Anarchy in the Cradle of Democracy: A Review of the Roots, Convictions and Place of Anarchism in Modern Greece

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ABSTRACT

Anarchism has spread its roots in countless nations and remains widely misunderstood. It will not cease to exist. It will not become obsolete nor irrelevant until coercive power and inequality cease to exist, until hierarchical establishment is destroyed, and until corruption and manipulation are no more. Anarchists are more than a band of disenchanted thugs, bound by their respective hate for the establishment, who seek to destroy it through violent revolution. They identify structures of authority, challenge them, and deem them illegitimate if unjustifiable. Looking specifically at the modern movement of anarchism in Greece, while it is possible that it is politically less than productive in the traditional sense, its emergence may be viewed as historically justified in its extreme distrust and skepticism with respect to the State, both domestic and foreign—born in a sort of perfect storm of conditions. The purpose of this paper is thus 1) to set the anarchist movement in the context of modern Greek history, exploring the movement as a response to economic, social, and political events and 2) to reassess the image of anarchism, both politically and philosophically, presenting it as a vehicle striving for greater progressive and libertarian reforms in a variety of issues through its purified criticism and unique approach toward common objectives. The lack of concern for political power and constituent accommodation presents a worldview that is more suited to criticize than to offer suggestion, but at its own reputational sacrifice, situated at the radical realms of the political spectrum, anarchism can serve as a powerful force for the progressive and libertarian development of society as a whole.
**Anarchy in the Cradle of Democracy: A Review of the Roots, Convictions and Place of Anarchism in Modern Greece**

**I. Introduction**

Political dissidents and socio-political theorists, rebels with a mission and the adrift disenfranchised, collectivists and individualists, loathers of God and Christians, pacifists and violent revolutionaries, tomorrow’s hope and the forefathers; a picture is painted that falsely yields nothing more than an icon of antithetical analogies, but a collage emerges, composed of all such characters and personalities that have found a home, united under the black flag of anarchism. It has been stated that “there are as many variations of Anarchism as there are Anarchists,” and while this is an unmistakable exaggeration, this statement sheds light on the inherent contradiction of attempting to organize and find order in a political or social theory which seemingly rejects these very principles.¹ Does anarchism reject these principles? What is anarchism and from where does it emerge? Does the theory or its apologists offer anything productive to society? Did it in the past; does it now? Or is it simply a collection of youth and the dispossessed wreaking havoc, orchestrating assassination attempts and slinging petrol-bombs?

Anarchism, in general intellectual culture, is associated “with chaos, violence, bombs, disruption, and so on,”² but it is remarkable that a theory that has carried perennial appeal and has spread its roots in countless nations can be so broadly defined and widely misunderstood. It has been claimed that anarchist roots and ambitions can be drawn to the slave revolts of antiquity, the uprisings of the peasantry throughout the Middle Ages, the French revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Russian and Spanish revolutions of the early

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twentieth-century, and later Japan and then to China, supplanted in modern societies counter-culturally in Greece, Mexico, Italy, and so on.³ It is the perpetual relationship of power, coercion, obligation and disobedience that carries this appeal through time, and it is worth a greater understanding for proponents and critics alike.

Anarchists are more than a band of disenchanted thugs bound by their respective hate for the system and the establishment who seek to destroy it through violent means and revolution. While this description may fit many who identify with the anarchist movement—and in fact others who merely participate in the violent and chaotic practices, completely devoid of political or social consciousness, for the thrill of glorified disobedience—this by no means should be used as the lens through which to view all anarchists. If it were, anarchism would be unfortunately discarded as hopelessly utopian, violent in a terroristic sense, and politically useless and backward. This, in fact, has become a popularly held conception of anarchism, used to dismiss modern anarchists accordingly, but this fails to weigh the merits of the anarchist criticisms and claims. For instance, the modern movement of anarchism in Greece, while possibly politically less than productive in the traditional sense, may be viewed as historically justified in its extreme distrust and skepticism with respect to the State. Domestically, the people have been victims of rampant societal corruption, ineffective economic and social policies, bouts of brutality, lack of opportunity, and ingrained practices and promotion of clientelism and patronage; and with regards to the foreign sphere, the Greek people have been stripped of their sovereignty on numerous occasions beginning in 1453 with the Ottoman occupation and extending through to the International Monetary Fund and European Union’s involvement in Greece’s current fiscal crisis. That being said, it is the perception that matters, not the fact. If the State is perceived as a

corrupt, manipulative, coercive, subordinating machine, the perception will be sufficient in supporting anarchist sentiment.

Anarchists identify structures of authority, challenge them, and deem them illegitimate if unjustifiable, and they do not have a monopoly on political violence. The teachings of anarchism often promote peace and harmony, non-invasion, and the sacredness of life and liberty. But anarchists “are more sensitive to wrong and injustice, quicker to resent oppression, and therefore not exempt from occasionally voicing their protest by an act of violence. But such acts are an expression of individual temperament, not of any particular theory.”

Thus, the purpose of this paper is twofold. I seek to 1) set the anarchist movement in the context of modern Greek history, exploring the movement as a response to economic, social, and political events. I also look to 2) reassess the image of anarchism, both politically and philosophically, presenting it as a vehicle striving for greater progressive and libertarian reforms through purified criticism and objectives and lack of concern for political power and constituent or special interest accommodation. My goal is not to unequivocally support anarchism, but rather to shed light on its inner complexities and to highlight its attributes as a forward-looking movement, safest when held to a counter-cultural or minority movement, that includes support for workers’ rights, environmental sustainability, immigrants’ rights, universal equality based on race, creed, and sexual preference; expanded federalism, spontaneous non-hierarchical organization, peace, happiness, and the achievement of natural human potential. Occasionally, protests for the above issues are accompanied by violent and passionate acts, deeming violence, etc.

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4 Doyle, I. Noam Chomsky on anarchism.
at least in the ritualistic sense and at times more terroristic, necessary. Somewhat unfortunately, these are the most likely candidates of anarchist action to receive full press and attention.

In attempting to accomplish this twofold goal I begin by looking at the range of definitions of anarchism. From here I look to the roots of anarchism in Greece. Although the modern movement does not often trace its lineage back to these actors or this far, a study of this period provides a cultural context that seems important to understanding aspects of historical distrust relevant to the current movement. I then explore the modern anarchist movement along with its relevant modern historical counterpart, and lastly I provide a philosophical view of autonomy and authority as a window into deeper thinking about the contribution of anarchism to Greek politics.

**II. Anarchism Defined**

The word *anarchy* comes from the Greek ἀναρχία (αναρχή) meaning contrary to authority or without a ruler. From this starting point, the word can suggest the complete and utter chaos arising from an unruly citizenry, or the more mild notion of being without a ruler because “rule is unnecessary for the preservation of order within a just and freely-associated society.”

