregularity in the economy is preventing citizens from participating in the capitalist market. The idea that government and capitalism themselves might be undesirable-that no authority should have the power to kill people in the first place-is unthinkable.

Accordingly, as soon as the scale of the repose to Alexander's murder became clear, the corporate media turned away from the banners decrying police brutality and unaccountable authority, seizing instead on the idea that the unrest was the result of poor economic prospects for young Greeks. Some corporate outlets went so far as to announce-in language that might be less surprising in a magazine lie this one- that the events in Greece might presage the second coming of the anti-globalization movement vanquished after September 11, 2001. Though that would hardly be unwelcome, we should e careful about taking up any narrative from the corporate media, least it be a Trojan horse.

Are we to believe that-were the economy more stable-it would be acceptable to shoot 15-year-olds? In the years leading up to December 2008, the police gunned down countless people in the United States without anyone smashing a single store

window. Is this simply because we had a lower unemployment rate? If we accept that the rage vented in Greece originated in economic conditions, the implication is that it could be dispelled by economic solutions- and there are capitalist solutions for the crisis in no shorter supply than socialist ones. The exploitation and the unemployment currently rampant in Greece could be exported to some meeker nation, or enough credit could be extended to the disaffected stone-throwers that they would come to identify as middle class themselves. These approaches have worked before; one might even argue that they had driven the process of capitalist globalization.

If Greece could somehow be transformed into Sweden- if every nation could be Sweden, without any having to be Nigeria- would it be OK to shoot teenagers then? They shoot anarchists in Sweden too, remember- for example, during the protest outside the European Union summit in Gothenburg in June 2001.

So to the extent to which the Greek resistance is simply an expression of frustration at dim financial prospects, it can be defused or co-opted. But here are other forces at work that are invisible through the corporate lens.

Masked anarchists setting fires and fighting the police have been common in Greece since before the turn of the century. In 1999, shortly before the Seattle WTO protests, there were major riots during a visit from Bill Clinton. At the time, the economy was livelier- and the socialists were in power, which seems to contradict the theory that the current unrest is simply a result of dissatisfaction with the conservative government.

On the contrary, the rioting in Greece wasn't simply an inevitable result of economic recession, but the fruit of decades of anarchist organizing. Through the rioting was provoked by the murder of Alexandros, it was only possible because of preexisting infrastructures and social currents- otherwise, such murders would catalyze uprisings in the US as well. Such an immediate and resolute response would not

Which of the tactics used in the uprising had been used before in Greece? Did they spread in the course of this rebellion? If they did, how did that occur?

VOID: Most of the tactics used in this struggle have been used here for a long time now. The most important new characteristic of this uprising was the immediate outbreak of actions all around the country. The assassination of a young boy in the most important area of anarchist activity provoked an instantaneous reaction; within five minutes of his death, anarchist cells all over the country had been activated. In some cases, the police were informed much later than the anarchists as to why they were being attacked. For many, it was a surprise that so many young people adopted the tactics of "anarchist violence, smashing and burning," but this was a result of the generalized influence that anarchists have had over the past four years.

ANONYMOUS: All of these tactics had been used before by anarchists and anti-authoritarians, but until the December revolt they were repressed by police and resulted in lots of arrests. The actions of the first night were mostly carried out by anarchists and anti-authoritarians; on the second day, the uprising spread to the political left, and on the third day the students and a great part of the rest of society took part. The students were encouraged by the determination and passion of the first people who reacted and the effectiveness of their direct action. And, of course, we should not forget the anger about the murder of Alexis that sparked the revolt.

Concerning the spread of the actions beyond anarchists and anti-authoritarians, I think it's not necessary to have experience to throw a stone, make a barricade, or smash a shop window. We saw students 13 or 14 years old making Molotov cocktails.

e.) Leftists organized concerts in public spaces for underground bands and politically conscious pop stars. The biggest one in Athens involved more than 40 performers and drew over 10,000 people.

f.) Controlled student demonstrations were organized by the Communist Party. Many of these attracted significantly fewer participants than the more spontaneous student demonstrations.

ANONYMOUS: There was also commodity expropriation. On December 8, the peak of the uprising, a lot of people- mostly immigrants- participated in this. There was also a great deal of organized commodity expropriation to support the occupations.

How many of the participants had previously been involved in similar actions?

VOID: Of the participants, several thousand were experienced anarchist insurrectionists, anti-authoritarians, and libertarian autonomists. There were also several thousand young people who had been radicalized over the preceding three years during the struggles for Social Insurance and against the privatization of education, and also in the huge spontaneous demonstrations that took place during the fires that burned almost 25% of the natural areas of Greece during the summer of 2007.

