


DEFIANCE+


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HARIS HATZIMICHELAKIS

V. The revolt of the free one against sorrow is only the intimate, passionate desire for a more intense and greater joy. But the greatest joy can only show itself to him in the mirror of the deepest sorrow, merging with it later in a vast barbaric embrace. And from this vast and fruitful embrace the higher smile of the strong one springs, as, in the midst of conflict, he sing the most thundering hymn to life.

A hymn woven from contempt and scorn, from will and might. A hymn that vibrates and throbs in the light of the sun as it shines on tombs, a hymn that revives the nothing and fills it with sound.

VI. Over Socrates' slave spirit that stoically accepts death and Diogenes' free spirit that cynically accepts life, rises the triumphal rainbow on which the sacrilegious crusher of new phantoms, the radical destroyer of every moral world, dances. It is the free one who dances on high amidst the magnificent phosphorescence of the sun.

And when huge clouds of gloomy darkness rise from swampy chasms to hinder his view of the light and block his path, he opens the way with shots from his Browning³ or stops their course with the flame of his domineering fantasy, forcing them to submit as humble slaves at his feet.

But only the one who knows and practices the iconoclastic fury of destruction can possess the joy born of freedom, of that unique freedom fertilized by sorrow. I rise up against the reality of the outer world for the triumph of the reality of my inner world.

I reject society for the triumph of the I. I reject the stability of every rule, every custom, every morality, for the affirmation of every willful instinct, all free emotionality, every passion and every fantasy. I mock at every duty and every right so I can sing free will.

I scorn the future to suffer and enjoy my good and my bad in the present. I despise humanity because it is not my humanity. I hate tyrants and I detest slaves. I don't want and I don't grant solidarity, because I am convinced that it is a new chain, and because I believe with Ibsen that the one who is most alone is the strongest one. This is my Nihilism. Life, for me, is nothing but a heroic poem of joy and perversity written with the bleeding hands of sorrow and pain or a tragic dream of art and beauty!



3 A type of pistol popular among anarchists of the time.



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person; just as one is a pitifully inferior being if he believes that the sacred tree of happiness is a twisted plant on all apes will be able to scramble in the more or less near future, and that then the shadow of pain will be driven away by the phosphorescent fireworks of the true Good...

III. Life—for me—is neither good nor bad, neither a theory nor an idea. Life is a reality, and the reality of life is war. For one who is a born warrior, life is a fountain of joy, for others it is only a fountain of humiliation and sorrow. I no longer demand carefree joy from life. It couldn't give it to me, and I would no longer know what to do with it now that my adolescence is past...

Instead I demand that it give me the perverse joy of battle that gives me the sorrowful spasms of defeat and the voluptuous thrills of victory.

Defeated in the mud or victorious in the sun, I sing life and I love it!

There is no rest for my rebel spirit except in war, just as there is no greater happiness for my vagabond, negating mind than the uninhibited affirmation of my capacity to life and to rejoice. My every defeat serves me only as symphonic prelude to a new victory.

IV. From the day that I came into the light—through a chance coincidence that I don't care to go into right now—I carried my own *Good* and my own *Bad* with me.

Meaning: my joy and my sorrow, still in embryo. Both advanced with me along the road of time. The more intensely I felt joy, the more deeply I understood sorrow. You can't suppress the one without suppressing the other.

Now I have smashed down the door and revealed the Sphinx's riddle. Joy and sorrow are only two liquors with which life merrily gets drunk. Therefore, it is not true that life is a squalid and frightening desert where flowers no longer blossom nor vermilion fruits ripen.

And even the mightiest of all sorrows, the one that drives a strong man toward the conscious and tragic shattering of his own individuality, is only a vigorous manifestation of art and beauty.

And it returns again to the universal human current with the dazzling rays of *crime* that breaks up and sweeps away all the crystallized reality of the circumscribed world of the many in order to rise toward the ultimate ideal flame and disperse in the endless fire of the new.

The original Greek pamphlet containing Hatzimichelakis' statement was released at the end of 2011 and appended Renzo Novatore's *I Am Also a Nihilist*. Hatzimichelakis' brief introduction to Novatore's text is as follows:

The translation of Novatore's text was added to this pamphlet because I consider it to be an important contribution to the development of the revolutionary-nihilist dialectic. In order to avoid possible misunderstandings, I must clarify that Novatore's opinion about solidarity isn't in accordance with mine or with that of the Conspiracy as a group, which should also be clear from the texts we've released in the past.

I Am Also a Nihilist

RENZO NOVATORE

I. I AM AN INDIVIDUALIST BECAUSE I AM AN ANARCHIST; AND I AM AN ANARCHIST BECAUSE I AM A NIHILIST. BUT I ALSO UNDERSTAND NIHILISM IN MY OWN WAY...

I don't care whether it is Nordic or Oriental, nor whether or not it has a historical, political, practical tradition, or a theoretical, philosophical, spiritual, intellectual one. I call myself a nihilist because I know that nihilism means *negation*.

Negation of every society, of every cult, of every rule and of every religion. But I don't yearn for Nirvana, any more than I long for Schopenhauer's desperate and powerless pessimism, which is a worse thing than the violent renunciation of life itself. Mine is an enthusiastic and dionysian pessimism, like a flame that sets my vital exuberance ablaze, that mocks at any theoretical, scientific or moral prison.

And if I call myself an individualist anarchist, an iconoclast and a nihilist, it is precisely because I believe that in these adjectives there is the highest and most complete expression of my willful and reckless individuality that, like an overflowing river, wants to expand, impetuously sweeping away dikes and hedges, until it crashes into a granite boulder, shattering and breaking up in its turn. I do not renounce life. I exalt and sing it.

II. Anyone who renounces life because he feels that it is nothing but pain and sorrow and doesn't find in himself the heroic courage to kill himself is — in my opinion — a grotesque poser and a helpless

HARIS HATZIMICHELAKIS 2012

HARIS HATZIMICHELAKIS IS A MEMBER OF THE Greek urban guerrilla group Conspiracy of Cells of Fire. In 2011 he was convicted of belonging to a terrorist organization, bombing the homes of several politicians, and bombing the Ministry of Macedonia-Thrace. Haris was sentenced to serve 25 out of 77 years, but was released in 2018.

