

Two translations concerning the Athens Polytechnic uprising of 1973

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These two sometimes contradictory anti-authoritarian perspectives were hastily translated 50 years after the 17th of November of 1973, the date marking the peak of an insurrection which marked the passage from dictatorship to bourgeois democracy in Greece. The first is an article published by an antifascist collective, which discusses, in the trademark style of local autonomists, contemporary — despite the 15 years that have passed since its publication — questions on the meaning and background of the uprising and the position that radicals should have towards its commemoration. The 2007 article ends with a brief chronology of the uprising, a useful segue into the second text, a discussion on the role of “the anarchists”, an informal grouping of anti-authoritarian participants in the workers’ assembly within the Polytechnic occupation. The text is a relatively brief reference within a 1977 article on the development of the Greek proletariat in one of many early anti-authoritarian print publications which emerged in the post-dictatorship era, and the originally unnamed author (who has posthumously been identified as X. Konstatinides) identifies himself as one of the participants within this anarchist grouping. Besides a detailed recollection of some seemingly small, but crucial moments within the occupation, there is also value in the inclusion of the reactions of the ‘traditional’ left to the uprising. At the time of writing, there have been large demonstrations and some, fairly limited — for the standards of this particular insurgent holiday — commemorative clashes in Athens, Patras, Thessaloniki and Ioannina. There are still lively debates within the anarchist/anti-authoritarian space on how — and if — uprisings such as the ones marked by the 17th of November of 1973, and the 6th of December of 2008, should be commemorated (see the extended 2022 analysis by anarchist prisoner D. Xatzivasiliadis: <https://athens.indymedia.org/post/1621702/>; if I have a lot more time on the 17th of November next year, I might tackle it...). Please excuse any translation mistakes!

WE DO NOT PROTEST WITH BOSSES (the ‘message of the Polytechnic’ from an anti-patriotic stance)

antifa: war against fear, #7, 12/2007.

The story goes a bit like this: during the junta all Greeks were sworn enemies of the colonels/who were just some mental blokes with the support of the Americans/so the patriot students ‘did’ the ‘Polytechnic’/with the national flag on the main gate/which was ripped apart by the tanks during the push/the moment where Damanakis’s radio station was playing the national anthem/this patriotic uprising pushed the junta away/Karamanlis took over, Andreas (Papandreou) came back, the Communist Parties were legalised and the first made-in-Greece bourgeois democracy was born/and this is why everyone lights a candle every year for the St. 17th of November to watch over us. There is, however, a different version....

A ROTTING CORPSE WAS FOUND IN THE MOUTH OF THE LEFT (or why all ideologies stink)

Ideology means false consciousness. A consciousness that ignores real life, historical development and its subjects. As there are no real clashes, ruptures or discontinuities for her, ideology has the need for events ‘of great public interest’. The mass character of the discussion of and participation in these events is the necessary condition for the falsities which ideology represents to “truly” exist.

At the same time, ideology does not deny ‘multiplicity’. Different ‘views’ on a given subject are not only allowed, but they are encouraged. In a framework of the type “we have a democracy, anyone can believe whatever they want.”

And to finish up: ideology doesn’t bother with the (potentially innocent) motives of its carriers. It is known that the best intentions paved the way for hell. The dangers of ideology are ever-present, wherever the lack of thought and the ease of tradition ready themselves to birth monsters.

The Polytechnic anniversary is a catwalk of ideologies.

BOSSSES ARE THE SAME — LEFT OR RIGHT (on anniversaries, too)

The anniversary of November plays (ideological) football in an empty field, seeing as no other insurrection enjoys such acceptance. Not that insurrections have been particularly absent from this corner of the world: Mayday ’36, December ’44, July ’65, wild strikes after the dictatorship, Chemistry School ’85, Polytechnic (December) ’90... Of course, one should not wonder why all these acts of proletarian hatred have lapsed into disesteem. The reason is that those days of November, after the ideological abuse they have been subjected to, can be made to fit everyone (now). They are the ideological landmark of the patriotic revival (left and right) against the supposed enemies of the nation (juntists and americans). They are the genesis myth of national unity, which has rewritten history and is already imposing its findings: Nobody speaks of the wide societal support for the Junta. Nobody admits that the clashes of those days were reminiscent of a civil war. Nobody admits that it was not the heart-wrenching cries of the patriot students for “Bread-Education-Freedom” which took down the regime, but the business constipation of the colonels.