Many political theorists characterize anarchism as “outdated, utopian, and generally confused:” a malignant “growth on the side of nineteenth-century political history” that is rarely fatal. George Woodcock and James Joll elaborate on this view as they describe anarchists as “idealists out of touch with reality” whose ideas and concepts were rooted during early industrialization, and who are unable to cope in a world with the emergence of large-scale industry. Other critics highlight

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8 Ibid.
the “dangers of disorder or the infeasibility of decentralized communities in a complex world,” expressing their opinion that anarchism has very limited historical value.9

According to D. Novak’s *The Place of Anarchism in the History of Political Thought*, anarchism is not only a political theory, but a social theory as well; one that is concerned with the “problems of power, authority and coercion” in general, but more specifically as “manifested in the machinery of the state.”10 Demonstrating that anarchism rejects the relations and exercises of power of man over man (and state as substituted for man), Novak insists that anarchism is unavoidably associated with the complex issues of domestic and international politics. He says this in order to refute the popular image of anarchists as individuals who commit terroristic actions by veiling criminal appetites with extreme political outlooks who should otherwise be overlooked.11

Anarchism develops its ideas for the proper social organization by seeking to follow nature in an unfettered form, and it questions the foundations of social institutions and other theories, readily rejecting and supplementing their principles with its own interpretations. Oscar Jaszi suggested that “[a]narchism covers so many distinct conceptions and tendencies that it is difficult to reduce them all to a common denominator,” seeing it as more of a mass ideology than a social theory. Similarly, Paul Eltzbacher sought to define anarchism through a study of seven thinkers (Godwin, Proudhon, Stirner, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Tucker, and Tolstoy) and the only element he found in common was a rejection of the State—a rejection of the “state which blinds men, coerces them, taxes them, and sends them out to be killed in war.”12 That being said, Novak also cites “the independent value of the individual and his right to a free and full

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9 Weiss, 2.
11 Ibid.
12 Novak, 309; Dillon, 235
development” as another common denominator, which naturally leads to the rejection of the State or any other authority that hinders “the free and full development” of the individual.13 Daniel Guerin, working off the writings of both Proudhon and Bakunin, puts forth visceral revolt, horror of the State, and hostility to bourgeois democracy as three ideas of his initial expressions of anarchism.14 Weiss lists and explains six values for which he believes anarchism provides insight and support: “rejection of illegitimate authority, ecological consciousness, anti-statism, the political economy of freedom, the importance of life styles, and the dynamics of cooperation.”15 R. B. Fowler again turns to the more confined approach, suggesting that anarchists of the nineteenth-century agreed on ““(1) a nearly total rejection of the familiar norms and structures, especially the political ones, of their age, and (2) a quest for an existence in a harmonious, “natural” world in which government was a remote memory.”16 There are countless definitions of anarchism, many of them accurate at least within a subset, but there are more frequently occurring features as mentioned above, and it is these more general tenets that will be highlighted throughout. In order to more fully understand its roots and to contextualize anarchism, it seems appropriate to briefly explore its historical appearances. The Greek case will be discussed afterwards.

III. The Roots of Anarchism

Anarchism can be likened to a tree in order to demonstrate its modern phenomenon. The roots were planted during the eighteenth century, full development was reached in the nineteenth

13 Novak, 311.
14 Dillon, 235.
15 Weiss, 4.
century, and some branches continued to grow into the twentieth century and beyond. Novak interestingly looks as far back as the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. as he notes the anarchist hints of Cynics and Cyrenaics who promoted the notion of the “individual as a law unto himself.”

Sophocles’ portrayal in 441 B.C. of Antigone’s refusal to abide by the man-made laws of Creon, ultimately burying Polynices in accordance with divine or natural law and in rejection of the ruler’s edict, also presents anarchist tendency. Novak further draws attention to the Sophist view that social conventions—and not nature—are responsible for social differences, to Zeno of Citium and his idea of a free ungoverned community, and to the Stoic principles of individualism, rationalism, and equality. Individualism is not itself a mark of all anarchists—many identify as collectivists—and the prospects of spontaneous ungoverned society are highly doubted, but equality, liberty, and social convention’s responsibility for social differences are marks of anarchism that bear great relevance still today.

Several major branches of anarchism exist, often emerging through feelings of betrayal after assisting in the revolutionary struggles to displace an exploitative tyrant. Thus, it is the State, this power structure that protects the powerful, that has become the enemy of the anarchist. It is necessary to note, as does Fowler, that the nineteenth-century rejection of the State and abolition of government did not necessarily refer to government as presently perceived. The “intensely communitarian societies they designed…” particularly in the wake of the Paris Commune, as will be described later on, may “have performed functions frequently associated

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17 Novak, 312.
18 Ibid, 313
20 Ibid, 314.
21 Ward, 2.
with ‘governments.’”\textsuperscript{22} While there is certainly a difference between these “governments” and between the State and government—government is the body within the borders of a State that controls and directs it, claiming legitimate authority and drafting and passing legislation—many “anarchists use the terms State and government loosely as if they were synonymous for the repository of political authority in society.”\textsuperscript{23}

Most anarchists identify with mainstream anarcho-communism (Godwin, Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin), where individual and social interests are seen as complementary and would achieve natural harmony if the State did not interfere. This theory argues for the mutual control of all property, natural resources, and means of production by local communities, and the absence of a central authority, which separates this branch from socialism.\textsuperscript{24} Russian revolutionary Mikhail Bakunin expressed that “we are convinced that liberty without socialism is privilege, injustice; and that socialism without liberty is slavery and brutality.”\textsuperscript{25}

The British philosopher William Godwin (1756-1836) laid out the anarchist case in opposition to the government, property, law, and other mechanisms of the State in his work \textit{Enquiry Concerning Political Justice}. The publication brought Godwin hostility, but his ideas flourished underground until the 1890s anarchist movement.\textsuperscript{26} It was said that “wherever liberty, truth, and justice was the theme, his name was not far off,” and no work of the time had given “such a blow to the philosophical mind of the country” as Godwin’s.\textsuperscript{27} He sees the most desirable social organization as one that is marked by justice defined as a principle of conduct where every action is taken with the consideration of the best interest of the whole: perfect

\textsuperscript{22} Fowler, 740.
\textsuperscript{23} Marshall, 19.
\textsuperscript{24} Ward, 2.
\textsuperscript{25} Weiss, 6.
\textsuperscript{26} Ward, 3.
\textsuperscript{27} Marshall, 191. According to fellow radical, William Hazlitt.
impartiality. Laws and government he saw as inconsistent with natural order and truth, not representing the wisdom of forefathers, but the “‘venal compact’ of ‘superior tyrants’ that were primarily enacted to defend economic inequality and unjust political power.” For Godwin, reason recognizes that an individual is a single unit among many, deserving no superior claim or preference. This extends to family and country as well, and thus, since men are naturally creatures of reason, “the best form of government is that which most completely recognizes [man’s] claims as an autonomous being, governing his own life voluntarily by conscious rational principles.” Godwin’s conception of a free and “just society does not include government. His overriding aim was to create a society which was free and yet ordered…[concluding] that ultimately order could only be achieved in anarchy.” While favoring democracy, likely as a lesser of evils, Godwin noted the use of coercion, always evil, as a defect of all forms of government since it both inflicts pain and replaces the natural motives of action, rational understanding and choice.

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865) was the first to call himself an anarchist and found fame through his essay Property is Theft. Proudhon was not a pure anarchist, however, seeking the best of both the individualistic and group centered worlds through syndicalism. According to Proudhon, man seeks rule in order to comprehensively fulfill his needs, and most often finds this rule in the form of something tangible whether it be his father, king, politician, et cetera. “The greater a man’s ignorance, the more implicit his obedience, the more absolute his

29 Marshall, 207.
30 Rogers, 53.
31 Marshall, 206.
32 Rogers, 53.
33 Ward, 4.
confidence in his leader.” But through deliberation and reasoning, he may “protest against authority...[and] the moment man looks into the well-springs of the sovereign will, from that moment that man is a rebel. If he obeys now, not so much because the king commands, but because of the king’s logic, it can be stated that henceforth he acknowledges no authority, and that he has set himself up as his own king.”

The foundation of Proudhon’s philosophy finds essential that at the core of any given relationship there must be mutual justice, “that every man owes his fellows complete respect;” and that the present social order does not admit this, but rather exploits relationships. Proudhon’s new order requires a growth of “equivalence in social function and status...best secured by a free ‘mutualistic’ organization of exchange in the economic sphere and by a free ‘federalistic’ organization of government in the political sphere.”