To begin with, I must make it clear that I consider this trial to be yet another theater of war, and the present political statement—because this is a political statement and not an apologia—is yet another act of enmity stemming from the camp of revolutionary forces. I have already taken responsibility for membership in the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire. Therefore, as a proud member of the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire, but also as a revolutionary and an anarchist, I view the occasion for my “apologia” as a forum in which to spread revolutionary discourse and explain my political positions regarding revolutionary war.

I would first like to talk about the institution of justice: from feudal regimes, in which justice was personified by an absolute monarch who possessed legislative as well as executive and judicial power, to the modern Western capitalist states, which upon adopting the separation

of powers devised by Montesquieu subsequently divided up those three aspects of domination and made them independent. The institution of justice, as repository and executor of the law, represents one of the fundamental pillars of domination as well as one more institution of unfettered exploitation and oppression.

Clearly, justice was and will continue to be based on class. It's enough to see how the individuals who constitute the institution deal with petty criminals, drug addicts, and the pariahs of this society, whom they annihilate by sentencing them to years and years in prison as effortlessly as they eat their breakfast. But whenever some politician, judge, or businessman gets into trouble—with double the prestige and special weight—they get out of it unscathed and use their excess arrogance to condemn the ultimately substantive or baseless prosecutions carried out to tarnish their reputations. So while they all live prosperously and enjoy a certain prestige, 12,500 prisoners are crowded together in conditions that animals wouldn't even put up with. Most of these prisoners are locked up due to the intensification of violence within the same class—the lower class. On the one hand, this intra-class violence is being produced by the increasing economic inequality infesting a large portion of the population, while on the other hand it is a result of the institution of property, which forms one of the strongest cornerstones of capitalist domination. The institution of property—its structure and its particular characteristics—gives rise to the expansion of a complex network of social behaviors and exploitative values that extend completely throughout the social fabric, as well as a kind of petty authority found in most of the oppressed social sectors and bred by the reproduction from below of predominant models of behavior. Thus, as a consequence of this institution, the predictable feelings of insecurity also emerge, accompanying a consumerist frenzy—which is the main component of the modern Western capitalist world—and generating the continual accumulation of consumer goods by the petit bourgeoisie, mostly bought on credit. Economic inequalities ultimately manifest themselves in the form of intra-class criminality. Property owners fear this criminality, so they ask for more police, security systems, and protection. In this constant demand for security—which on the one hand makes the social fabric become more and more conservative, and on the other produces a society of security and surveillance reigned over by the police—the institution of justice finds its *raison d'être*.

16. And on the first night a man who had lost his face entered the cell and he left the lamp he was holding on the floor.

17. And his shadow grew against the wall.

18. And he asked: where have you hidden the weapons?

19. And no one knows whether that was haphazard, or perhaps meant to be answered

20. He put his hand on his heart.

21. And then he struck. Then another man who had also lost his face entered and he too struck.

22. And the men who had lost their faces, they were many.

23. And day broke. And night fell.

24. Day forty.

25. And there were times he feared he was losing his mind.

26. and he kept a little spider in the corner, which he would watch tirelessly and patiently weaving its web.

27. and every day they would break it with their boots when they came in

28. And she would begin again every day. And again they would break it. And she would begin again.

29. Until the end of time.

NOTHING HAS ENDED. THE WAR CONTINUES.

LONG LIVE THE CONSPIRACY OF CELLS OF FIRE.

LONG LIVE THE INFORMAL ANARCHIST FEDERATION/INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY FRONT.

LONG LIVE ANARCHIST REVOLUTION.

end of the monstrosity you support with your lives; a revolution that will crush, overthrow, and eliminate society in its present form.

I am therefore making it clear that my arrest and imprisonment in the cells of democracy in no way mean the end of my revolutionary activities. Instead, my goal is to keep converting my negations into practice, spreading and promoting positions—mine as well as the organization’s—on struggle, urban guerrilla warfare, and revolutionary war. I have thus also taken political responsibility for my participation in the organization. Because the coherency of and pride in my decisions obliges me to. Because it is important to me to defend and portray the organization’s history and decisions clearly and publicly. Because I don’t want to allow any maggot reporter to build his career on its name and reputation, attempting with crude and vicious assertions to disparage, ethically disdain, and drain the content from its political action. The political legacy that an arrest or a trial leaves in the collective conscience of revolutionary forces is also important to me.

I firmly believe that urban guerrilla war and armed struggle have not been defeated, nor is that going to happen. The dismantling of a single organization, the arrests or even the deaths of its members, is not enough to extinguish the flame of permanent insurrection that burns in the eyes of those who declare themselves in favor of revolutionary war. The analyses that claim the defeat of guerrilla war, translating it into sterile numbers, lack any historical dialectic. As long as the legacies of each project remain alive in the memories of revolutionary movements and combatants, armed struggle will never be defeated. Our organization will never be defeated! And as the organization itself said in the communiqué for the mailing of incendiary packages to embassies and international political figures: “The Conspiracy will never be stopped, because it isn’t simply an organization. It is a current of ideas, and ideas cannot be stopped.” As long as we continue to combat the existent, firmly and without interruption; as long as we do so in practice through our daily struggle, independent of and despite the cost of supporting the choices that make us proud; as long as we refuse to lower our heads and submit; as long as we keep fighting; the commitment to revolution will continue stronger than ever!

To conclude my political statement, I would like to dedicate with all my heart—to my comrades, brothers, and sisters, together with whom I walk and will walk along the path marked by dignity, freedom, and revolution—this excerpt from Tasos Livaditis:

The willing guardian of the existing order, the modern goddess Themis, is a ragged and deplorable figure that assumes the “sacred” duty of punishing transgressors of the law—individuals who come from a social fabric torn into a thousand pieces. To clarify my own position on this point, I want to say that I have nothing to do with petty criminality or crime committed within the same class. Instead, those practices are thousands of light-years away from my code of values. Of course, this isn’t out of any respect for the institution of property, but rather because I view precaution as a basic structural element of every action. When the oppressed—instead of opposing the capitalist system, which is the source that produces inequality—find an alibi for eventual assaults and robberies in the exploitation they themselves suffer and the isolation to which they are condemned, they generally treat their own as enemies. In my opinion, they are feigning blindness and putting on an act when it comes to their inability to understand the true magnitude of the problem, the true perpetrators of capitalist crime.