At the same time, there are some who (far from being patriots, proclaiming, even, their hatred for the national structure) dedicate themselves to the search for the ‘real meaning’ of the insurrection. A meaning that truly exists and has class as its core. The tragic mistake, however, is that whatever they do, they do it “cleanly”, in a rendez-vous set up precisely by those they hate: the patriots. Every year, many of these local extremists go to the back of a march of ‘national unity’; at the head of this demo, the party lackeys of the EFEE (official student body of the dictatorship) march holding a ‘blood-stained’ greek flag! And every year, behind PASOK (the Panhellenic Socialist Movement), the stalinists and various other ‘resisters’, they try to subvert this demo in the name of the real insurrection. Every year, they are present at a rendez-vous set up by the left, with the totality of the greek police on the streets against a loose bloc at the very back of the demo which is ultimately under its control.

AND SOMETHING FROM THE RECENT PAST...

On 17/11/95, occasioned by solidarity to a developing hunger strike, over 1000 people from the anti-authoritarian/anarchist (A/A) space shut themselves within the Polytechnic after some limited street clashes with the cops. They did it on this specific day, at this specific place, and not some other day... somewhere else... And not by chance. They did it embraced by the (ideological) security of the myth.

What dominated the core of this action was the (unspeakable) ideological conviction that such a move would sensitise the ‘progressive’ section of public opinion. And it would do so

invoking the emotion (or otherwise) locating the political situation of '73 in the political reality of '95: "everyone" would remember their youth, "everyone" would get the symbolism, "everyone" would justify them. However, they did so forgetting that every genuine insurrection, to be so (oppositional, that is, towards every ideology) must have ITSELF determined the place and time of its outbreak. Forgetting that no authentic insurrection can happen twice in the same place, on the same date. If it continues to do so it will not be anything but an ideological (or religious) rendez-vous.

The final arrest (following the entrance of the MAT riot cops in the 'political asylum' of the Polytechnic) and judicial processing of 526 comrades was a destructive landmark which crushed the anti-establishment space, although many from within its circles rushed to forget, or even to present this as a victory!!! The almost total absence of the A/A space from the streets in the following years has now been written off movement memory. The resurgence of the (holed up, until then) fascists in schools across Athens following this crushing defeat has also been forgotten. And the mistake (random riots at the tail of the left/run away/retreat into the 'asylum') seems ready to be repeated.

The local extremists made the mistake of embracing a myth and succumbing to its emotional and political blackmail. They believed that they would be recognised as what they truly were, but that the left and right forgers refused stubbornly: that they consist, that is, of the political descendants of the insurrection of '73. Other than the fact that the system would have no benefit from such a recognition, the contemporary 'agent provocateurs' had no hope due to a further reason. They missed the class rage that made the extremists of '73 face a heavily armed enemy with rocks, sticks and bottles, and make him (even for 3 days) run in fear. They believed that the power of their ideology was enough, but ultimately the myth, the Greek society of national unity and its cops, put the handcuffs on.

AUTONOMY AGAINST IDEOLOGY (because besides the bollocks, there is also the class struggle)

Outwith and besides political myths, outwith and besides state planning (and any kind of mediation) there is autonomy. Autonomy is not an ideology, it does not obey any political dogma and its choice is not ideological, to bow to false consciousness. It is a choice of **rupture** with this glass world in as many of its dimensions as possible. And, naturally, autonomy is not 'one' — we should, more correctly, be discussing 'autonomies'. Autonomies of thought and action have been as many as were prescribed each era by the creational wealth of social movements. These continue to exist in such a variety today.