It is worth noting that Proudhonians were the largest group in the Paris Commune of 1871.

Mikhail Bakunin (1814-1876) was a romantic rebel, a man whose reputation grew not as a theorist but as an activist. “His broad magnanimity and childlike enthusiasm, his burning passion for liberty and equality, his volcanic onslaughts against privilege and injustice—all this gave him enormous human appeal in the libertarian circles of his day.” In fact, quotations from Bakunin can be found on Greek anarchist solidarity posters today, espoused for his insurrectionary outlook. Bakunin was well known, competing with Karl Marx for leadership of

36 Ibid, 783.
37 Marshall, 235. The Commune will be briefly discussed below.
the First International Workingmen’s Association. Unlike the philosophies and ““scientific socialism”” of Marx, Bakunin’s socialism was ““purely instinctive.””39 According to Bakunin:

At first, neither that consciousness nor that liberty are accessible to [man]: he is born a brute beast and slave and becomes human and progressively emancipated only in the context of a society which necessarily predates the inception of his reason, speech, and will: and this he can only do through the collective endeavors of all past and present members of that society which is, in consequence, the basis and natural point of departure of his human existence. It follows from that that man does not attain his individual freedom or personality unless these are complemented by those of all of the individuals around him (…) I am truly free only when all human beings around me, men and women alike, are equally free. Far from being a limitation or negation of my freedom, the freedom of my neighbor is instead its precondition and confirmation (…) I have no hesitation I saying that the State is an evil, albeit a historically necessary evil, as necessary in the past as its utter extinction will sooner or later prove to be… Even when it serves the good, it does it disservice and spoils it, precisely because it commands good, and any command provokes and inspires freedom to righteous revolt: and because the good, once it is commanded, becomes, from the vantage point of true morality, human…morality, and in terms of human respect and liberty, the bad.40

It has been said that men like Bakunin ““grow in a hurricane and ripen better in stormy weather than in sunshine.””41 Bakunin rejected the notion that social change relies on a temporal aspect or a gradual unfolding, but rather believed that the people shape their own fate, unfit to be reduced to abstract sociological formulas.42 Bakunin saw the peasantry and Lumpenproletariat as those having been least exposed to the Bourgeoisie, retaining ““their primitive vigor and turbulent instinct for revolt,” and it was on this grouping, the ““darkest elements of society,” coupled with the unemployed and the outlaws, that Bakunin set his hopes for a spontaneous uprising ““against

39 Avrich, 130.
40 Guerin, 150-152. God and the State, Mikhail Bakunin.
41 Avrich, 130. A remark from one on Bakunin’s contemporaries.
42 Ibid.
those who thrived on their misery and enslavement.” Bakunin perceives the State as “the most flagrant, the most cynical, and the most complete negation of humanity. It shatters the conventional solidarity of all men on earth, and brings some of them into association only for the purpose of destroying, conquering, and enslaving the rest. It protects its own citizens only…”

Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921) became the fourth major anarchist theorist through his works *The Conquest of Bread* and *Mutual Aid*. In the latter, facing Darwinian theory, he sought to demonstrate that cooperation is far more significant than competition as a precondition to survival. Kropotkin focused on a positive program based on free cooperation in the establishment of society, whereas Bakunin more negatively anticipated the destruction of the existing system. Again, for Kropotkin, the base of his philosophical anarchism was the fostering of natural solidarity amongst the people and their natural inclination to work together without external coercion. Kropotkin welcomed as friends in the struggle for political liberty the Socialist Revolutionary and Social Democrats, but opposed Lenin from the very beginning, and as it went the anarchist sympathy towards the Bolsheviks did waver with Bolshevik terror and the suppression of the Kronstadt revolt. Writing in 1879 under the alias of Lavashoff, Kropotkin’s words bear incredible relevance today:

As anarchists’ efforts ought to be directed at undermining the State in all its parts, we cannot see the usefulness of our setting ourselves up as a political party which would strive to ensconce itself in the ramifications of government, in the hope of one day claiming its share of the inheritance of the present governmentalism. We believe that the best way of shaking this edifice would be to escalate the economic struggle. But we

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43 Ibid, 132.  
44 Weiss, 6.  
45 Ward, 7.  
believe too that it would also be a good idea to have an eye out at all times for the acts
and feats of those who govern us, to study diligently those political issues which interest
the laboring people, and to let slip no favorable opportunity to point up the
incompetence, hypocrisy and class self-interest of existing governments…

Kropotkin defined anarchism in 1905 as a “principle or theory of life and conduct under which a
society is conceived without government—harmony in such a society being obtained, not by
submission to law, or by obedience to any authority, but by free agreements concluded between
various groups, territorial and professional, freely constituted for the sake of production and
consumption, as also for the satisfaction of the infinite variety of needs and aspirations of a
civilized being.”

Anarcho-syndicalism, another variant, emphasizes the working class struggle, and would
ideally abolish government and run society through syndicates. It is the duty of these trade
unions or labor syndicates to improve wages and workers’ conditions and to create institutions of
self-management that will be prepared for social transformation upon revolution through general
strike. The syndicates will thus create the revolution and, serving an educational and social
function, will act as the model for the arrangement of future society. The International
Workingmen’s Association declared its principles in Berlin in 1922, confirming syndicalism to
be the “enemy of every form of economic and social monopoly.” It was stated that revolutionary
syndicalism aims at the abolition of monopoly “by means of economic communes and
administrative organs of field and factory workers on the basis of a free system of councils,
entirely liberated from subordination to any government or political party.” Anarcho-syndicalism
is thus concerned more with the liberation of producers than society as a whole, concerning itself

48 Guerin, 279. The Anarchist Idea, report delivered by Kropotkin on November 1, 1879 to the Jura gathering and
printed in Genena newspaper, Le Revolte.
49 Weiss, 6.
with narrow issues of class struggle, and holds the general strike in utopian confidence. It is
criticized accordingly, but that being said, anarcho-syndicalists played a significant role in the
Russian and Spanish revolutions, flourishing in locales marked by bitter class struggles and
poorly organized labor movements.\textsuperscript{50}

A third strand, anarchist individualism, such as that advocated by German Max Stirner,
bluntly states that anything curtailing individual freedom should be attacked.\textsuperscript{51} American
philosophical or individualist anarchist, Benjamin R. Tucker, was an admirer of Proudhon and
Bakunin, who believed that government by consent of all the governed was anarchism.\textsuperscript{52} The
logic followed that “the consent of majorities, nominal or actual, was certainly not the consent of
all the governed” and “if we are to discard majority rule as well as rule by tyrants, oligarchies,
and dictators, then we are logically forced to make anarchism our goal.”\textsuperscript{53} Still, Tucker hated the
government, denounced it, and called the plutocrats and capitalists the “brotherhood of
thieves,” but he never advocated violence or physical force of any sort, claiming that the
resistance should take the form of refusal to pay taxes, and evasion of jury duty and military
service.\textsuperscript{54} Thomas G Weiss finds right-wing or individualist-libertarian anarchism hardly suitable
“as a potential source for improving the future,” focusing mostly upon “mutualist, collectivist
and anarcho-communist schools…that seek to synthesize individual autonomy and
communitarian responsibility.”\textsuperscript{55} This seems to be an opinion supported by many of the Greek
movement from its inception and through until now. Although many views are held in

\textsuperscript{50} Marshall, 9.
\textsuperscript{51} Novak, 321-322.
\textsuperscript{52} Yarros, Victor S. 1936. Philosophical Anarchism: Its Rise, Decline, and Eclipse. \textit{The American Journal of
Sociology.} 41:473.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid 471.
\textsuperscript{55} Weiss, 4.
common—disgust of tyranny of the majority, capitalism, and plutocracy—this branch of individualist anarchism relates more closely to libertarian anarchists, more likely in the United States than the communitarians or mutualists that seem to carry more weight in Greece.