However, justice as an institution doesn’t operate on just one level, reproducing exploitative relationships while isolating and marginalizing still more of the already excluded social sectors. Its most repugnant and hostile role focuses on the repression and criminalization of social revolutionary struggles and processes. From the hangings of prerevolutionary Russia; the severe sentences inflicted on radical strikers during the vigorous period of workers’ struggles in America; the years and years of solitary confinement in sunless white cells in the dungeons of Peru, Argentina, and elsewhere; to the antiterrorist and mask laws¹; the carte blanche to publish photos of comrades charged in different cases; the numerous arrest warrants; the criminalization of friendly and comradely relationships in political cases, especially during the last two years; as well as the crushing sentences of countless years in prison imposed on the guerrillas of the RAF, the Revolutionary Cells, and the 2 June Movement in Germany, the Red Brigades in Italy, Action Directe in France, the MIL and ETA in Spain, the IRA in Ireland, and 17 November in Greece; innumerable examples—or better said, experiences—illustrate the way

1 “The law regarding the concealment of facial features at public gatherings,” called the “mask law,” was passed in Greece at the beginning of 2009 (as one of the immediate legislative responses to the December 2008 revolt) and has been applied since then. In accordance with the law, the charge of “covering one’s face” was changed from a misdemeanor to a felony.

bourgeois justice confronts the political enemies of every regime and order. The institution of justice uses any dubious contingency and any legal technicality when it sees itself opposed by those who negate the system. Justice forms an inseparable and essential part of the system, representing it and at the same time serving as one of its fundamental pillars.

The fine line of historical memory—by way of this first trial for the case of the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire—cuts across my own path through revolutionary space-time, while the past meets the present in a courtroom. For my part, I must therefore state that I am totally against everything this trial represents and against the institution it serves. In addition, I am going to spend my entire life fighting with all my strength for the destruction of that institution and the destruction of the predominant behavioral and relationship models it reproduces. Naturally, as a revolutionary and an anarchist I am not fighting for an improved and incorruptible justice or for more favorable treatment. The sole objective of everything I've mentioned is to once again emphasize that institution's villainous role in the global crime called capitalism. Perhaps the following words of my comrades-, brothers-, and sisters-in-arms express it better:

We combat their justice not simply because it is unjust, but because it expresses the system's code of values, which is antagonistic to our own. And no objective court or judge can settle that conflict. It's our values against theirs. Professionals of the law have no place in our conception and view of the world. And if someone asks us: "So then what do you want?", we will answer: "We want to hang the managers of this system from the walls, not to replace them by establishing a 'purer' concept of justice (objective courts, fair laws, reasonable sentences), but merely to assume the unyielding 'duty' of settling accounts as an honorable act in itself."

—Conspiracy of Cells of Fire

It's very clear that an institution that equates laws imposed from above with justice as a universal value is, to revolutionary forces, an *a priori* enemy that deserves to be completely destroyed. Such laws derive from a

of his leg; and of course the arrests of the other brothers, sisters, and comrades from the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire.

Therefore, it can easily be seen how the generalized proceedings in the framework of our case are part of a quite widespread repressive project directly targeting revolutionary forces and their actions. Our response to a plan like this can be nothing other than the even further intensification of our actions, returning blow for blow as much as possible with still more vigor and effectiveness.

This is also the position expressed by the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire. For that same reason, it has recently developed its revolutionary worldview, even further increasing the degree of its action and discourse, and striking various targets located in the metropolis with devastating explosive devices. The attacks on the National Insurance building, Parliament, the pre-election rally for former prime minister Kostas Karamanlis, the apartments of Mimis Androulakis and Marietta Giannakou, the offices of Chrysi Avgi, the immigrant concentration camp on Petrou Ralli Street, Korydallos Prison, and the Thessaloniki Courthouse, as well as the 14 incendiary packages sent to embassies and international agencies, the package sent to then justice minister H. Kastanidis, and the blow struck against the Athens Court of Appeals in the heart of the metropolis, were the essential dialectics produced by the Conspiracy while I was already locked up. The deepening of its practice but also its discourse, to me represents an example of integrity for any guerrilla infrastructure that truly desires to promote the revolutionary objective. It is the direct rejection of the logic of victimhood, the rejection of a life of fear and anxiety, the focusing of your own strength on the intensification and spread of your actions, and ultimately the permanent heightening and continuation of urban guerrilla war and revolutionary war, far beyond conformities and reconciliations.

If anyone believes that I am going to have even a minimum amount of fear in the face of bourgeois justice, they are mistaken. If they think that I am going to beg them, on my knees, for more favorable treatment, they are most certainly deceiving themselves. I know full well that the only ones who are intimidated by seeing our absolute questioning of their world and our absolute disdain for the power they possess are you yourselves. Because our persona, as well as the persona of every dignified combatant and every combatant who doesn't back down, consists of revolutionary character—a revolution that will be the beginning of the

people who have nothing to do with the struggle, tossing everyone into the same sack on the basis of ridiculous accusations.

The case of the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire represents the beginning of a series of proceedings and events that signal the repressive counter-attack of the state and capitalism against the advance and radicalization of the combative current within the anarchist milieu that has taken place during the past few years. The rising tide of more and more attacks on targets and symbols of domination, carried out by groups and collectives that constitute the new urban guerrilla warfare—groups with different political viewpoints and analyses, but with a shared project of struggle—in turn obliges the repressive mechanisms to evolve their means and methods in order to apply the brakes to the development of revolutionary forces. If we make a brief review, especially of the period after December 2008 and the peace that came once the revolt had calmed, we can see that the young comrades who had gotten involved in those processes chose to continue down the path of fire instead of withdrawing into submissive tranquility. Concurrently, the already extant guerrilla infrastructure intensified its action, creating an intricate complex of combative groupings that were simultaneously renewing and increasing the degree of revolutionary commitment. This intensification of revolutionary action led, quite logically, to a parallel intensification of repression, since the state machinery was recognizing the danger of revolutionary practices, especially during a period characterized by political instability.