And in contrast with the political memorials of ideologies, autonomies choose class memory. In this spirit, the comrades who sign the text that follows (from a poster publicising an action on 17/11/06) show that class insurrections can (and should) be honoured, outside of, and far away from leftist epitaphs.

"You noticed: during the recent pre-electoral period, the moneygrabbing bosses of advertising company Alma Atermon decided it was a good idea to give advertising space... to the Greek neonazis. Even the stones know this... But stones are what the advertising company Alma Atermon received! On the 17th of November, dozens of antifascists arrived at the office of the company and destroyed windows, guard cubicles, company vehicles etc. They showed the greedy bosses, of this company and every advertising company, that the commerce of swastikas has profits... but also damages! And

something more: Obviously, the choice of the date — the 17th of November — was symbolic. The poet wanted to say that, besides the splutters of leftists and the — state organised — epitaphs with the musical background of the national anthem, there are also the real matters of class antagonism. And if these had an anniversary, it would be illegal. See you next year!” (antifascists)

Class struggle in greece in the '60s (and why the junta was not the case of a few “madmen”)

In the decade of the 60s, a dynamic part of the greek bourgeois class begins its attempt to widen the base of its capital through its inclusion in the international business cycle. As a result, local capitalism presents leaps and bounds of development with the following characteristics: internal migration and proletarianisation of rural populations, urbanisation, industrialisation. These developments led in turn to the emergence of new proletarian subjects. The dawn of the new class explosion had at its core the industrial proletariat, construction workers and students, who with strikes, demonstrations and (often bloody) clashes, sweep away every establishment certainty. It is indicative that within a single year ('62-'63) the lost labour hours due to strikes doubled.

The clashes of the period reach their peak in April of '67 with the local bourgeoisie feeling threatened by the upcoming elections in May. Although the working class had, already, began to reject the orthodoxy of the traditional left, the right party of ERE (Ethniki Rizospastiki Enosis — National Radical Union) was surely not going to reach a majority percentage. Thus, the solution of a coup was emerging as ideal: being the coercive hand of the bourgeoisie, the colonels occupied power, discharging the former from its precarious position.

King Capital and his contradictions (or why the “heroic people” did not bring down the junta)

With the coming of the junta, the bourgeoisie accomplished two basic goals. On the one hand, to quell class resistance, and on the other to attract investors. And truly, the first aspect had been (temporarily) accomplished: Peace, Order and Security was prevailing in the country, with the dynamic sections of the working class beaten and the rest of local society feigning indifference (if not dominating outright). The second aspect was beginning to show difficulties.

The junta was proving to be a waste, making anti-productive investments, throwing parties in its own honour, forgiving agricultural debts, promoting its internal aristocracy and its cops. Consistently devaluating, therefore, the capital of the nation. And the section of the bourgeoisie which had initially supported it began to feel increasingly distressed.

Feeling that it was in an unfavourable environment, the junta appointed the Markezinis government, which adopted a 'liberal' profile, the most basic aspect of which was the — on the part of the junta — promise of elections and a gradual return to parliamentarism. Which would allow for capital to find a loophole. November 1973, however, did not find the bourgeoisie facing only a wasteful junta. An explosive (if minoritarian) section of workers and young people seemed able to convey internationally an image of instability which would definitely not attract many investors. Thus, the coup had to end.

Of course, the swansong of the “bloodless revolution” had to wait a bit more. Eight months, to be exact.

Hop, hop, look at a magic trick! (The “cypriot question” and the true passage to democracy)

The cypriot question was part of the everyday configuration of local political life decades before the bird of the junta began to flutter. We briefly note: When, at the end of the 50s, the English leave the island, a constitution was given to the cypriots which did not correspond to greek imperialist ambitions: it recognised the ‘equality’ of turkish cypriots. So, the orthodox fundamentalist priest Makarios, leader of the cypriot state, breached this particular constitution (’63) with armed fascist groups, and cornered turkish cypriots into “enclaves”.