A final strand, religious anarchism, a branch of anarchism often associated with Leo Tolstoy, derives its authority from God and the Scriptures, and rejects all forms of earthly authority. Followers of Carpocrates of Alexandria, the Anabaptists, Quakers, Hussites, and Beghards are also noted. Petr Chalcicky, a Czech peasant, interestingly suggests, however, that secular power is necessary to preserve peace and justice among non-Christians.  

Anarchism is thus far-reaching and exists in a variety of forms within various cultures. At its core it seeks a society without a State or government and a world that is free from coercive relationships and hierarchical structure. Although it calls for the abstention from conventional political participation and is classified, most usually, as a leftist ideology, anarchism is marked by a synthesis of ideas from both liberalism and socialism, from the right and left. In accordance with the right, many anarchists advocate liberty of choice, “of enquiry, of thought, of expression, and of association.” They are skeptical of centralized power, bureaucracy, and political authority, and fear the “triumph of mediocrity and the tyranny of the majority.” Anarchists realize that “power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” They pursue tolerance and forbearance, opposing force and dogma, and go further than liberalism in extending freedom to the political and economic realms. Anarchists, by rejecting constitutions and social contract, believe that “the natural harmony of interests will prevail if people are left to themselves.”  

Anarchism also maintains elements of socialism, criticizing the role of capital, property, and hierarchy, and emphasizes the need for mutual aid and solidarity. It rejects parliamentary

56 Novak, 319.
57 Marshall, 639-640.
participation and political parties, however, and does not seek to create a workers’ state, which could also rise to tyranny and serve as a dictatorship of the proletariat. Anarchists align themselves with liberalism or socialism, with the right or left, depending on their tendencies to stress the liberty of individuals or social solidarity of collectivists, but they find common ground in finding the State obsolete.\textsuperscript{58}

\textit{IV. The Roots of Greek Anarchism}

There are thus many paths to anarchism and there exist various reasons to raise the black flag. From the insurrectionary outlook of Bakunin to the individualistic nature of Stirner, there are similarities and differences between the major anarchist theorists, and there is a natural rift between thinkers and actors involved and associated with a theory that abhors hierarchical organization and coerced uniformity. There is order, but it is spontaneous and natural order. Hence, an anarchist, in becoming an anarchist, cannot slavishly follow the doctrine put forth by another but must lead him or herself to their own conclusion, even if exactly the same. Influences will be in the air, but authority, command, and thoughtless obedience should bear no role. Thus, the emergence of anarchism lends itself to an idea that is exposed through a variety of avenues and develops and matures as an amalgamation of influences and autonomist natural impulses that may yield collective order and organization.

The circumstance in Greece is quite this way. Anarchist ideas immigrated along with Italians in Patras, who had been exposed to Bakunin and the revolutionary ideas of Western Europe, and this introduction slowly developed into an anarchism that fit the Greek case. Naturally, anarchist history is not well documented in official sources or found in state histories. It has been relegated to the underground, to websites, blogs, conversations, and academic

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid, 640.
pamphlets and books in anarchist libraries. Translations are vast but often unofficial.

Accordingly, it becomes difficult to paint an indisputably true picture of anarchism. I have read Greek histories (though lacking anarchist references), and have looked to anarchist works through this historical lens, seeking to understand how historical context shaped the anarchist aims and objectives in Greece.

Turning attention toward the Greek case more closely, the emergence of modern anarchist action and libertarian writings can be traced back to the 1860s under the influence of European socialist groups and the reach of the anarchist revolutionaries’ ideas.\(^5\)\(^9\) Italian anarchist refugees, such as Amilicare Cipriani, the founder of the ‘Democratic Club’, are likely to have brought the ideas to Greece and particularly to Emmanuel Daoudoglou who organized and undertook the anti-royalist insurrection of 1862.\(^6\)\(^0\) Daoudoglou entered the International Workingmen’s Association in Naples between 1864 and 1867, an association with close ties to Bakunin who was in the same region at this point in time.\(^6\)\(^1\) Thus, anarchist ideas entered Greece by means of displaced Italian refugees or Greeks who had embraced such ideas while traveling abroad.

September 9, 1861 marks the first anarchist publication in Greece, entitled ‘Anarchy’ by an anonymous writer, believed to be either D. Paparigopoulos\(^6\)\(^2\) or Demonsthenes Papathanasiou\(^6\)\(^3\) in Sofoklis Karydis’ newspaper *Fos (Light)*. The article began by asking, “why


\(^6\)\(^0\) Ibid.

\(^6\)\(^1\) Ibid.


\(^6\)\(^3\) Noutsos, Panayiotis. 1992. *Η Σοσιαλιστική Σκέψη στην Ελλάδα από το 1875 ως το 1974. Τόμος Α: Οι σοσιαλιστές διανοούμενοι και η πολιτική λειτουργία της πρώιμης κοινωνικής κριτικής, 1875-1907.* (Socialist Thought in Greece...
are people so afraid of anarchism? And why do the people not laugh as the general newspapers and ministerial bodies seek to exorcise it? Is anarchism such an evil that we should all tremble before it and seek its exorcism?"64 The article defined anarchism as “social symbiosis with established authority” and claimed that “…governments…no matter how benevolent and temperate and just, will always constitute a yoke.”65 Anarchy, defined as the complete absence of rulers, was portrayed as the greatest good: “the condition which God intended all nations to one day achieve, those being most fortunate which reach it first.”66 The newspaper was confiscated by royal police during a raid of the headquarters, but the article was reprinted several times by various publishers, the third interestingly in 1974.67

Papathanasiou, an editor of Φώς (Light), Νέα Γενεά (New Generation), Φιλοπάτρις (Patriot), and chief editor of Μέλλον (Future), made his opposition to King Otto, his abolitionist ideas with regards to the State, and his support of the Paris Commune quite prevalent in his writing.68 The first two stances, associated with the rejection of governing authority and State, would be expected of an anarchist, but it is worth examining the appeal of the Paris Commune as well.

The Paris Commune lasted from March 26 to May 30, 1871, and was seen as the first successful revolution of workers. With the defeat of the French in the Franco-Prussian War, Paris, which had withstood six months of German siege, was to be occupied by German forces.