Revolutionary war means damage on both sides. Thus, during the last one-and-a-half years, a series of cases and events has provided the setting for repressive policy. A few obvious examples include the act of putting a price of 600,000 euros on the heads of comrades S. Seisidis, M. Seisidis, and G. Tsironis shortly after our arrests; the widespread preventive detentions prior to protests; the raids on social centers carried out under ridiculous pretexts; the arrest and imprisonment of combatants without there being a shred of evidence against them; the Revolutionary Struggle arrests and the climate of antiterrorist hysteria; the criminal prosecutions launched against the circle of intimates, friends, comrades, and family members of combatants Nikos Maziotis, Pola Roupá, and Costas Gournas, who took political responsibility for their membership in Revolutionary Struggle; the murder of Lambros Fountas, member of the same organization, during preparatory activity for an operation; the shooting from behind of Simos Seisidis and the subsequent amputation

certain code of values, from a quite specific ethic, and therefore cannot be objective. Rather, it is the subjectivity of values that intrinsically leads to the subjectivity of justice. Courts, judges, prosecutors, and all those who serve justice as an institution represent the modern code of values. In other words, they are a product of predominant morality itself. And in opposition to that predominant morality, which confines the law to a perpetual struggle between objective axioms of good and evil, which doesn't recognize a conception of justice that is continually fluctuating and being redefined, and which finally hands a caste of judges and prosecutors—to whom it attributes a quasi-divine dimension—the responsibility to oversee and administer laws imposed from above, I propose taking justice into our own hands. Revolutionary self-justice, as an honorable and unmediated practice, finds the human dimension in law and doesn't recognize anyone's right to impose their will on my life.

Courts ultimately operate within the framework of a *de jure* prosecution of criminal cases as defined by the logic of the system. However, the real criminals right now are the very supporters of the bourgeois-democratic regime, and the real global crime is none other than the capitalist system itself.

The capitalist system is based on the exploitation and oppression of human beings by other human beings, and its goal is the continuous production—on the backs of the overwhelming majority of the world's population—of profit and wealth for a tiny caste. Capitalism has been represented by totalitarian and fascist regimes as well as by the bourgeois-democratic model we presently find throughout the entire Western world. Bourgeois democracy, as the representative expression of capitalism, is the political system that asserts and maintains its extensive domination from behind a liberal facade. It is a system based on the promise of carrying out the will of the people as an inviolable condition. This is of course a false condition meaning that once every four years the masses go to the ballot boxes, where they elect which scum will best play the role of everyone's mediator, leader, and specialist. They then hand that scum the reins to their own lives in exchange for a betrayed conscience or, in the best of cases, some small favor. It is a system whose foundations are laid by the magnificent cooperation between businessmen, contractors, shipping magnates, judges, and reporters, as well as their interrelations with the world of politics. In every case, people from these branches of professional life are the ones who fill political leadership

positions. It is very clear that the political system is structured this way in order to defend the interests of the haute bourgeoisie and is therefore tailor-made to suit the capitalist regime. Bourgeois democracy is not the will of the people. It is the science and technique that power uses in order to not be perceived as oppression. The interests of the dominant classes continue to govern without displaying the overt brutality of absolutist regimes. But whenever barbarous violence is replaced by vulgar mass media propaganda, whenever alienation chokes off any response, whenever silent consensus fills the void left by fear of repression, democracy claims its share in a brutality that is no less obscene even though it is concealed and refined.

Concurrently, bourgeois democracy has the tendency to spread exploitative and authoritarian relationships throughout the social fabric. It thus creates a society whose only function is to reproduce predominant morality and the structural elements of the capitalist regime. Getting rich quick, the desire for—or obsession with—social ascent, the depiction of alienated and decadent behavior as ideal models to follow, consumerist mania, acquiescence, egoism, and self-interest all constitute the results derived from a society based on spectacle and illusory capitalist prosperity. All these social behaviors and many others, replicated by a giant mass of subordinates, create a complex network of authoritarian relationships that guarantee the stability of capitalism.

The rise of a middle class and its consolidation as the prime expression of the social body prefigured the social stupor and lethargy of the spectacle. The teeming arrival of immigrants at the beginning of the 1990s (with the fall of the Eastern Bloc and its socialist regimes) created a new social class that replaced Greek workers as a productive base. It's worth pointing out that this migratory wave was mainly the result of the plundering of resources from countries in the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. A globalized economy needs a modern globalized proletariat. The exploitation suffered by the so-called underdeveloped countries, with their cheap labor, horrific living conditions, and abundant natural resources, guarantees the opulence and progress of the Western capitalist world. It is an opulence that—incapable of being maintained via “legal” means—gives rise to imperialist wars that simultaneously lead the populations of those countries to even more extreme degradation. And so the desperate begin a journey—with no guarantees of success—toward the Western metropolises, where they arrive by the thousands.

The media began to disparage and gloss over everything, taking about the dismantling of the organization and the widespread arrests of its members. Obsessed with the insistence that this really was a safe house, arrest warrants were issued for anyone who had left their fingerprints at my place, even if they only visited once years ago. In this way, apart from the first three preventive detentions, other arrests followed. People were dragged in front of the examining magistrates by masked members of the Antiterrorist Unit, even if only for a fingerprint found on a lamp, a CD-ROM, a bathroom tile, or for some other equally ridiculous but in no way less irrefutable evidence.