The thing went wrong went Makarios understood that his “dynamic” actions would not go down well internationally with the militarists in power in Athens. Additionally, the Turks had also understood the geostrategic importance of the island. Therefore every attempt to fully hellenize Cyprus would lead to a war that nobody wanted. What had to happen was a just and imperialistic partition of the island. The junta took over this dirty job. And it had to make do at that moment, ie. before the **controlled** transferall of power was completed (which, as previously demonstrated, was near).

Thus, on the 18/11/73, coincidentally the day on which the morgues of Athens were dropping off those murdered by the military and police, the right-wing politician Evangelos Averoff (the ‘bridge’ between the colonels and their political heirs) left Athens for Rome. To participate as an ‘unofficial’ representative of the junta as well as Karamanlis, in a seminar of the “Centre for Mediterranean Studies” titled: “Investigation on the perspectives for the resolution of the cypriot problem”.

In this seminar, additional participants included: Glafcos Clerides (right hand of Makarios), Rauf Denktaş (leader of the excluded turkish cypriots), D. Bitsios (minister of foreign affairs in the first Karamanlis government after the junta), the turkish professor Aydin Yalcin, Cyrus Vance (ex-deputy secretary of defense and future foreign secretary of the USA) and others. It wasn’t nobodies. At this conference, then, Averoff proposed the abolition of the (already violated) constitution and the separation of the two communities so as to avoid a grecoturkish crisis. On this pattern, Cyrus Vance proposed that the best way to achieve such a thing would be firstly the military intervention of the greeks in cyprus, followed by a ‘balancing’ intervention by the turks.

A day after the return of Averoff, the ‘coup-on-coup’ by Ioannidis happened. And 8 months later, in the summer of ’74, ‘Operation Cyprus’. The junta ‘resolved’ the cypriot issue on behalf of greek democracy, and then gave it the keys to power.

A COP CONFESSES: “I WAS THERE TOO” (or why Kostas Laliotis did not join the riots)

A chronology of the insurrection (summarised) from the magazine “Sabotage” #7/8

***** **wednesday 14 november**

At lunchtime, the cops provoke a crowd at the polytechnic and small clashes begin. Hearing this, a demonstration of 1,500 people (far-left and beyond) begins from the law school towards the polytechnic — but is attacked by the cops. Half of them flee to the polytechnic and unite with those already there.

At 12pm, the gates close and the organisation of the occupation begins by 3000 people. The workers meet in a separate assembly, that the orthodox left attempts to dissolve: ‘we do not hold a shovel but a pencil. If you want to occupy something, go to the workers’ housing organisation”...

***** **thursday 15 november**

The junta, however, will not intervene, hoping that the ‘politicians’ will defuse the situation. And truly, as it was confirmed by Alavanos in ’75, on the night of 15/11 there is a meeting of the left on the issue of breaking the occupation! There were participants in this meeting from the Communist Party and PAK (the Panhellenic Liberation Movement, future PASOK), and among them Mantzouranis (of the later Koskotas scandal), Laliotis and Tsouras (future leader of the Intelligence Service under PASOK). It was too late: on the night of 15/11 the occupation is no longer a student one.

***** **friday 16 november**

At 10am, 500 construction workers and hundreds of high school students enter the Polytechnic in a demonstration. A new attempt by the left to dissolve the occupation fails as it remains a minority in the coordinating committee, while there is a rejection of its proposal for the constitution of a national unity government (!) to be a demand of the occupation. At 6:30, the first clashes start in Klafthmonos Square, with more than 150,000 agent provocateurs having taken over the city centre. At 8:30, there are the first two deaths by police fire. Protesters occupy the prefecture on Aioulou street, while the ministries of education, agriculture, justice, social services, and public works are besieged. 1,500 workers go up Peiraeus Avenue and, with the chant “Down with Capital”, attack a Trapeza Pisteos (ex-Alpha Bank) bank. By 11:30, the rebels control the totality of the city centre, from Alexandras and Peiraeus avenues until Aristotelous Street. At midnight, 15,000 agent provocateurs begin a demonstration from Alexandras Avenue and clash in rage with the police, which retreats, leaving at the site of the confrontation police batons and caps...