We estimate that for about 30% of the people, this was their first rioting.

have occurred if anarchists in Greece had not developed a culture conducive to it. Thanks to a network of social centers, a deep-seated sense that neighborhoods such as the one in which Alexandros was killed are liberated zones off-limits to police, and a tradition of resistance extending back through generations, Greek anarchists felt entitled to their rage and capable of acting upon it. In the preceding years, a series of struggles against the prison system, the mistreatment of immigrants, and the privatization of schools had given innumerable young people experience in militant action. As soon as the text messages circulated announcing the murder, Greek anarchists knew exactly how to respond, because they had done so time and gain before.

The general public in Greece is already sympathetic to resistance movements, owing to the heritage of struggle against the US-supported dictatorship. In this regard, Greece is similar to Chile, another nation noted for the intensity of its street conflicts and class warfare. With the murder of Alexandros, anarchists finally had a narrative that was compelling to a great number of people. In another political context, liberals or other opportunists might have been able to exploit this tragedy to their own ends, but the Greek anarchists forestalled this possibility by immediately seizing the initiative and framing the terms of the conflict.

So whatever the corporate media alleged, the riots in Greece were not about the economy. That is to say, they were about the economy, but not just the economic hardships accompanying the recession-they were also a revolt against the exploitation, alienation, and hierarchy inherent in the capitalist system, all of which set the stage for police to murder teenagers whether or not there is widespread unemployment.

To repeat, if alienation and hierarchy alone were sufficient to inspire effective resistance, we'd see a lot more if it in the United States. The decisive factor in Greece was not the economy, nor the brutality of the police, but cumulative efforts that built a vibrant anarchist movement. There is no shortcut around developing an

analogous movement in the US if we want to be capable of similar responses to oppression and injustice.

Anarchists in the United States face a much different context than their Greek colleagues. Greece is a peripheral participant in the European Union, while the US remains the epicenter of global capitalism, with a correspondingly more powerful repressive apparatus. The consequences of participating in confrontations with police are potentially more severe in the US, at least in proportion to the support available to arrestees. Much of the population is more conservative, and radical and oppressed communities are more fragmented, owing to the tremendous numbers of people in prison and the transience enforced by the job market. There is little continuity in the traditions of resistance-in most communities the collective anarchist memory does not stretch back beyond a decade at eh most. The events in Greece are inspiring, but US anarchists can probably learn more from the infrastructures behind them than from the superficial aspects of the clashes. We might start by noting the role of the occupied universities as safe zones that provided a nerve center for the revolt, and brainstorming about how to create similar spaces on this continent.

Likewise, radicals in the US can draw inspiration from Greek anarchists without forgetting what is worthwhile in local anarchist communities. Though Greek anarchists clearly excel at confrontation, this does not guarantee that they are equally equipped to contest internal hierarchies and forms of oppression. The capacity to work out conflicts and maintain a horizontal distribution of power is as essential to the anarchist project as any kind of offense or defense. It would be unfortunate if fascination with the Greeks led US anarchists to de-prioritize discussions about consent, consensus-based decision-making, and privilege.

What different forms did the actions take?

VOID: a.) Smashing, looting, and burning were the primary tactics used by young people. They often attacked expensive shopping districts, opened the luxury shops, took everything inside, and set fire to it in order to counteract the effects of the tear gas in the air. Many turned cars upside down to serve as barricades, keeping the police at a distance and thus creating liberated areas. The police used over 4600 tear gas bombs- nearly 4 tons -but people set countless fires, enough to maintain areas in which you could breathe despite this chemical warfare.

When the thousands of people on the streets realized that the black smoke of the fires would cancel out the white smoke of the tear gas, they took up this tactic of setting fires. Other tactics included smashing up the pavement with hammers to produce stones for use as projectiles, and, of course, producing and throwing Molotov cocktails. This last tactic was used especially to force riot police to fear and respect the demonstrators, and also in order to control the space and time of an attack and escape.

b.) Attacks with sticks, stones, and Molotov cocktails were carried out against countless banks, police stations, and police cars across the country. In smaller cities, banks and police were the primary or only targets, as the small-scale society and face-to-face relations discouraged attacks on shops, with the exception of a few multinational franchises.

c.) Groups of 50-70 people carried out hundreds of symbolic occupations in all kinds of public buildings, municipal offices, public service offices, theaters, radio stations, TV stations, and other buildings. Also, there were many symbolic acts of sabotage and blockades of streets, highways, offices, metro stations, public services, and so on, usually accompanied by the distribution of thousands of pamphlets.

d.) Every day there were silent protests, street theater, and non-violent actions in front of the parliament and in other cities. Most of these were brutally attacked by police.