Nevertheless, things were very clear. The only one who knew about the device was me. My social circle, my friends and comrades who came to see me in the simple context of social relationships, cannot be responsible for an object that was carefully hidden out of sight in my home, and their presence there is obviously no proof that they were Conspiracy of Cells of Fire members. Additionally, a safe house is a place with very specific characteristics. It is a clandestine home with false ownership information and a large quantity of weapons or explosives, and it is used as a base of operations. Only a limited circle of people would have access to such a house, not just anyone who felt like visiting. These characteristics are far from those of my home, which is rented in my father's name and was visited by a stream of people, some of whom had nothing whatsoever to do with the anarchist milieu. Also, the prosecutorial mechanism itself had already shot down the assertion that it was dealing with a safe house, since only certain people who left fingerprints there were charged with membership in the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire. Naturally, the selection wasn't made on the basis of objective evidence. The criteria were the people's pasts, their positions, or their political identities. I have taken political responsibility for my membership in the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire organization. Does this mean that the rest of the accused have something to do with the organization simply because they know me? I have likewise made it clear that the device was mine and that its presence in a legal home was of a preparatory nature and my own personal mistake. So a social visit is enough to sentence other defendants for explosives possession? When you go visit one of your friends or acquaintances, do you poke around to see if they are perhaps hiding something on their bookshelves? I don't think so. This is simply a matter of a convenient circumstance to justify the criminal prosecution of revolutionaries, but also

we don't view ourselves as the vanguard of a struggle that the docile masses must follow, but rather as individuals who participate in processes of struggle—individuals who collectivize their negations and convert them into practice here and now, with the aim of seeking out those minorities who in turn will stride toward the revolutionary goal, their weapon being hatred for the dominant civilization and hatred for the structures and functions of society as we know it; rebellious individuals who will walk together toward the destruction of the existent, forming healthy and comradely connections while promoting the values and principles of equality, solidarity, self-commitment, autonomy, self-organization, and freedom.

This is the worldview proposed by the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire: ruthless daily war on all forms of power; direct and total rupture, far beyond the disorienting demands and complaints of the unions. We refuse to reconcile ourselves with the current material conditions of life. We don't view our lives in simple economic terms, nor do we measure them in statistics, and we therefore don't talk about low wages, the lack of social programs, or economic degradation. Instead, we make reference to existential poverty, the decay of feeling and ethics, and generalized alienation. We aren't begging for more favorable conditions of slavery. We demand to have absolute and final say regarding our lives, and we transform that demand into praxis: yesterday, today, and forever, attacking under the structured aegis of guerrilla war on everything that attempts to repress, alienate, or corrode our desires and our ethic, our integrity and our character. Ultimately, we want to spread and promote this kind of action to all who—with honor, dignity, and bravery—engage in revolution as a permanent defiance, as an endless voyage toward clear skies.

I would thus like to address my arrest, which happened on September 23, 2009. An Antiterrorist Unit operation carried out at my home in Halandri ended with four arrests. I, my cousin, his girlfriend, and another comrade and friend were arrested as members of the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire. In my home they found an explosive device under construction that, according to the logic of *modus operandi*, became the evidentiary proof connecting the arrestees with the organization. The complete absence of evidence that could connect any other person apart from myself to the presence of the device, much less to the organization, led the pigs to cooperate with the mass media in the need to create the farce of a safe house in order to have something to base their criminal prosecutions on.

The ever-diligent middle class took the opportunity offered by the existence of this new productive base, which—combined with the barest guarantees of economic profit resulting from their, at least apparent, social status—helped them ascend to become a class of small proprietors and employers. This form of petty authority, mated to an episodic acquiescence and the nocturnal emissions of consumerism that accompany out-of-control lending, was the spark that ignited the creation of a colorless, odorless, and completely submissive social sector. The betrayed consciences of large portions of the population; their embrace of the idol Mammon; the ideologization of inaction; and of course the idealized portrayal of a modern, robotized, sheep-like lifestyle devoid of any trace of responsibility, initiative, or individual will; were reflected in thousands of passive spectators who gave up their last vestiges of dignity and began to simultaneously maintain and strengthen the capitalist machine.

However, over these last few years we have seen the most decisive turn in the history of capitalism. The greatest financial crisis the economic world has ever known, which is in fact a crisis of the hyperaccumulation of capital and hyperinflation in the financial sector, has made the weight of the financial sector unsupportable to the state machine. Threatened by the fall, economic interests are once again putting the squeeze on the productive base, on the great mass of wage-earners, and on the middle and lower classes, with the aim of salvaging their profits and surviving. Social inequalities are thus widening even more, since the middle class—that product of the twentieth century—is losing those privileges (especially those of an economic nature) that were created to impose a gulf between the powerful and the lower classes. The changes to the social fabric at a structural level, but also to material living conditions due to the economic crisis and the constantly adjusting conditions of oppression that accompany it, are radical. In Greece, the presence of the IMF—an entity whose name is intertwined with bankruptcy and tyranny over struggling economies around the world, some characteristic examples of which would be Argentina or, more recently, Hungary and Ireland—signals the beginning of a new era with regard to the limits of the capitalist model. In the name of perpetual capitalist progress, and with the objective of saving the interests of banks and business conglomerates, an entire array of social benefits—which were used in the past as the price paid for generalized inaction itself—is being abolished in Greece. The new reality being shaped is ushering in totally miserable conditions similar to

those prevailing in countries on the capitalist periphery. The apparent opulence of the last twenty years is falling to pieces, revealing the naked misery of the capitalist regime as well as the absence of imagination of most of the population, who betrayed their consciences in exchange for a few meager material guarantees and the dream of social recognition.

Moving on to the matter of how, in my opinion, revolutionary forces must handle a situation like the one I described, I should first clarify certain points regarding my own political position as well as the way I view the current social reality. From the first moment of its activity, the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire made it clear that it understood repression not only as a condition produced by domination but simultaneously as a set of social behaviors reproduced from below and woven throughout the entire social fabric. That's because the survival of capitalism doesn't just require the powerful to impose exploitative rules. It also needs the actual oppressed to accept them. However, acceptance of the degrading conditions of modern slavery requires an alienated and passive social body. As an organization we therefore promoted revolutionary consciousness as both the motive force of subversion and a weapon against capitalist power. One might view the capitalist development resulting from the economic crisis as materially guaranteeing the conditions of survival for an enormous sector of the population, but that view in itself isn't responsible for the misery of our lives. Oppression is implanted and forms an integral part of capitalist structures and the statist model, no matter what the conditions may be. Even in times of outward prosperity and neoliberal consensus, it is not the essence itself of exploitation that changes, but only the terms under which it is imposed. As Guy Debord said: "The problem isn't that people live more or less poorly, but that they live in a way that always escapes their control." Regarding revolutionary action and practice, at this level it doesn't matter to me personally whether conditions are "ripe" or whether social consensus remains equivalent to passive indifference.