***** **saturday 17 november**

At 1:15am, the tanks have reached Patision street, right outside the polytechnic. Some provocateurs make strong molotov cocktails to face the, but the megaphones of the school transmit this: “guys, don’t throw anything at them. Welcome them with the phrase — oh soldiers, our brothers!”(!!!) At 3:00, a tank collapses the central gate. Cops and spec ops are faced by the occupiers in hand-to-hand fighting. The cops shoot, and dozens fall dead. At 7:30, new demonstrations are started, mainly by construction workers. Barricades are set up on Patision and Alexandras street, while outside of OTE (the Hellenic Telecommunications Organisation), 4,000 provocateurs attempt to occupy the building, in which the police has barricaded itself. At 11:00, martial law is invoked, but the clashes will only calm down in the evening...

What exactly happened in the workers’ assembly at the Polytechnic occupation of 1973?

note in ‘State, Proletariat and Ideology’, Πεζοδρόμιο #7, Διεθνής Βιβλιοθήκη, Feb. 1977.

In the context of a note, we will try to outline very briefly the actions of the “Anarchists”. This group, without being a typical organisation, acted in an organised fashion during the events of November, as with in a series of other activities. The comrade writing these lines was also in-

cluded in its ranks. We will limit ourselves to the intervention of this group, without this meaning that other “anarchists” were not acting individually within and outside of the Polytechnic.

The projection of slogans and chants on state media (the television particularly) in the hopes of disclaiming the nightmare of social revolt led to the **opposite** result of what was expected, to the extent that these **led to** radicalisation and to the beginning of the overcoming of the false dilemma of Democracy-Dictatorship. We mention below some of the slogans: “Social Revolution”, “State=repression”, “Down with Capital”, “Down with the State”, “Down with the Army”, “May 1968”, “General Insurrection”, “Down with wage labour”, “The proletariat is the gravedigger of wage labour”, “The proletariat on the streets”, “Workers’ Councils”, “Workers do not have a homeland”, “Patriots are wankers”, “Down with Power”.

The panicked reaction of the lackeys of State and Capital to the arrogant confirmation of the aims of the Social Revolution, was crystallised for the first time in the illegal student “Panspoudastiki” newspaper (#8, Jan-Feb 1974): *“We denounce the premeditated intrusion into the space of the Polytechnic on Wednesday, the 14th of November, of around 350 organised agents of the KYP (Central Intelligence Service), under the provocative plan of Roufogalis-Karagiannopoulos, based on the orders of the now-sidelined arch-dictator Papadopoulos and the American CIA, aiming to promote with every mean of coercion and provocation ridiculous and anarchist chants, as well as chants which did not express the moment and its particular forces. To be able to therefore isolate our movement and our event at the Polytechnic from the totality of the people and youth. To further be able, through the construction (with the help of the junta media) of an image of an isolated, extremist revolutionary-anarchist insurgency which does not have the support of the people, to use once more for the millionth time the excuse of a social regime under threat.”* They wanted to demonstrate that *“it was nothing but the berserk nihilistic actions of unrepentant anarchist insurrectionist annihilators.”* Below, they assure us that *“our chants: Bread-Education-Freedom, 20% for Education, Down with the junta, Out with the Americans, Workers Farmers Students, All United, Popular Power, National Independence, drowned out the pseudo-revolutionary cries of the KYP and its snitches, who had unexpectedly promoted, on banners and through the coercive occupation of two megaphones, chants such as: Down with the State, Down with Power, May ’68, and had led some groundless calls for an immediate popular revolution and an immediate general strike.”*

The use of the word “snitch” by the authors of the above text is not at all random. It is rooted in the nature of their profession. Already today, they are the waged snitches of the brezhnevist bureaucracy, and tomorrow, aspiring authentic informers of a “socialist” Intelligence Agency of some greek “People’s Republic”. But, so as to not do them wrong, we must say that they are informers and undercovers very different to the others. Truly, above their interrogation rooms, inside their prisons and psychiatric hospitals, inside their concentration camps and their industrial labour camps... atop their caps and gallons, there will be hammers and sickles and not “reactionary” symbols.