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64 Noutsos, 130. My own translation from Demosthenes Papathanasiou’s (according to Noutsos) “Anarchia” from Fos: Διατί μερικοί τόσον πολύ φοβούνται την αναρχίαν; Διατί και η Γεν. Εφημερίς και όλα τα υπουργικά όργανα τόσους εξορκισμούς κάνουσα κατ’ αυτής και οι πολίτες τους ακούουν και δεν γελώσει; Είναι τάχα τόσον μέγα κακόν η αναρχία, ώστε να την τρέμουμε όλοι και να την εξορκίζουμε;
65 Pomonis, 1.
66 Pomonis, 132. My own translation from “Anarchia”.
67 Pomonis, 1. 1974 marks the end of seven years of colonels’ dictatorial rule in Greece by the military junta from (1967-1974).
68 Pomonis, 2; via Noutsos, 129.
Parisian workers naturally rejected the conclusion, and on the 18th of March the French Army was sent into Paris in order to confiscate all arms available to the workers. Upon refusal, the French Government of National Defense declared war on Paris, and the city elected soldiers and workers to a municipal council and abolished the morality police and the standing army. Skilled workers, professionals, and political activists soon became active in the Commune. The National Guard, in which all able-bodied citizens were to be enlisted, served as the lone military force. The highest salary was set to 6,000 francs on April the 1st, not to be exceeded by the ordinary citizens or the members of the Commune, and the separation of Church from the State was declared. Night work in bakeries was abolished and rent dating back to the siege period was cancelled.\(^6^9\) Women received the right to vote and pensions were provided for unmarried companions of National Guard members who died in active duty.\(^7^0\) A tabulation of factories which had been previously shut down by the manufacturers was called by the Commune on the 16\(^{th}\) of April, and the organization and planning for the continuation of these factories by workers whom they formerly employed and who were to be organized in co-operative societies were set. There were also plans made for the co-operatives to be organized into one great union. However, not three months after the Commune was established, some 30,000 unarmed workers were massacred by French forces entering Paris, shot in the streets. Others, an approximated 38,000, were arrested and another 7,000 were exiled. Only after eight days of struggle, the last defenders of the


Commune were defeated\textsuperscript{71}—the largest massacre until that of Armenians slaughtered by Turks during World War I.\textsuperscript{72} In the words of Mikhail Bakunin:

I am a supporter of the Paris Commune which, though it has been massacred and smothered in blood by the henchmen of monarchist and clerical reaction, is all the livelier and more potent in the imagination and heart’s of Europe’s proletariat: I am a supporter of it because it was a well articulated and daring rebuttal of the State…Paris, drowned in the blood of her most selfless children, is mankind crucified by the concerted international reaction in Europe, under the aegis of all the Christian churches and of the high priest of iniquity, the Pope: but the coming international, solidarity revolution of peoples will be Paris’s resurrection.\textsuperscript{73}

The Paris Commune eradicated the state with no designed plan to install another state in its absence. The state was obliterated with the aim of having it replaced by reorganizing society on economic and federalist foundations.\textsuperscript{74} The experiment was over, but it had passed a plethora of social legislation by bringing together a variety of different groups, Jacobins, anarchists, moderate republicans, socialists, et cetera with a variety of differing demands.\textsuperscript{75}

Turning back to Greece, also defending the Paris Commune was the poet and journalist Panagiotis Panas, who between 1875-76 published *Ergatis* (Workingman) and circulated news of Bakunin and the Russian anarchist movement as well as of the Eastern/Anatolian Democratic Federation (Δημοκρατική Ανατολική Ομοσπονδία).\textsuperscript{76} An organization of revolutionaries from all Balkan nations with a vision first to dissolve the Ottoman yoke and later to establish free

\textsuperscript{73} Guerin, 202-203. Mikhail Bakunin on the Paris Commune.
\textsuperscript{74} Guerin, 201. Arthur Lehning outlining the contradictions between the *Civil War in France* address and Marx’s other writings, particularly the identified evolutionary stages of revolution.
\textsuperscript{75} Merriman, 1.
\textsuperscript{76} Pomonis, 2; via Nous’s, 129.
societies, Panas became a member while in Romania, and was one of the founders of its chapter in Greece. His ideas were greatly influenced by the Commune, French revolutionary Gustave Flourens, with whom he had regular correspondence, and Italian patriot and politician Giuseppe Mazzini. Panas also wrote several responses to the newspaper Mellon (Future), which Papathanasiou edited, and he became a friend of anarchist poet Mikelis Avlichos as well.

Avlichos (1844-1917), a satirical poet born on Cephalonia, studied at the University of Berne, travelling through Paris, Zurich and Venice. Berne, at the time, was a city of refuge for European revolutionaries, and Avlichos there met Bakunin while meeting other communards in Paris in 1871. Returning to his home in Lyxouri, the anarchist ideas he had been exposed to were disseminated through poetry and oral propaganda, attacking authority, clergy, local rulers, and war, but his influence did not seem great outside of the bounds of Heptanesian (Ionian) youths and intellectuals. One such excerpt, available in a column written by Thanos Tsoukalas in Patras’ Νεολόγος (New Word) in February 1932, outlines Avlichos’ interesting view that anarchy is pure aristocracy.

Avlichos’ friend, Konemenos (1832-1907) was a supporter of Proudhon’s ideas, writing a book in Italian in 1893 entitled “Thieves and Murderers”. He suggested that with the abolition of private property and through a change of the current system, 9/10 of all things evil would be corrected. He also recommended total destruction until such a society was

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78 Ibid, My own translation.
79 Ibid.
80 Pomonis, 2.
81 “Mikelis Avlichos” – Chapter One: Visionaries and Revolutionaries 1830-1875. Κεφάλαιο Πρώτο: Οραματιστές & Επαναστάτες 1830-1875 - Μικέλης Άβλιχος. “No God - No Master.”
achieved. The Democratic Club of Patras sought to coordinate all associated groups in Greece and to form a local branch of the International Workingmen’s Association. The Greek state, in agreement with several states across Europe, was successful in nearly crushing all such attempts.

The Club was founded early in 1876, and the Bulletin of the Jura noted on October 22nd that “this will be the first time that Greece will participate in a Congress of the International” Workingmen’s Association. It seems that libertarian and anarchist ideas thus entered Greece through the swarms of Italian refugees in Patras following the revolutions of 1848, comprising ten percent of the total population, and through the Ionian radicals who were likely influenced by Italy and the major European movements themselves. The Democratic Club developed close contacts with Italian anarchist organizations, as is evidenced by a letter from the Greek M. Demetriou published in Bologna’s Il Martelo March 1877 edition. Demetriou here stated that “the type and fashion of our intervention cannot be identical in every country” as only the citizens of a particular region are equipped with the knowledge of which means are best for application, but he also added that the “ultimate goal is the well being of the human race,” noting a strong opposition to any ideas that seek to implement a gradual emancipation of the populace (seeming to reflect an anti-Marxist, pro-Bakuninist flare). It was also noted that the Greeks would soon send “the General Charter of the Democratic Federation of the People and the Special Charter of the Patras Society,” and that they would begin to publish their own socialist newspaper, Ελληνική Δημοκρατία (Hellenic Democracy).

83 Pomonis, 3.
84 Ibid.
85 Ibid, 5.
86 Ibid, 6.
87 Ibid.
This first publication, distributed in 1877, included the Democratic Club’s charter, an article commemorating the sixth anniversary of the Paris Commune, and articles outlining the eastern question (nationalist rise of the Balkans following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire) and Kafiero and Malatesta’s Benevento uprisings. *Hellenic Democracy* here states:

We are convinced that: poverty and ignorance are the greatest plagues of the people, and that from these two emerge all social miseries, and therefore, freedom from poverty and ignorance must become the chief objective for all who truly wish to work for the Fatherland. And this freedom is a concern for all of us … and the setting free of the people…requires that these very people themselves rise.88

The charter goes on to affirm that this freedom is dependent upon the political emancipation of the people, based on both history and the belief that “each man is created free, the master of himself.”89 The main objective was the establishment of a democratic regime marked by “total decentralization and perfect self-administration of the Municipalities… total freedom of the human being,” and a system in which “every authority [would] be submitted directly to the people.”90 Truth, justice, and morality became the only laws the League would follow, and all who supported the contemporary social order were deemed enemies.