In every instance it is a certainty that conditions of instability and political polarization are completely desirable, since they oblige that enormous mass of those who take part in nothing, as well as the permanently indifferent, to take a position. It's also no coincidence that the now indispensable condition to ensure the so-called social peace is political stability, which in turn guarantees the normal functioning of the system.

Within this context, the role of revolutionary forces consists of radicalizing rebellious minorities, organizing them into a solid revolutionary

Nevertheless, our political viewpoint as the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire is that domination doesn't emerge from one dimension of the centers of power. Rather, it expands throughout all social structures and determines all relationships and behaviors. In our communiqués we therefore indicated these behaviors and attitudes as well as the characteristics adopted by the social body, since meekly bowing your head before the tyrants in exchange for artificial capitalist opulence is nothing more than begging for crumbs off the table of the economic elite.

We pointed out these behaviors precisely because it seems important to us to emphasize that the survival of a system based on exploitation is rooted not just in the imposition of a dominant model of government from above, but also in social consensus from below—a consensus expressed by way of indifference, inertia, fear, and alienation. When the oppressed masses sell off even the last trace of their creative conscience; when they are incapable of viewing their lives as the consequence and result of choices they themselves have made; when, in thrall to the drug of spectacle, they allow themselves to be lulled by the idea of a televised utopia; when private life, egoism, the dream of social ascent, and petty authority become ends in themselves; when indifference is justified as a vital attitude; when demands are limited to false, empty threats against the most weak; when fear is capable of applying the brakes to subversive thought and practice; when intra-class violence replaces conflict against the system of power; when choosing the tyrant of the moment via the electoral process is perceived as struggle; and finally, when passivity and submission find fertile ground in which to put down roots; then the alibi of oppression is unable to offer safe refuge to the choices and faults of the exploited. We therefore refuse to see the social body as a perpetual victim that deserves to be completely absolved of its sins.

Thus, we also profess anarchic individualism. Because we seek comrades-, brothers-, and sisters-in-arms who are taking the road toward revolutionary destiny, with consciousness as their weapon. Because we know that consciousness and the revolutionary ethic are necessary conditions for the creation of a healthy, anarchist, and revolutionary process as we understand it. Because we consider revolution to be an individual matter in the first place and a collective matter only later on, and that stems from our belief that everyone is responsible for their choices, their options, and their own vital position. Because we don't accept that some are capable of taking revolutionary action while others aren't. Because

are our enemies. And independently of whether or not some invisible possibility for massive and widespread conflict appears, we choose the logic of immediate and continual activity, with the goal of satisfying and realizing our individuality and ultimately collectivizing the means of revolutionary process—a process that will make society as we know it collapse.

With this idea, the Conspiracy began to strike using incendiary devices against car dealerships, banks, insurance companies, economic and state services, politicians, ministries, [political] parties, churches, military barracks, prisons, pigs, systems of control and surveillance, reporters, and fascist gangs. The themes developed in the organization's communiqués covered a wide and varied spectrum: the economic dimension of capitalism and the role of economic centers of power; specific people who form the democratic elite, as well as the role of the mechanisms in which the military-police complex takes part; attacks on the military courthouse in the Rouf neighborhood and military targets carried out on October 29, 2008 and November 2, 3, and 4, 2008, respectively; the role of reporters, the mass media, and propaganda as a means to achieve consensus as well as a process of alienation; the role of the pigs, systems of control, and surveillance; repression as a process that produces symptoms of fear and the creation of a police state; religion and its role as an instrument that subjugates and denigrates life itself; the international solidarity expressed by the attack on the French news agency carried out on December 3, 2008 for the comrades engaging in sabotage on train lines; and the attack on the Chilean Consulate carried out on July 22, 2009 for comrade Mauricio Morales Duarte, who died when a bomb he was carrying—meant to be placed at a police barracks—exploded in his hands. The Conspiracy, acquiring and sharing experiences while developing its political positions and consolidating its focus, then decided to evolve and heighten the degree of its activity. Thus, an attack on the apartment of Panayiotis Hinofotis—old fascist and former interior vice-minister, as well as part of the military during the junta—was carried out on July 11, 2009; an attack on the Ministry of Macedonia-Thrace was carried out on September 2, 2009; and then there was the attack on the home of Gerasimos Arsenis and Louka Katseli. Arsenis plagues an entire generation of young people who curse his name, while Katseli is a loyal representative of capitalism who plays an important role in the current government.

front, exposing the alienated behavior that breeds submission and indifference, damaging the enemy within, sowing insurrectionary violence, and ultimately creating a polarization clearly oriented toward subversion. Naturally, to realize such possibilities—in other words, to bring into existence the collectivization of consciences toward a common goal—the individuals who take part in the process must above all and before everything possess individual consciousness. The main issue is therefore each person's individual responsibility regarding how and to what degree they view their own role in the continuation of capitalism, as well as their combined enthusiasm and urgency for conflict with the existent, with the goal of totally pulling it down from its cross.

Our weapon in such a project is none other than polymorphic action, understood as political propaganda, marches, talks, discussions, occupations, sabotage, expropriations, and armed struggle as well. Self-organization; antihierarchy; unmediated ways to take action, far removed from the typical party and politicking identities; horizontal structures; collective decisions; equality; solidarity; subversive thinking; and of course the revolutionary ethic—these are some of the features that the anarchist/antiauthoritarian milieu already possesses right now.

Within that milieu, I personally created my political identity, developed my revolutionary conscience, found comrades, collectivized my negations, matured politically, and participated in struggles that had different characteristics and objectives. And it was ultimately the anarchist milieu that marked my path as a revolutionary, which led me to make decisions that I am proud of and continue to honor even to this day. In detail, briefly reviewing my history as part of the revolutionary forces, I've been in the anarchist milieu since 2005. This political milieu brings together individuals and collectives with diverse points of view, different conceptions of struggle, and distinct attributes. Nevertheless, it focuses on an antiauthoritarian, antihierarchical worldview and self-organized structures, and its goal—obviously—is anarchist revolution.