This mud, as vulgar as it is, does not shock us. It is the beloved method of all lackeys of state and capital. All the above must not, therefore, be taken as a protest against the mudslingers. The logic of Protest is included inside the logic of Martyrology — a logic which is beloved by the greek left of capital, and not the social revolution.

One more example of their methods — we remind those who have a weak memory — was given to us in the case of the above text, which was presented as an announcement of the Coordinating Committee of the Polytechnic, to receive slightly later a refutation signed by 17 members of the Committee transmitted in April ’74 by “Deutsche Welle”: *“...We did not participate in the*

drafting or signing of any such announcement, and of course not the one above... The appeal to the name of the Coordinating Committee for the coverage and promotion of certain opinions and positions, independently of any criticism which could be levelled to their content, is at least unacceptable...

A similar position to the KKE(Exterior) was adopted by the General Secretary of the KKE(Interior) M. Drakopoulos, stating that: *"Dark forces are at work to prevent the return to democratic normality and organise challenges to justify the enforcement of military measures."* Later, this original position was silenced, and a differentiated version appeared officially in the "positions of the office of the Central Committee of the KKE(interior)" which was publicised in "Radical Fighter" (#65, March 1974): *"Within these events, confusion prevailed for some time, from the erroneous slogans from elements of various leftist tendencies — slogans that are sectarian and erroneous (social revolution — down with capital — down with authority) and later committed to the chant 'now or never'..."*

On Wednesday night, at around 11, these comrades (together with a few others), driven by the need to create a rallying pole outside of the deplorable student assemblies which are traditionally spaces for manipulation, political maneuvering and act as an outlet for any subversive tendencies, took the initiative for an assembly of workers and generally of non-students who were within the Polytechnic. After finding a room in the Gini building and fixing the electricity and microphone, began calling workers to participate in the meeting.

During this time, the following memorable incident took place: these comrades, along with some other working-class youths, unknown until then, entered the Architecture building and confiscated from the students one out of three polygraphs, to put it into the service of the workers' assembly. Some students (Communist Party cadres), with the understanding that such an action would mean challenging the monopoly of expression, brought objections. After a few "indecent" strikes, and seeing that the "extremists" were not willing to discuss it at length with them, they retreated. (This was possible on the Wednesday, not on the Friday though, when the monopoly of expression, which was then represented by the Polytechnic radio station, was guarded by a number of **professional** — ie. waged cadres). Following democratisation, a leading member of "Rigas Feraios" will say during the state investigation that "**unknown** provocateurs" attempted to take a polygraph but were "repelled"(sic!),,, And requested from the Democratic State to find them and punish them! And yet, this marxist bastard knew well, and **by name**, two comrades at least.

At around 1am, within the Gini hall, around 300 people had gathered. The first who spoke was a comrade who asked for there to be no presidency to "direct" the Assembly, and argued that everyone must have responsibility and know that they must be concise and allow others to speak. After these things were accepted, he continued by discussing the autonomy of the class struggle, and the Assembly itself, which only represents itself and cannot accept to be represented by anybody else.