Alexandros Funeral



Uprisers build fires to cancel out tear gas

The Insurrections to Come

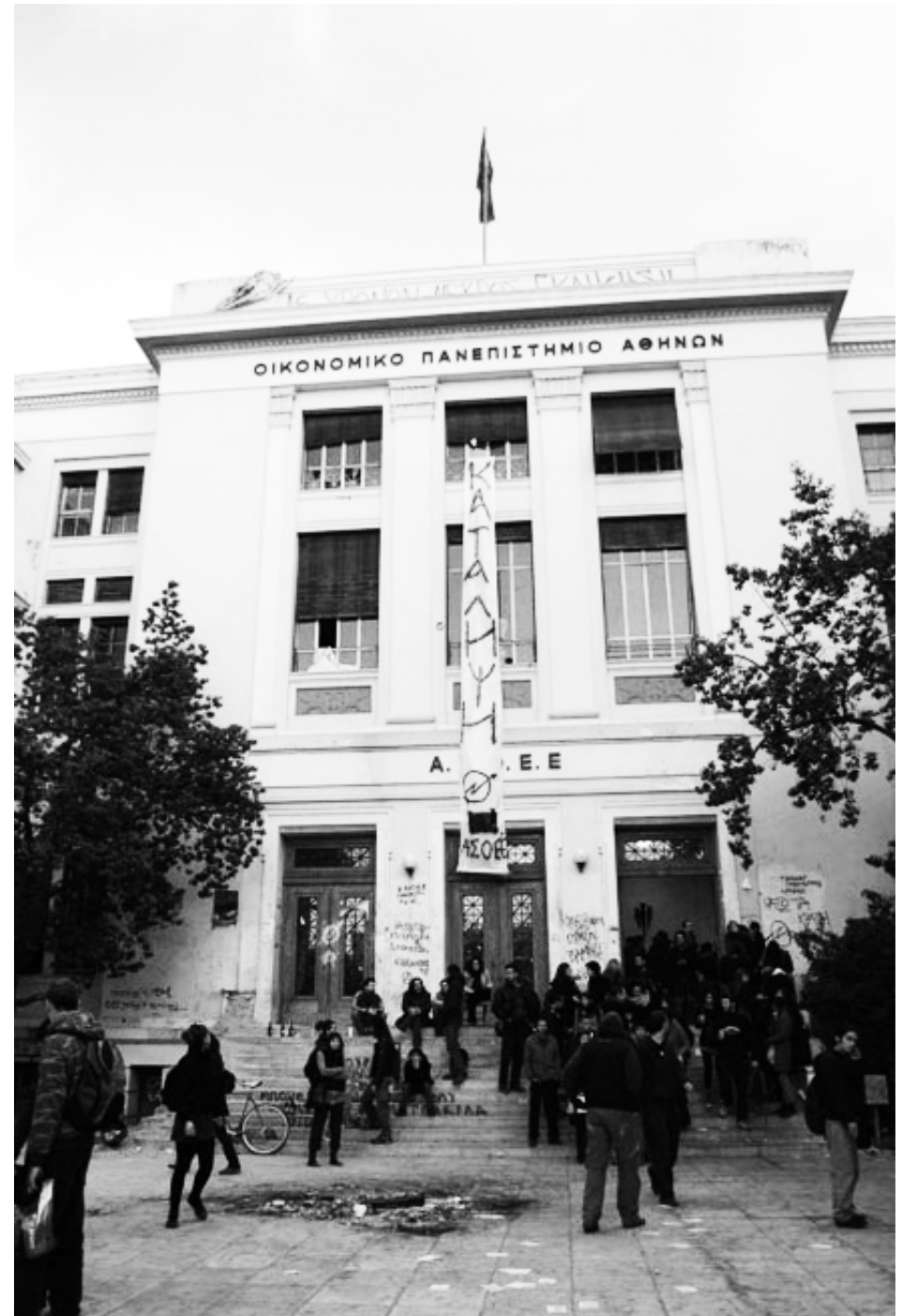
At best, the events in Greece might help reframe the global context the way the Zapatista revolt did in 1994. The Greek riots are hardly the only recent conflict to occupy the world stage—tragically, the Israeli invasion of Gaza occurred immediately afterward*—but they may be the most promising, in that they were explicitly directed against hierarchical power.

