

Letter from prison, March 2013

Andreas-Dimitris Bourzoukos

2013

*It wasn't quite dawn yet
But I have never accepted defeat*

25 minutes past midday. The last time I had a look at the time. Behind us a patrol car and in the van my two comrades, the 'hostage' and I. Only a few minutes earlier our emotions were completely different. For an instant, everything seemed to be perfectly all right, until they arrested our comrade in the 'ambulance'. All of a sudden we lost heart but in spite of this we remained as much lucid as we could, and in this way we managed to ensure our comrades' escape.

Let's go back to the picture of the beginning: the three of us along with the 'hostage' in the van and an 'accidental' encounter (actually it was not at all accidental because the alarm had been raised in all the surrounding villages) with a patrol car. In the last minutes of our freedom the countdown had already started. What we said to each other in the van is not relevant to our story, what is relevant is our final decision. We wouldn't have fired and put the doctor's life in danger. But it was our only choice at that moment. However the only weapon we had in those conditions was our passion for freedom. And we used it as best as we could. After a chase in the streets of Veria, just like in a film, we got finally trapped by a patrol passing there by chance, in a dead end road. It is pointless to tell the rest of this story once again.

The only thing I'd like to clarify is the part concerning torture, as this was quite a big thing. I know that in society the image of someone who got beaten up can generate fear, compassion or doubts. But this is not the case with us comrades. I also want to say that the State intentionally allowed our photos be made public, and they did so with the intent to terrorize those who might think to do what we did. Perhaps it was a 'mistake' due to hurry and the fact that any operation of the Anti-terrorism Squad is done almost automatically. Be that as it is, I don't want to concentrate on this now. Instead, I'd like to shortly talk about the thoughts that crossed my mind during the time we were beaten up.

I never felt like a victim and of course I don't want that others consider me as such. During those four hours of continuous beating one of the things I was thinking about was the possible scenarios on the 'end' the cowardly and bully pigs had in mind. Neither fear nor pain, just anger. In spite of how much truth can hurt, you just take someone by the hair and put them on their knees. While the beating was going on without stopping I recalled all the years when I had chosen

to clash with this rotten system. All my choices and thoughts became flesh and bones. Perhaps one single minute with my hands tied would have been enough. Perhaps the torture was just a proof confirming how the system is rotten.

But let's talk about money now, the money that flows abundantly (including during these times of crisis) in banks, public offices and all kinds of capital investment (like Cosco). This is the blood of capitalism.

My refusal to become yet another well-oiled clog of the system is one of the many reasons why I decided to carry out a bank robbery (personally I call it 'expropriation'). I mean I've never wanted to be another 'pedestrian' on this earth, one who has a 'normal' job and a 'normal' life. I didn't take much to understand that work aims at exploiting the human being for the sake of Capital, of the concentration of capital in the hands of few, which doesn't take much to show its side effects. At that point I asked myself some questions: were fraud and corruption leading the system to crisis isolated cases or is the crisis itself a pre-arranged plan that serves to achieve yet more profits? Was the 'crash' of the bank system due to lending or was it a capitalist trick for more concentration of capital, for an even bigger capitalization?

Surely we are facing an unprecedented crisis in capitalist reality and surely the crisis was preceded by the 'crash' of the bank system. But we are talking about two sides of the same counterfeit coin. Capitalism couldn't exist without the bank system nor would exist one of the most important means of capital concentration. As the State was called in to fill up bank safes when the crash of the bank system was imminent, so banks were called in to strengthen investments and pave the way to a new capitalization of the banks immediately after the collapse of the State machinery. A vicious circle that serves to spare death to moribund capitalism.

Looking at the brief history of Greece in the European Union and at its economic collapse I can only interpret it as something that was planned in advance, both Greece's collapse and that of other European countries hit by the crisis. As Greece joined the euro zone with a 'creative logistics' (as Greek logistics has been called), prime minister Simitis talked about a wonderful era and presented Greece as a strong country, in constant development, just like any other EU state. And at that time the middle class hoped in the advent of the capitalist heaven. But this ended with the 2008 crisis, the 'mark' of the capitalist system, and the beginning of collapse. What followed was once again 'creative logistics', this time introduced by Giorgios Papandreu so as Greece could benefit of financial support mechanisms (IMF-ECB). And then we came where we are today, to the total selling off of people's lives and the elimination of human dignity. Of course this goes hand in hand with low-cost investments and opportunities for the plunder of nature, as they are doing today in several places.

Lived experiences and the unbearable pressure imposed on society are sufficient to demonstrate the dirty face of capitalism in all its clarity. I recognize my action as expropriation. To me the real thieves are those who administer bank executive bodies and the state apparatus. An obvious assistant of the crisis of the system is repression, be it generalized or aimed at an objective, and repression is meant to terrorize and debilitate the whole society. Its main target is the wide anarchist-subversive spectre, which often acts as detonator and catalyst for insurrection, tensions and the anger that is increasingly spreading in different social sectors.