It is worth taking a look at another article included in this first publication of *Hellenic Democracy* as well, that of the Eastern Question (*Ανατολικό Ζήτημα*), taking a small step back from Greece’s domestic situation to shed light upon ideas of irredentism and nationalism that influenced Greek foreign policy since the birth of the modern state; ideas that would remain a


89 Ibid, My own general translation.

90 Ibid, but translated at Pomonis, 11. Άτροπος και αποκέντρωσις και τελείαν αυτοδιοίκησιν των Δήμων, δηλαδή κάθε Δήμος να είναι όλος διόλου ανεξάρτητος και να διοικείται μόνος του. Β’. Πλήρην ελευθερίαν του ατόμου. Γ’. Κάθε εξουσία να είναι υποταγμένη εις την κυριαρχίαν του Λαού κατ’ ευθείαν.
mere hope until the 1922 burning of Smyrna and the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne.\textsuperscript{91} This irredentist scheme, known as the \textit{Megali Idea (Great Idea)}, sought the redemption of Byzantine lands following the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, and effectively the revival of the Byzantine Empire, at least geographically, that would once again crown Constantinople as its glorious capital. The Patran anarchists perceived such bold attempts to redeem lost nationals and lands as attempts to lead the people astray through exciting endeavor, turning their attention away from their pressing problems of poverty and ignorance, and thus benefitting the bourgeois interest. This view earned these anarchists criticism from Marxist historians, who suggested that the anarchists failed to understand the “democratic and progressive character of the national question and its resolution in the frame of the bourgeois state, one of the ‘scientifically tested stages’ towards socialism”—an obvious rejection of Bakunin’s immediate social revolution through the direct action of the masses, which the Greek anarchists seemingly espoused.\textsuperscript{92} Thus, the anarchists perceived the Eastern Question as a game played by the rich and powerful, a game such as “cards in the café,” to use the direct translation from the Greek. The article stated that in times of peace “they entertain themselves at the expense of the people over these issues…[and] when the interests of the rich call for war, they goad us on, just like the farmer goad his ox…” with the intention of getting ourselves killed as we aim to kill as many as possible for their own advantage.\textsuperscript{93} Drawing attention to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, in which the czar vowed to right the wrongs of Balkan Christians under the Ottoman Empire\textsuperscript{94} and to liberate his fellow

\textsuperscript{91} The 1923 Population Exchange, as a result of the Treaty of Lausanne that followed the Turkish War of Independence, along with the 1922 burning of Smyrna, served as the death knells for the achievement of the \textit{Megali Idea}.\textsuperscript{92} Pomonis, 12.\textsuperscript{93} Ibid, Pomonis’ translation with minor adaptations of my own from the original publication found at http://ngnom.vrahokipos.net/part03.html?start=2 (14 Nov. 2010).\textsuperscript{94} Crowe, John Henry Verrinder, Lt Colonel. “Russo-Turkish Wars.” \textit{Xenophon Group International}. (via 11th edition Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 23: 931-936). http://www.xenophon-mil.org/milhist/modern/russoturk.htm
Slavs from the Turkish yoke, the *New Democracy* anarchists wrote that if freedom was truly sought and loved, “they would have first liberated those millions of Russians who are slaves in their own homeland, and then care[d] for the freedom of the others.”

The governments of Europe, the article continues, here support Russia, unsurprisingly, for they too treat their people in the same way, preoccupying the masses with grand campaigns. *New Democracy* stated:

> We must fi[r]st stop our ears to these words that they are using to deceive us…when they’re speaking about ethnicity, sacrifice, [and] self-denial…because those people who pronounce them don’t believe a word of them… The biggest proof lies in 1821 [the first revolts of the Greek revolution], when they fought for their own interests at our expense. As for all those who fought out of sincere love of the homeland, most of them got killed, others became destitute and their children don’t have bread to eat… They will tell us: either you all [get lost] or we conquer Istanbul. And while we will be marching to the border… they will contribute 50 drachmas… so that some rag tag history will put them down as benefactors of the Nation… And if we still possess some brain it is from home that we must start dealing with the Eastern Question and not in those places they chose.

Thus is laid out the case of the anarchists with regards to their objection to the Eastern Question and advancement of the irredentist *Megali Idea*. Fueled by a suspicion of the State and a refusal to remain ignorant, the anarchists sought to direct attention towards domestic problems.

It should be noted that although the Patran anarchists did not support the Eastern Question and the pursuit of the *Megali Idea*, justifications were not made on humanitarian lines on behalf of the Turks—a distinction that would be likely to be made today. While modern anarchists may condemn military aggression and expansionism, the anarchists rejected the idea not for such reasons, but out of their own self-interest, in order to avoid deception at the hands of

(16 Nov. 2010).

95 Pomonis, 13.
96 Pomonis, 13-14. Translated from *New Democracy*.
the powerful. In fact, a later excerpt states that the “Turks are not to be found only in Thessaly, but also inside our own walls and our own homes; and if we are slightly intelligent, we must begin by killing the Turks of the interior before thinking about the others. This is our duty and for that purpose the Democratic League of the People was founded.”\textsuperscript{97} This is not to say, however, that these anarchists were nationalistic. It seems, rather, that the Patran anarchists rejected firstly the Turks, who were their previous subjugators under the Ottoman regime, thus the violently aggressive prose; and secondly the irredentist idea and Eastern Question, as it was a vehicle by which their current subjugators, the Greek government and bourgeois, could preoccupy them and serve their own self-interest through deception. In essence, they remained consistent in rejecting any authority that threatened deception.

Also in 1877, \textit{The Bulletin of the Jurassian Federation} published Dionysis Ambelicopoulos’ own \textit{Study on Socialism in Greece}.\textsuperscript{98} Ambelicopoulos, among several others, was later imprisoned due to the publication of \textit{Hellenic Democracy’s} first issue. In his study, providing an interesting view of the Greek situation, he states that the Greek people began to retreat from the center of the Polity after the end of the Peloponnesian War and the process was completed after the fall of the Achaean League. From here began a rule of corruption and tyranny, whereby the rich had flattered the conquerors and Byzantium was born. According to Ambelicopoulos, what is labeled \textit{communism} or \textit{socialism} in the West, is seen purely as democracy in Greece. Accordingly, “We, Greeks, do not teach the people that

\textsuperscript{97} Pomonis, 16. Translated from a Patron letter excerpt published in the Bulletin of the Jura, August 27, 1877.
decentralization...must form the keystone of the people’s organization and that concentration results in death. Our people have learned all that from their own history...”

He continues:

all corruption and tyranny, in any form, has been concentrated in the government. There was no place for them anywhere else. The social community was more or less equal, and radical equality remained the heritage of the people... This explains why the Greeks hate whatever comes from the government.

The “kleftes, (the bravest among the people, who were living armed in the mountains)” who fought for national independence in the revolution against the Turks, disappeared when their services were no longer necessary, a phenomenon bringing to mind the displacement of the anarchists following the Russian Revolution and the rise of Lenin. The lower levels of clergy were also an integral part of the resistance alongside the kleftes, and Ambelicopoulos highlights Greece’s differing view concerning Church and State relations, much more tightly intertwined than Western counterparts. He also notes that the Greek people grasp the financial problem quite well, wondering what was gained in fighting for Greece’s independence in the revolution of 1821. It is the rich who profited and the poor who saw no improvement. “Today the farmer as well as the workingman understands very well that they are toiling for the rich and that they will forever remain poor, due to the monopoly of capital.

Following the arrests of those associated with Hellenic Democracy, Dionysis Ambelicopoulos, one of the arrested, continued correspondence with anarchists outside of

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99 Pomonis, 8.
100 Noutsos, 152. ΜΕΛΕΤΗ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΣΟΣΙΑΛΙΣΜΟ ΣΤΗΝ ΕΛΛΑΔΑ—Study on Socialism in Greece. Dionysis Ambelicopoulos.
101 Pomonis, 9.
Greece, often sending articles to the Bulletin of the Jura. Dated December 28, 1877 it is written, likely gathered from information sent by Ambelicopoulos:

The Greek government saw the publication as a threat to the social establishment, and thus arrested and detained the authors of Hellenic Democracy. That much better; it drives them towards the revolutionary path. We express our warm sympathies to these bold fighters, for they are the first to lift the modern flag of socialism among the Greek people.