"Workers' Struggle" (#15–23 November 1974) writes: *"The first problem that there was concerned the direction of the conversation. There were many proposals for a president or presidency of the assembly, as there was a proposal for there to not be any kind of presidency, which happened, and was supported by Anarchists. This issue created some agitation, and the whole conversation happened under the management of various militants who took the initiative to attempt to instill some order in the conversation, and many times the meeting would resort to voting to determine whether someone should continue speaking."*

And it continues: *“The tendency expressed by the “anti-authoritarians” and the anarchists worked consciously to prevent any organised effort, as much within the assembly as with the duties of mobilisation it set upon itself. Its speakers insisted greatly upon idealist models for future society, repeating many times various positions of Guy Debord from “Society of the Spectacle” and the ideal society wherein power shall not exist. They theorised that these things were directly applicable, and this is why they opposed themselves to any hierarchisation and organisation within the assembly. This stance of the tendency caused serious delays and agitation within the assembly.”*

After the continuous discussions, and of course disagreements, of the night, it was made clear that everyone, or almost everyone who participated in the Assembly agreed upon the anticapitalistic content of the struggle (independently from the dimension given to it by each participant) and it was decided that a proclamation would be leafleted in factories and spaces where workers congregate.

On the issue of the proclamation, we must highlight a forgery that exists within the text of the “Anonymous”. As genuine and unscrupulous leftists, they reassure us that the Assembly voted for a proclamation, which was in fact printed. But this proclamation, at least as it is given retrospectively, exists only in their heads, and, unfortunately for them, was printed only a few months after November, outside of Greece.

Closer to the truth, there is the book of a trotskyist with the title “the November events in the light of marxism”, and which is the only one — out of all that has been published — that discusses the incident — as he understands it — on page 25–6, with the characteristic subtitle: **“The proclamation that never happened”**.

“...With concise editing, two proclamation plans were presented. The first — which appeared as trotskyist — determined the socialist direction of the movement. It was addressed to workers, it demanded the creation of committees everywhere, it broached the matter of a general strike in the struggle against dictatorship. It concluded in the need for the creation of a revolutionary party. To an extent, it expressed the general direction of Trotskyism. Incomplete. But it did not bring up the matter of power. The other expressed the opinions of the anarchists. With some variations, it was directed towards the socialist solution. It demanded the intervention of the working class and the occupation of factories. It also broached the matter of a general strike and the creation of councils which would struggle for the matters of the masses. Yet as this tendency was submitted to the spontaneous of the movement and anti-authoritarian, it negated the necessity for the occupation of power.”

When it comes to the first proclamation, this is attributed correctly although the emphasis which was given on the construction of the “NEW” revolutionary party is missing. Concerning the second, it is enough to refer to its unaltered conclusion, which summarises the theory of our comrades: *“3. The autonomous assembly of workers which is in the space of the Polytechnic calls for workers to occupy the spaces of production and to create factory and strike committees with as their ultimate goal the creation of workers’ councils. The minimum programme of the workers’ council is the destruction of wage labour, the state, commerce and politics.”*

Yet, the question remains. Why was this proclamation not made? The answer has two facets. First, the “trotskyist” proclamation could not in any way concentrate the majority, despite the fact that professional cadres of the Party — and this is terribly delightful — would raise their hands, voting for the creation of the **new** revolutionary party.

This weakness is confessed with sorrow by the Marxist Leninists in the EKKE (Revolutionary Communist Movement of Greece) in their monumental brochure “Let us raise high the flag of

November” in page 29: *“The whole demonstration limited itself to the conversation of: “what to do to organise ourselves” in our workplaces regardless of the occupation. It seems the anarchists brought all their forces (5–6 people) and were able to disorient the conversation for a long time. Their arrogant stance and all the nonsense that they were laying out made them from the beginning unpleasant to the demonstration. In a conversation around a workers proclamation, which would be printed on the Polytechnic polygraph, while there were insistent proposals to express the necessity for the construction of a Revolutionary Party, the anarchists were able through their hysterias to disorient the conversation, and the matter was sidelined in the proclamation, while it was coming up constantly in the conversation.”*

Second, the assembly could not be completed due to the **organised** attempt by party lackeys to dissolve it. The peak of this effort was noted on Thursday morning, with the invasion of around twenty party-affiliated students. From all they said, we had noted immediately the representative and memorable phrase: “We do not hold a shovel and pickaxe but a pencil. If you want to do an occupation, go to the Workers’ Housing Organisation.” They argued that workers had no place in the Polytechnic, that the space belonged to the students and that there could be no promotion of workers’ slogans such as “Down with Capital”. The result was the creation of agitation, disappointment and disgust. Many workers replied with “fuck off you wankers”, and left. Of course, the intervention of party lackeys could not bring by itself any result. But it happened in a moment where the meeting was already nearing its end due to tiredness from staying up all night, and, an even more significant factor, because workers were leaving slowly to go to their jobs.