Most current hostilities, even those not organized by governments, are not as promising. Not everyone who takes up arms outside the state's monopoly on violence is fighting for the abolition of hierarchy. Nationalist campaigns, fundamentalist crusades, religious conflicts, ethnic strife, and the gang warfare of illegal capitalism pit people against each other without any hope of liberation. Earlier in 2008, for example, South African rioters angry about their economic prospects carried out a series of brutal attacks on immigrant workers. Not only is there no guarantee that economic crises will produce riots, but when they do produce them there is no guarantee that this will be for the best.

We have to set visible precedents for liberation struggles if we hope future conflicts will pit the oppressed against their oppressors rather than against each other. This is especially important in times of crisis, when the initiative is up for grabs—if we do not seize it liberals or fascists certainly will. Greece may be one such precedent, but it is far from enough. We can create similar precedents on smaller scales in the US by taking the initiative to determine the character of confrontations with authority. The mobilization at last summer's Republican National Convention was arguably an example of this, though certainly not the only format for it; the riots in Oakland offers another model.

*In one heartening example of effective solidarity, the US government canceled a major arms shipment to Israel that had been scheduled to pass through Greek ports after Greek anarchists threatened to mobilize massive resistance.

Today, party communism is largely discredited, and most resistance movements do not see seizing state power as feasible or desirable. This leaves two roads for proponents of social change. One is to support Obama, Lula, and Chavez, who cash in on dissent to re-legitimize the state form and, as if incidentally, their own power. On the other hand, there is the possibility of a struggle against hierarchy itself- whether waged consciously, as in Greece, or as a result of compete social and economic marginalization, as it was in the suburbs of Paris in 2005. Such a path offers a long struggle with no victory in sight, but it is our only hope of reaching a new world.



Occupied University

students 16-18 years old. Alongside these groups were immigrants, thousands of university students, many “gypsy” [Romani] kids taking revenge for social repression and racism, and old revolutionaries with experience from previous social struggles.

ANONYMOUS: Lots of different kinds of people participated. Students got organized all over Greece in the same way- from poor neighborhoods to rich and bourgeois neighborhoods. A great number of youth, university students, precarious workers, young workers, and unemployed people took part in the actions. Theater students and actors and actresses stopped several theater performances. Hooligans participated as well, not on a political basis but because of their hatred of police and the system. Workers participated too, as the occupation of the GSEE building indicates. In contrast to the students, the workers who took part were mostly radical minorities who were already politically active. Many of them also participated in the occupations in their neighborhoods.

The participation of first- and second- generation immigrants in the clashes was impressive. Lots of them took part in the clashes and expropriations on Monday, December 8, and many were arrested. During those days, the Romani groups that live in Athens also fought against the cops.

Politically, the greatest proportion of people who took part in the actions were active anarchists and anti-authoritarians and people close to that scene who are not politically organized. These are the people behind the occupations and the movement that continues today. On the other hand, the uprising superseded this political arena as well as the left organizations that participated.

Appendix: How to Organize an Insurrection

We conducted interviews with Void Network, a collective focusing on “Theory, Utopia, Empathy, and Ephemeral Arts,” and with an anonymous anti-authoritarian/autonome communist post-graduate student, who participated in the uprising primarily through the occupied university of ASOEE.

How were the actions coordinated within the cities? How about between cities?

VOID: There are hundreds of small, totally closed affinity groups- groups based in long standing friendship and 100% trust- and some bigger groups like the people from the three big squats in Athens and three more in Thessaloniki. There are more than 50 social centers in Greece, and anarchist political spaces in all the universities around the country; also, the Anti-Authoritarian Movement has sections in all major cities. For all of them, Indymedia is a very important as a strategic point for collecting and sharing useful information: where conflicts are happening, where the police are, where undercover police are making arrests, what is happening everywhere minute by minute; it is also useful on a political level, for publishing announcements and calls for demonstrations and actions.

Of course, in practice the primary form of coordination was from friend to friend through mobile phones; that was also the main approach used by young students to coordinate their initiatives.

ANONYMOUS: There were two phases of the actions in December. Roughly, the first week was characterized by direct actions on the streets: destruction of state and capitalist targets, attacks on police stations, commodity expropriation, and so on. The second week was more obviously a social movement in which several forms of action were coordinated.

The actions of the first week weren't organized in advance. As soon as news of the murder spread, on December 6, anarchists and anti-authoritarians reacted by gathering in Exarchia and the Polytechnic University. Riots had already started in the area. Clashes in Exarchia would have been easily contained by the forces of repression, so there was a general opinion that the clashes should extend all over the town. That same night, there were attacks in at least two other parts of Athens: on Psirri shopping center and the police station of that region, and also on the police station in Petralona. That same night, addition to the occupation of the Polytechnic University, two more central universities, ASOEE and the Law school, were occupied and used as staging areas for more actions. In the same spontaneous way, actions started elsewhere in Greece, but mostly in places where there was already organized anarchist/anti-authoritarian activity.