During the reign of King Otto, island deportations and arrests of radical intellectuals along with newspaper confiscations became Greece’s contribution to the greater European effort to crush socialist organizations and supporters of the Paris Commune. According to contemporary newspapers, the anarchists were accused of attempting to establish a democracy, conspiring in secret to violently overthrow the established regime and King George I, who soon replaced the expelled Otto. They were likewise accused of offending the king through their publication, and of organizing during specified hours in attempts to stir a civil war through socialist reforms and revolt against the established laws in order to empower the impoverished classed by plundering the wealthy. The anarchists were later released and again later charged. Pomonis suggests that communication with international organizations was maintained until the early 1880s, but soon dwindled as the sections of the International Workingmen’s Association dwindled and state repression intensified. Despite local chapters of the League in Athens, Syros, Aegio, Messini, and Cephalonia, this is essentially the last verifiable evidence of the Patran anarchists of the

104 According to Pomonis, 1871, 1873, and 1874 saw persecutions of socialist and anarchist groups in France, Italy and Spain respectively.
105 Found in the original at ”— Chaper Three: The Democratic Club of Patras – Persecution. Κεφάλαιο Τρίτο: Ο Δημοκρατικός Σύλλογος Πατρών - Οι διώξεις http://ngnm.vrahokipos.net/part03.html?start=4 (Dec. 1 2010), but also translated by Pomonis, 15.
Democratic League of Patras. Socialism had been introduced in Greece, promoted by anarchists, and the seeds had been sown, awaiting the eventual revival of their ideas.

Thus, social radicalism of revolts, social movements, and revolutions in Europe, spearheaded by the seventy days of the Paris Commune in 1871, introduced “ideological radiance and revolutionary traditions” to Greece in the 1870s. Greece did not have the “clear cut class contrasts” which were developing in Western Europe as there were too few workers and too many small professionals, and even the small land owners and peasantry were motivated by eventual relocation and realization of employment in small trade. But as is natural, rifts occurred between exploiters and exploited, and deterioration and class separation led to the creation of socialist groups and workers’ unions that sought shorter working hours and higher wages, often protesting with armed clashes against state forces, as was the case with the tobacco workers’ strike in 1901 Volos, and in Piraeus’ 1910 strikes of the steamship sailors and tobacco and rail workers. These are few examples of anarcho-syndicalism in Greece, which did not greatly develop as the country lacked industrial centers and had few permanent labor employees. That being said, clashes occurred, most notably in Lavrio (southeastern Attica), where the anarchist league Cosmos, which sought the abolition of competition and the transfer of all resources under common ownership, set a strike for higher wages, security and protection measures, and Sunday as a day of rest, which resulted in explosions, damaged buildings, and the targeting of boss’ representatives, “bloodily suppressed by the army and the police.” Anarcho-syndicalist partner of this group was the League of Anarchist Workers of Athens, which rejected parliamentary and legal action, believing that “any representation and legislation is nothing but

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106 According to M. Demetriou. Pomonis, 19.
107 Pomonis, 20.
109 Ibid, 22.
the negation of the absolute freedom of the individual.”\textsuperscript{110} The League admitted to having no recognition of internal ranks or positions, and suggested that nothing productive would emerge from socialist or revolutionary groups in parliamentary democracy, as power and “authority corrupts even the best among men.”\textsuperscript{111}

Alongside the anarcho-syndicalists, Pomonis cites small sub-sectional followings of Christian anarchism, individual terrorism, and peasant anarchism in Greece. A fair deal of attention is given to the latter, where small landowners of the late nineteenth-century were at the mercy of usurers and large export houses, watching the simultaneous decline of income and invasion of state agents imposing fines and collecting debt. The Peloponnesian case saw violent clashes and peasants taking over villages and preventing state presence; representatives of the State were targeted.\textsuperscript{112}

Set in great contrast to these very action-based immediate cries for revolution, Platon Drakoulis, a radical theorist but not activist, influenced by Kropotkin, wrote in the publication \textit{Ardin} in 1885 that his aim is not subversive, but seeks a gradual change.

We are enemies of unruliness… [but also of] injustice and tyranny… [and] it is unjust that so many should suffer and so few should prosper. Down with privileges is the eternal cry of humankind and it will never be silenced as long as the inequality of rights between one and the next is not eradicated.\textsuperscript{113}

Thus, Greece of the late-nineteenth century serves as a valid starting point in examining the history and role of anarchism amongst the Greek citizenry, having imported the anarchism that

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid, According to a memorandum sent to the International Congress of Paris in 1900 by the League.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid, 23.
\textsuperscript{113} September 14, 1885 – written by Drakoulis in \textit{Ardin}. Pomonis, 20. «Εἴμεθα ἕξθοροι τῆς ἀταξίας…τῆς ἀδικίας καὶ τῆς τυραννίας… Κακοδαμωνοῦσι έννεακόσιοι ένεννήκοντα, εὐδαμονοῦσι δέκα…τούτο εἶναι ἀδικον…Κάτω τά προνόμια, εἶναι ἢ αλονία φωνή τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος, καὶ δέν θὰ σηκήσῃ ἢ φωνὴ αὐτή ἐνόσῳ δέν πέσωσι πράγματα τά προνόμια, τουτέστιν αἱ διαφοραὶ μεταξὺ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὅσον ἄφορὰ τά συμφέροντα καὶ τά δικαιώματα αὐτῶν ἐν τούτῳ τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις». (via Noutsos 169)
found relative popularity in Europe, protesting coercion, oppression, and injustice. As noted earlier, elements of anarchism may be traced to thought greatly preceding the nineteenth century—wherever people demanded self-government and an end to domination—from ancient Chinese Taoism through classical Greece, and from medieval peasant revolts to town meetings in early America. But using Proudhon’s firstly recorded anarchist self-identification as a milestone, anarchism’s arrival in Greece can be traced to the nineteenth century. Though a subject of debate, Bakunin’s three and half years in Italy may have had much influence on the minds of contemporary Italian anarchists, and through the Patran extension, surely made an impression on the minds of contemporary Greeks as well. Aldo Romano contrarily suggests that Bakunin simply altered or reworked the ideas already present by Carlo Pisacane, who was a follower of French anarchist Pierre Proudhon, but for the purpose of this discussion it is sufficient to simply draw a connector between the Greek anarchists and the major theorists and activists in their contemporary world, whether Bakunin or Proudhon, in order to contextualize the emergence of anarchism in Greece.

