

Additions :

For some sense of conclusion we asked TPTG a final few questions about the uprising.

- What was the relationship between the political activists (anarchos etc.) and the mass of people who were drawn into the struggle by more immediate concerns?

The relationship between the politicised minority and the “ordinary people” was surely affected by the fact that the politicized minority had the quick reflexes to be the first in the streets in the first two days (Saturday-Sunday), even if there were other people as well. For obvious reasons, activists were organisationally in better trim than ‘ordinary people’ to actually trigger the rebellion. Especially the insurrectionists were more familiar with riot strategies, such as making barricades and fighting with the police, something that gave them the lead in the first two days. That’s why, the activists were the first to take the initiative for the organization of occupations both in the 4 occupations of the city centre (Polytechnic School, Law School, ASOEE and GSEE) and in the occupations in the suburbs (Agios Dimitrios, Chalandri).

Nevertheless, we may say that, in general, during the riots there was no separation among the people that participated in the conflicts with the police. This can be explained by the class composition of the greek rebellion: secondary school students have a long tradition of school occupations that goes down to younger ones; university students have also a ‘legacy’

of struggles (and recently, quite violent ones), football hooligans, drug addicts, a lot of migrants all share a culture of delinquency and, at least an anti-cop mentality, and, of course, the anti-authoritarian milieu can be seen as the delinquent social segment par excellence - necessary prerequisites for a rebellion. Of course, when the violence escalated on Monday evening there were many activists that felt that what was happening was “out of (their) control” and too extreme. This sense of ‘being surpassed’ by the situation (which gradually became more generalised) was the natural outcome of the abolition of the role either of the ‘riot specialist’ or the ‘political avant-guard’ felt on a personal level. When everyone riots, the ‘ritual rioters’ or the ‘revolutionaries’ have no distinguishable position anymore.

On Monday, a full-scale looting of shops in the centre of Athens took place but there was no reaction against that in the streets. From the start, many migrants and marginalized youth frequented the Polytechnic School and this drove some people to move to ASOEE because of the chaotic situation there. The marginalized proletarians were especially oriented to loot nearby stores and this began to be problematic for most of the anarchists there after Tuesday. So, they organised the repression of such actions near the Polytechnic School on the grounds of ‘anti-consumerism’ and regarding it as a non-political act, an end in itself, which did not contribute to the fight against the police. Besides, there were also some practical problems since some people brought the looted merchandise inside the occupation and fought over its distribution. The assembly of Polytechnic school was to a great extent controlled by the anarchists since most of the migrants didn’t even speak Greek.

As far as life in occupations is concerned, we may say that, apart from the peculiarities of the Polytechnic School because of its special composition, in most of the other occupations a community of struggle was really formed without exclusions, even if the initiative was taken by the “activists”. So it can be said that a supersession of “separated identities” really happened. The traditional schema of representation and vanguardism didn’t work this time, and we think that this is also the case for the Law School where many left groups participated. In the occupation of GSEE the workerist-base unionist tendency tried to enforce a workers’ identity and to exclude other proletarians but their attempt failed at large because of the reactions of the “base”.

Of course, as the revolt was running out of steam and the days were passing there was a gradual re-emergence of separated identities. From then on, most activities were organised by activists and the usual manipulation techniques came into full force once again.

- How did the movement end?

You are right in your consideration that the movement just ran out of steam. This is connected with the fact that it was a minority proletarian movement characterized by the distinct tradition of struggles of its different ‘delinquent’ parts. After more than 2 weeks of riots and occupations most of the people got really tired and the only way to continue would be the spreading out of the revolt in other parts of the proletariat. But this was not possible because of the passive attitude of the

part of the working class that did not participate in the revolt. This also explains why the revolt didn't spread to the workplaces as well as why the occupations in the neighborhoods stopped after some time, although most of the squatters thought that this could possibly be another way of extending the struggle. Also, in other cities outside of Athens the "web of control" is much stronger since we are talking about small communities with a fairly big petit-bourgeoisie of shop-owners and farmers as well as more stringent family bonds. That was the reason why the events there were not as big and didn't last for so long (except for some big cities like Thessaloniki, Patra and Heraklio). Among the external limits of the rebellion cited so far, we should not also omit the ideological use the state made of the vanguard armed struggle acts. The state tried to relegitimize itself and in particular its repressive mechanism reversing the roles and playing the part of the victim. At the same time its repression affected the most vulnerable subjects of the rebellion: the migrants (the number of migrants deported or sent to prison is still unknown) and the secondary school students. Therefore, as gradually the rebellion was weakened (when the secondary school students and the migrants left the stage—the two most prominent groups of the rebellion), the internal limits (the limited creative initiatives among the rebels themselves) became more visible and decisive.