The paradox of the repressive politics of the State can be seen in the way it also strikes other social sectors that resist as it describes them as 'illegal and terrorist people who only want destruction'. An example of this is the spasmodic reaction of the State after the events of Skouries. The massive fire that totally destroyed the equipment of the gold mines was quickly labelled as

'terrorist attack'. It is a fact I welcome and I'm on the side of those who realized it. The only possible dialogue with a multinational that wants to destroy and plunder nature for its profits' sake is pure and hard attack. I acknowledge the courage of the people who opted for direct action and took their lives in their hands. They caused fatal injury to both the 'El Dorado' enterprise and the State. This is also the reason why on the following day the entire village of Skouries was literally inundated with forces of order, which promptly raided all the houses of the village. This method reminds of civil war and shows the totalitarianism of the State, which turned the village into a war zone. Of course they also talked of the 'involvement of terrorist anarchists' in this attack. Since the beginning the media hastened to locate the 'terrorists who gave instructions for the attack'. Media tactics are well-known: denounce, terrorize and vilify always following the guidelines of the messenger in charge, the Security of The State, the Anti-terrorism Squad or the government itself. Authentic 'workers' of oppression and submission are digging graves – deep enough to allow everyone in – so that the repressive arm can continue its work and the judiciary mafia can bury everything when resistance occurs.

In this way the delirium of the media (Goebbels-style propaganda) also set off immediately after our arrest. Perfect stuff for the news bulletins of terror and the screenwriters of the anti-terrorism fiction. I can't help recognizing a clear political line adopted by the media when with pomposity and sensationalism they talked about our 'certain participation in other actions besides the robbery'. Using a tactic similar to that employed in Italy in the mid-nineties to strike the anarchists (ORAI case), the Greek state is trying to repress all forms of resistance.

It was easy to imagine what was to happen in the days following my arrest. Some special prosecutor in charge of terrorism-related cases (can he be named Mokkalas?) would summon me on the basis of empty evidence, apart from the conjectures of the Antiterrorism, and point at me as a member of some organization. Confirmation of this didn't take long to come.

I was summoned by the special investigation judge (in fact he's called Mokkalas), who included me in the revolutionary organization Conspiracy of the Cells of Fire. Of course I recognize the actions of the CCF and its members as revolutionary, but this doesn't prevent me from saying that I've got nothing to do with this organization. I've never been a member of it because of essential differences in both projectuality and the general perception of society. By making me a member of the CCF the State can easily increase my sentence and consequently the years I should spent in prison. But I think this is just putting all in the same bag, a flagrant grouping that automatically suppresses any political attitude of a fighter.

'Price of self-determination is never low, and in some cases it is incredibly expensive.'

Certainly the trajectory to revolution and anarchy cannot be covered with rose petals, but it is not the only trajectory either, no matter what the current situation is like. Our means are well-known and need constant development, and the range of choices we have in our armoury is wide enough. I think that any revolutionary has to have the necessary acuteness and lucidity to choose the most adequate 'weapons' according to the conditions. The road to resistance presents many aspects and we need a multiform struggle. It can be a poster calling for a strike, the occupation of some state-owned building, arson on a bank, an explosive attack on some structure of the State, expropriation of the money belonging to the State: the goal is still the same, i.e. on the one hand to strike the structures and functions of capitalism, on the other hand to spread the means, practices and conceptions of struggle for anarchy, for freedom.

I'm in a society very much varied and I always struggle for myself, my comrades, the definitive destruction of the system and the total collapse of the existent. This does not mean that I will

stop criticizing those who deserve my critique because they are responsible for maintaining and reproducing a rotten and oppressing system with their tolerance and indifference.

‘This revolution must be violent, even if violence is not right in itself. It would be absurd to hope that the privileged ones recognize the suffering and injustice caused by their privileges and that they decide to voluntarily renounce them.’

Violence emerges from inside us and it is the only worthwhile response to the decay and misery generated by the system. The radicalization of society is obvious nowadays. The historically important question is: where is this polarisation heading to? A tangible example of this tension can be seen in the growing percentage of votes gained by Golden Dawn during the elections, and the recurrent episodes of racist attacks in the centre of Athens. Clearly this is a superficial ‘extreme’ position because it lacks conscience. Presenting itself as an alleged ‘anti-system party’ Golden Dawn has managed to recuperate most of the anger of some social sectors.

Needless to say, I’m not a supporter of the ‘theory of the extremes’, and I don’t consider Golden Dawn as anti-system. It is even too clear to me that they are indeed part of the system and also a weapon of the system. This is the reason why Golden Dawn shouldn’t attract less attention than it deserves.

We will organize for a multiform and lasting struggle to destroy work and its foundation of oppressive relations, and will do this through conscious expropriation of capitalist wealth with the aim of strengthening and supporting the struggle. We will continue on the road of direct action and total attack on the capitalist system. By constantly communicating and stirring up the anarchist-subversive environment as well as wider social sectors we can spread anarchist relations and self-management of our lives. By being constantly present in the streets and in wild street struggles we form our conscience and fighting soul, and violence spreads in the struggle.

No: molotov bottles and barricades are not steps necessary to ‘climb higher’ and eventually dedicate oneself to gas bottles, bombs and armed struggle. Instead, they constitute an inseparable part of the struggle itself. One completes the other. Street struggle is as much necessary as is night sabotage carried out with all means against the machinery of the State. Armed struggle is one of the expressions of the fight, an indispensable expression that has to support the wider struggles of the movement and be supported by the latter. Any sabotage separated from the struggles of the movement and wider claims risks to pass through history in low profile, as if it was an unimportant event, and finally be erased.

Let’s leave an indelible ‘imprint’ in history. The moment has come, let’s make revolution possible and destroy plutocracy, for anarchy.

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Koridallos prison, wing A
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A.D. Bourzoukos is one of the 4 anarchist comrades arrested on 1st February 2013 following the double robbery carried out in Velventòs Translated by Actforfreedomnow/boubourAs

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