Left groups called for a march to the headquarters of the police the next day. Anarchists and anti-authoritarians also participated in this demonstration. During it, Alexandras Avenue in central Athens was completely destroyed. On the second night, another demonstration took place, during which thousands of people destroyed, burned, and looted a great part of downtown Athens. Everybody was talking about a social uprising that was not coordinated by a political center, group, or party.

In Athens, the most impressive things was the spontaneous organization and response of the students, who organized demonstration in their neighborhoods and attacked police stations. The students coordinated themselves through mobile phones and the Internet, as well as through a student coordination group named for the murdered boy, Alexis. This group called for demonstrations and actions, and this encouraged popular response. Left university student associations also called for demonstrations.

neighborhoods occupied public buildings were used successfully for public meetings. Some schools were also occupied by their students; I don't know much about them, but we were always meeting the students on the street.

Were there any structures already in place that people used to organize?

VOID: For the young students who were in the streets for the first time, and also for the immigrants who participated, the telephone was enough; this produced a totally chaotic and unpredictable element in the situations. On the other hand, anarchists and anti-authoritarians have used General Assemblies as an organizing tool for the last 30 years during any kind of movement. All affinity groups, squats, social centers, university occupations, and other organizations have their own assemblies, as well. During the fight, a lot of new blogs appeared, and new coordinating networks of high-school students.

ANONYMOUS: Anarchists and the anti-authoritarians typically organize through self-facilitated meetings that are announced via a call out. There are also some settled structures, like the self-organized spaces ("stekia") in the neighborhoods and some universities, and some self-organized associations in workplaces and Antifa groups. Of course, there are also squatted houses; nowadays we are seeking an increasing number of squatting actions, mostly in the countryside.

What different kinds of people participated in the actions?

VOID: The majority were anarchists, half of them older ones who came into the streets only in very important struggles, as most have previous charges and would have to face prison time if they were arrested. Beside them were thousands of

What kinds of organizing structures appeared?

VOID: a.) All sorts of small companies of friends were making spontaneous decisions in the streets, planning actions and carrying them out themselves in a chaotic, uncontrollable manner: thousands of actions taking place at the same time everywhere around the country. . .
b.) Every afternoon there was a General Assembly in occupied schools, public buildings, and universities. . .
c.) Indymedia was used for announcements and strategic coordination . . .
d.) The various communist parties also organized their own confederations of students. . .
e.) . . . And also, one especially influential federation was organized by friends of Alexis, to organize student demonstrations and school occupations, and to publish general announcements from the students' struggle.

ANONYMOUS: The basic structures of organization were rooted in the occupied public buildings. At first, there were the three biggest occupied universities in the center of Athens and the occupied GSEE, the union building, also in the center. In the occupied buildings, every day hundreds of people organized themselves through general meetings. In general, the ASOEE and Polytechnic University occupations functioned through self-facilitated meetings, while in ASOEE, working groups and initiatives for different actions were also created. The occupation of the law school university, in which non-governmental, extreme leftists were participating, functioned through "directly democratic" structures, such as voting and the formation of associations. The GSEE occupation was somewhere in the middle; for example, they had a presiding board to coordinate and mediate the meetings. In addition, in some

The three biggest occupations either circulated calls for action via the Internet or organized attacks, depending on how many people were present in each one.

During the second week, students participated in more demonstrations. These were actually called for by left groups, but these groups couldn't control them, due to the disposition of the participants. The strategy of decentralizing actions to the neighborhoods also emerged. The municipal buildings in some neighborhoods of Athens were occupied and used for open public meetings. Some demonstrations that took place during this period attacked banks and similar targets.

The coordination group between the central occupations called for a major solidarity demonstration on Christmas Eve for those who were arrested during the riots. Before that, the Polytechnic occupation called for a European day of action and a demonstration in Exarchia on Saturday, December 20. The ASOEE occupation, on the other hand, suggested decentralized demonstrations in different parts of Athens on that day. But the demonstration on December 20 weren't as aggressive as many people expected, revealing the limits of the continuation of the revolt through the occupations' calls.

The coordination between cities happened mostly as the exchanging of ideas and experiences through the Internet. For example, the call to occupy municipal buildings quickly spread nationwide. One other organized action was the call for a demonstration on New Year's Eve at the prisons all around Greece. This call came after a meeting that took place before the conclusion of the occupations of the four central buildings in Athens.

“Defiance and resistance are illegal. Therein lies the salvation of man. Everything illegal necessitates integrity, self-reliance, and courage.”



— — — *Emma
Goldman*