Therefore, by meeting people and gradually forming my political identity, beginning as a schoolboy and then as a university student, I took part in all kinds of political activity. The student marches of 2005; protests during the European Social Forum; the rallies against educational reform in 2006 and 2007; the massive riots and school occupations; solidarity with political prisoners (talks, demonstrations, etc.); my participation in the self-managed social center at the Polytechnic,

which developed many different types of activities inside as well as outside the university; and of course the revolt of December 2008—those were the events, among many others I’ve possibly forgotten, that defined my trajectory within the anarchist milieu. All those experiences of struggle, as well as the comradely relationships I developed with people as a result, the difficulties and the successes, the victories and the defeats, the losses and the endings, the attitudes and the ruptures, the adoption of values and the political alliances—all that, as a continuous and full experience, has determined my revolutionary identity and established my political convictions.

With the passage of time and the acquisition of valuable experience, my revolutionary thinking was being shaped and I was becoming aware of the range and nature of the choices open to me. I finally arrived at the decision to dedicate my energy and potential to urban guerrilla war and the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire, a decision I am proud of and certainly won’t apologize for. The moment I chose urban guerrilla war as the expression of political struggle that advanced the revolutionary worldview as I understood it was a crucial one to me. It deepened my critical thinking, allowed my activities to evolve, and functioned as the factor that made me more complete and fulfilled on a political as well as an existential level.

But before talking about urban guerrilla war, I would like to say a few things about revolutionary violence as an inseparable part of the overall struggle. As an anarchist and a revolutionary I don’t acknowledge any of the false distinctions between legal and clandestine action. Of course, neither do I embrace the prevailing propaganda that anxiously seeks to take advantage of every combative and insurrectional expression by stuffing it into the framework of bourgeois democracy. In addition, the defense of “speech” often corresponds to the condemnation of “action.” This is no more and no less than the same prevailing propaganda taking shape, leading to invisibility, inactivity, and ultimately the disappearance of every form of response. Obviously, by not recognizing the political or moral legitimacy of the system, I don’t accept its restriction or limitation of my actions in any way. In the end, the limits of struggle aren’t established from above, but are instead framed and determined by our own revolutionary ethic, as well as by the goal of total destruction.

Revolutionary violence is just and necessary—just according to my own principles and code of values, and necessary for the simple reason

It is therefore natural that armed organizations scattered throughout the world and the course of history would possess distinct characteristics and political viewpoints unto themselves, depending on the factors I’ve mentioned as well as the decisive role of the subjective factor—in other words, the essence of the people they comprise. The same also goes for the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire. One of the reasons why I took political responsibility for membership in the organization was because I felt it was important to defend its history and the choices it made. I won’t allow its name to be dragged through the mud by supporters of the system who are eagerly attempting to drain the organization’s struggle of any meaning, and I will continue to spread its particular discourse, ideas, and views.

The Conspiracy of Cells of Fire is an anarchist guerrilla group that, through organized structures of attack, promotes the revolutionary objective. We are part of a revolutionary project based in the present but with its eyes gazing toward the future, toward the objective that is revolution. It is an objective we place in front of us here and now, in the form of direct action and constant activity. The Conspiracy of Cells of Fire struck and strikes the prevailing structures of capitalism and bourgeois democracy. Its attacks are directed at the complexes of power and at the institutions that support the system. To us, precaution is a fundamental and imperative condition of our activities. We care about damaging the enemy and emphasizing its vulnerability via continuous acts of war. We do so in an organized way and with particular coherency for the production of our revolutionary discourse, which envelops and accompanies our actions.

Without praxis, words are nothing. The harmony of the fist striking the table, the sound of the explosion and the gunshot, are needed for the magical recipe that—at a critical moment—brings together all the potential of our defiance.

—Jean-Marc Rouillan

Praxis is the most sacred form of discourse. It simultaneously determines and positions the political choices of individuals who shift into action. Our very political choices are enemies of this world in its entirety. Every aspect of domination and every relationship based on exploitation

That's because the spread of fear—the fear of revolt, the fear of radical action, and the fear of urban guerrilla war reflected in everyone who consciously forms part of and directly supports authoritarian institutions—and ultimately terror throughout the enemy camp is not only a desirable condition but, in my opinion, also indispensable to the interests of revolution. In 1794, Robespierre defined terror as “justice: prompt, severe, and inflexible.” And terror caused by the actions of revolutionary forces and directed against the regime's order is nothing less than the result of our combative politics. It is the justice of revolution.

The quintessence of this combative politics is urban guerrilla war and armed struggle as specific expressions of revolutionary violence, whose characteristics I analyzed earlier. It is organized and orchestrated attack on the established modern politico-economic order. It is partly and firstly a political choice of rupture, and partly a process of self-realization and self-evolution for the revolutionary herself. The political choice of rupture consists of direct opposition to the regime in the form of radical practice as the transmutation of our revolutionary discourse. Consistency; organization; mortal wounds effectively and precisely inflicted on centers of power; the spread of anarchist discourse and the new nihilism as the culmination of a critique of weapons, in which weapons don't necessarily mean guns and bullets, but any methods used by individuals that most appropriately fit the situation; as well as the propagation and promotion of revolutionary practices; constitute the structural elements comprised by urban guerrilla war. On the other hand, as a process to be carried out for its own sake, urban guerrilla war represents a proud choice and a dynamic attitude that proposes total and direct rupture with the existent—a choice that speaks the language of revolution in the present tense. It is an essential evolutionary step, since it breaks away from meaningless routine and offers the revolutionary an opportunity for constant and coherent revolutionary activity.