This tactic of the parties was followed in the following days, and as a result workers, who of course did not have student identification, were not allowed to enter the Polytechnic, presenting the pretext that they were preventing the entry of undercover agents (while it is known to everybody that undercovers can have a wealthy collection of student IDs). The reality was that they wanted at all costs to preserve the composition of the Polytechnic occupation. Something which was impossible to accomplish, and this is demonstrated firmly by the number of workers arrested (475 against 317 students), even though they had more reasons than a student to not be arrested in the Polytechnic.

One more episode which is indicative of this conspiracy of silence in the workers assembly, demonstrates the level of the developed consciousness of party cadres in the **destruction of every source** of revolutionary history. Throughout the night of Wednesday an architect — as we later learnt — was recording all that was said within the assembly. For his bad luck, the professional party members who had come in the aims of dissolving the meeting caught on to him. In a matter of seconds, after they fell on him, they took the tape and immediately destroyed it. They said that maybe he was undercover, and that the tape could be used against them... It is true that our group of comrades was ‘confused’ and when it understood what happened it was too late. The tape was destroyed. Only in retrospect did we understand what value this tape could have for the revolutionary movement. We note that within the context of the same operation of the assimilation and destruction of every source, censorship was imposed, as all the banners with the aforementioned slogans were “cut” from the movie which was screened across Greece following democratisation — the same movie which had been screened repeatedly in Paris and Germany without censorship.

On the morning of Thursday, the site of the Polytechnic had been essentially evacuated of workers. That night, at the initiative of the leftists this time, and with the tolerance of the Coordi-

nating Committee of students, the workers' assembly was staged again in the same lecture hall in the Gini building. However, its character had changed radically. In place of the non-managed meeting of Wednesday, where the workers were discussing everything freely, without being separated into groups, a parliament of the Left was created, with its factions, its predetermined voters and its swarm of aspiring leaders. (The quality of the assembly had fallen to the extent that a marxist intellectual could state with pride that he was also a worker, and therefore had the right to participate, since **as an intellectual he produces workers' ideology.**)

Dawning on the morning of Friday, following the election of a committee for "worker mobilisation" with the responsibility **to leave** the Polytechnic and go to Kotzia square and other places where workers gathered, in the hopes of inciting them to strike. After this the meeting dissolved, to recommence on Friday evening, although this meeting only lasted 2–3 hours, until around the time when tear gas began to fall in the Polytechnic. During all of Friday, the workers' committee, which **never left the school**, ensured harmonious coexistence, with the "Coordinating Committee" publishing in the name of the workers' assembly various proclamations which were never discussed by it, with calls such as: "50% wage increase", "lower the price index", etc. After the events, through the newspapers, we learnt that the assembly was represented in the "Coordinating Committee" with two representatives (among dozens of student reps). It must be noted that the assembly never saw, never heard, never approved such a thing. Let it also be added that on Friday, during the day when the assembly was not active, two marxists from the workers' committee ripped up a banner which our comrades had dropped with a call for "Workers' Councils".

On Saturday and Sunday, our group of comrades participated in the clashes, which were mainly led by young workers.

It would be an omission if, closing this note, we did not mention that our group of comrades **deemed in retrospect** that it was deluding itself on Friday afternoon concerning the possibilities of the transformation of the workers' assembly into an authentic instrument for our class. Something which it could do, as had been proposed by a comrade then, was to incite in that moment a circle of some dozens of workers — something which in that moment was easy enough — to occupy the building of the GSEE (General Confederation of Greek Workers), and if this was not possible, to burn it.

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