Urban guerrilla war—and armed struggle in general—is a historically affirmed practice, recognized as a means of struggle for different types of subversive movements and politico-ideological approaches as well as distinct points of departure. It represents an expression in the process of birth and development, part of polymorphic revolutionary movements that—as everyone can easily realize—interact with the unique conditions existing in every era and are the native product of sociopolitical processes occurring at specific historical moments.

that those who have power have never given it away willingly and without bloodshed, and they never will. “Violence is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one,” wrote Marx. And revolution is a violent process of overthrowing the existent. Since revolutionaries are enemies of the system in its totality and all its expressions, it would be inconceivable for them to operate within the reformist pacifist framework of the system itself. Casting a brief glance at the global history of subversive movements, we realize that every great and essential change has been brought about solely and exclusively through violent processes and struggles. I thus not only accept but also prefer any collective or individual form of expression of revolutionary violence, on the condition that it is in accordance with an ethical standard, as a method for the spread of the revolutionary objective.

By the spread of the revolutionary objective, I mean when revolutionary activity contributes to the revolutionary process by breaking the state's monopoly of violence, radicalizing consciousnesses and responses, and of course managing to cause damage to the enemy. Revolutionary violence causes damage to the enemy, whether through massive riots or in the form of guerrilla attacks, that yields a very tangible and material certainty and is in no way insignificant or valueless. This material certainty doesn't just operate on the level of an unproductive symbolism. It also speaks to losses in material and human potential that are valuable in themselves. A destroyed bank is a bank that doesn't function, a torched police car means one less police car, bombed courthouses are useless courthouses, a thrashed riot squad is a riot squad incapable of doing its work properly the next day, etc. A radically rebellious movement must speak the language of attack, permanent mobility, and continuous evolution. And the language of attack and revolutionary war is measured by casualties. That certainly doesn't mean it doesn't recognize the symbolic value of an action. Far from it. I understand the tremendous role played in tactics by dialectics, which should nevertheless go hand-in-hand with the effectiveness and results of the damage.

Another consequence of violent revolutionary processes is the radicalization that results from the appropriation of such practices by more and more people. And that appropriation materialized on a massive scale precisely during the revolt of December 2008, when thousands of different people from different social sectors met on the streets, bringing a distinctly insurrectionary and violent outlook with them. The radicalization

of the broad revolutionary milieu since that December becomes obvious when one considers the growth and intensification of actions by guerrilla groups as well as the more general and widespread enthusiasm for conflict and confrontation. Therefore, the essential role of violent methods in the deepening and sharpening of subversive struggles and in making them stand out as an incipient threat to domination also becomes obvious. Acts of war in the urban environment demonstrate the regime's role as enemy, produce a polarization that is indispensable to the broad revolutionary perspective, reveal the vulnerability of the system's centers of power as well as the possibility of carrying out effective attacks against that system, and finally create a continually tense situation of pressure and political unrest that acts as a destabilizing factor to the regime. That destabilization in turn functions as a crucial tool in favor of the revolutionary objective.

In the end, revolutionary violence breaks the state's monopoly on violence and repression. The legitimization of violence exercised from above, combined with the attempt to vilify and condemn rebellious violence exercised by the oppressed against their tyrants, is one of the system's most potent propagandistic weapons. The bourgeois-democratic state—as capitalism's political representative—cements its power with exploitation, oppression, and therefore violence, which is either visible and direct or remains concealed yet just as ruthless. In *Prometheus Bound*, the famous tragedy by Aeschylus, the State and Violence are portrayed as sister deities who together chain the Titan Prometheus to the rocks of the Caucasus Mountains for revolting against the domination of the world by Zeus. Almost 2,500 years separate us from the message of that important work, yet it still continues to be relevant. Violence and the fear of repression on one side, with propaganda and the creation of consensus on the other, constitute the most essential authoritarian bipolarity of the modern regime. And additionally, how could a political system that suppresses every notion of human essence and dignity in the name of profit; that annihilates and murders in the streets, police stations, prisons, workplaces, and on the borders of land and sea; that packs people together in modern concentration camps; that actively participates in or supports imperialist wars and chemical weapon interventions in countries on the capitalist periphery; that constructs a police state of control and surveillance in the name of security; that promotes the values of egoism, apathy, indifference, greed, snitching, malice, etc.; be based on anything else but violent imposition?

The expression of violence by domination is always morally legitimized. Conversely, when the victims of that continuous and relentless process stop seeing themselves as victims and begin to rebel by claiming the role of executioner for themselves, they are called criminals, extremists, lunatics, hoodlums, and terrorists. The concept of “terrorism” has a particular connotation today. And how could it be different when the “war on terror” is nothing more than an ideological weapon serving world domination and its need to gravitate toward fascism and conservatism?

But what does the term “terrorist” mean? Louise Richardson, in her book *What Terrorists Want*, defines the term thusly: “terrorism simply means deliberately and violently targeting civilians for political purposes.” If we accept the definition of this academic, whose studies are being used by the Defense Ministry as well as by American intelligence services, then a terrorist can only be someone who willingly aims to hurt the civilian population in the interest of a political end. When has the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire or any other revolutionary organization targeted the civilian population? The answer is, of course, never! Precaution is a structural element of urban guerrilla war and revolutionary violence. The only reason why the term “terrorism” is being used with the quite particular connotation implied by this case is in an attempt to denigrate our political struggle and drain it of any content, an attempt to portray the individuals who take part in or support such practices as crazy, demented, bloodthirsty criminals who attack everyone, no matter whom.

Now, if we examine the etymology of the term “terrorism,” we see that it derives from “fear/terror-power/state.”² We should therefore conclude that a terrorist is whoever manipulates and administers the power of fear, always with political ends. So the crucial question is: who is the recipient of the message of terror? Because if it concerns a large portion of the population, as explicitly stated in the penal code I am being judged with, then the terrorist is the politico-economic elite, due to the violence—which is integral to its existence—that it exercises over the body of the oppressed. But if the recipient of terror is the politico-economic elite and its centers of power, then I will not refuse but instead proudly wear the “label” of terrorist.

2 The Greek word for “terrorism” is “τρομοκρατία”, which consists of the words “τρόμος” (“terror” or “horror”) and “κράτος” (“government” or “state”). Therefore, if democracy means “government by the people,” then terrorism could be translated as “government by terror.”