V. Greek Anarchism in Modern Times

Anarchism maintained the form of publishing and revolutionary organizations in the early twentieth-century, remaining active in all Greek cities as workers’ and peasants’ struggles continued. In 1913, anarchist Alexandros Schinas, who opened a school that the Greek government closed, assassinated King George I in Thessaloniki. Many Greek anarcho-
syndicalists participated in workers’ struggles and wildcat strikes throughout the twenties and thirties while collaborating with socialists and later the Communist Party of Greece, which attracted scores of anarchists and “whose hit squads assassinate[d] several” of influential status.\(^\text{118}\) Here the anarchist tradition in Greece appears to dissolve, dismantled by consecutive occasions—the military dictatorship of Ioannis Metaxas (1936-1941), the Nazi occupation of WWII (1941-1944), and the subsequent civil war (1944-1949).\(^\text{119}\) Interestingly, this period coincides with what Peter Marshall considers “by far the greatest anarchist experiment,” that is Spain of the 1930s, which saw peasants of Andalucía, Aragon, and Valencia establish networks of collectives in villages, while Catalonia, the nation’s industrial center, was managed by anarchists through workers’ collectives based on self-management.\(^\text{120}\) The experiment was ultimately doomed with the addition of fascist Italian and German intervention supporting Franco.\(^\text{121}\)

Anarchists were killed or imprisoned in concentration camps under the dictatorship of Metaxas and during the subsequent Nazi occupation of Greece. General Metaxas’ Fourth of August Regime (1936) sought its basis in ancient Spartan political and social institutions and “was to be based on total state discipline, a freedom of the individual strictly limited by the needs of the state.”\(^\text{122}\) Metaxas looked for the realization of the third great Hellenic civilization—one that would effectively synthesize the glories of antiquity and Byzantium—and though sharing the hatred for communism, liberalism, and parliamentarism that defined Hitler and Mussolini,

\(^{118}\) Schwarz, 5.
\(^{120}\) Marshall, xi.
\(^{121}\) Ibid.
Metaxas’ regime ultimately lacked the radicalism and racism of true fascism.\textsuperscript{123} The patriarchal
dictator’s regime has nonetheless been characterized, though arguably, as an “unbearable
tyranny,”\textsuperscript{124} and following a heroic stand during World War II it eventually gave way to brutal
foreign occupation, initially from Italy, and then Germany and Bulgaria.\textsuperscript{125}

The years of occupation saw a series of governments willing to collaborate with the
occupying forces.\textsuperscript{126} Soon a communist guerilla movement assisted in ousting the Nazis, who
were weakened by defeats on the Eastern Front, and Greece essentially liberated itself before the
arrival of the British, who had decided with Stalin, “unbeknownst to the Greek people,” that
Greece should be placed under the British sphere of influence.\textsuperscript{127} From here, the Communist
Party of Greece (Κομμουνιστικό Κόμμα Ελλάδας - KKE) was a driving force behind the
National Liberation Front (Εθνικό Απελευθερωτικό Μέτωπο- EAM) and the National People’s
Liberation Army (Ελληνικός Λαϊκός Απελευθερωτικός Στρατός - ELAS), whose essential
objectives were to resist the Axis occupation and to influence politics following liberation.\textsuperscript{128}
Targeting political opponents including anarchists, a revolt was launched that led to the Greek
Civil War (1946-49), which featured Greek and British forces against those of EAM/ELAS—an
early episode of the Cold War.\textsuperscript{129}

\textsuperscript{124} Vatikiotis, 200.
\textsuperscript{125} Kaloundis, George. 2002. \textit{Modern Greece: A Partner of Still a Client?} Lanham: University Press of America, 47.
\textsuperscript{126} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{127} Schwarz, 6. Another interesting example of an external authority grappling with Greece’s sovereignty.
\textsuperscript{128} Kaloundis, 47. “Today, the services of EAM/ELAS fighters have been officially recognized by the state, and the
old debates between Left and Right have lost much of their venom”—Mazawer, Mark. 1993. \textit{Inside Hitler’s Greece:}
\textsuperscript{129} Schwarz, 6.
With British and American assistance, the communist insurgency was crushed, ensuring that Greece would emerge as the lone Balkan state without a communist regime.\(^{130}\) Following a series of coalition governments, Greece witnessed a period of relative stability under right wing rule from 1952 to 1963 as only General Papagos, preferred by the United States as a guarantor of anticommunism, and Konstantinos Karamanlis, a member of the Papagos government appointed by the King following the former’s death, served as prime ministers.\(^{131}\) George Papandreou’s Center Union Party, victorious in 1963, fell as a result of disputes with the King over control of the armed forces, and between 1963 and 1967, six-month governing life spans and caretaker governments were common.\(^{132}\) The stage was set for the military coup that would ultimately rule the country as a military junta for seven years. At this point, anarchism amongst the Greeks dwelled primarily in the works of writers and poets stationed abroad or in island penal colonies.\(^{133}\)

The ‘Revolution of 21 April 1967’ formed a Colonels’ dictatorship, some suggest with the blessing of the King. The dictatorship was fiercely anticommunist with a populist façade and sought to defend Hellenic-Christian ideals, reminding one of the previous Metaxas regime.\(^{134}\) Although unable to rally much popular support, the Colonels did successfully manage the economy until cracks in the stable regime appeared while the inflation rate shot up to double digits in 1973. Students took the lead in resisting the regime by occupying the Law Faculty of the University of Athens.\(^{135}\) Previously, in 1971 Christos Konstantinidis founded the Διεθνής Βιβλιοθήκη (International Library), publishing and translating classical and contemporary

\(^{130}\) Clogg, 143.
\(^{131}\) Kaloudis, 58.
\(^{132}\) Ibid, 65.
\(^{133}\) Schwarz, 6.
\(^{134}\) Clogg, 160.
\(^{135}\) Ibid, 162.
anarchist and Situationist texts. It is said that Konstantinidis and his comrades assisted in instigating the occupation of the Athens Polytechnic, which was decked with banners stating “Down with the State, Down with Capital, Down with Authority!” On November 17, 1973 the junta squashed the uprising, sending tanks into the University and allegedly killed 23 protesters. The uprising assisted in overthrowing Papadopoulos, most noteworthy of the Colonels, and eventually in the downfall of the dictatorship by 1974 following Brigadier Ioannidis’ failed coup in Cyprus against Archbishop Makarios. Calls within the armed forces for a return to civilian government yielded the decision to invite Konstantinos Karamanlis to oversee the transition back to democracy—the longest reign of democracy in modern Greece spanning to the present day.

From this point on, anarchists have been a factor in Greek society, albeit minor players, adopting the ideas of libertarians and Situationists from 1968 France. Traditional forms of authority had also begun to decline by this time, which demonstrated a progressive trend away from slavish obedience and ignorance towards greater autonomy, liberty, and equality. Patriotism and its association with the military and religious values lost fervor as the prospects of war between European democracies became a thing of the past. The Church lost some hold in its association with wealth and political oppression, and the authority of the teacher was reduced in schools and universities as students sought to think and examine evidence on their own rather than as mere reflections of the educator’s ideology. This declining authority permeated to the family level as well, where women were increasingly found outside the household and in the

136 Schwarz, 6.
137 Egger, 1. Clogg suggests at least twelve deaths with more injuries and arrests, 165.
138 Clogg, 165.
139 Ibid.
140 Egger, 1.
workforce while children pursued careers different from those passed generationally—both at the expense of the father’s previous hold on authority.  

VI. Anarchism and Greek Democracy

The transition to democracy, or metapolitevsi, occurred relatively quickly in Greece. With regards to “consensus on maintaining its essential features, the fair conduct of elections, the low level of civil disorder, the durability of governments and the apparently high level of voters’ trust in parliament and satisfaction with the political system,” Greece was among the more stable democracies as early as the early 1980s. Prior to elaborating on the process of democratization that has led Greece to its current standing, it is worth noting a brief history of parliamentary politics in the nation, which highlights some peculiar qualities, possibly promoting corruption, even if unintentionally, that can still be identified today.

Since the birth of the modern Greek state in the early 1830s, party politics has been dominated by “parties of notables rather than of principle.” Italian anarchist of the late nineteenth-century, Errico Malatesta, typifies, more generally, an anarchist interpretation as he inquires and comments:

Are they [politicians] so infallible and incorruptible that the fate of each and every one can prudently be entrusted to their kind hearts? Even if the power of government were to be bestowed upon the most competent and the best, the possession of power would add nothing to their beneficence, and would, rather, paralyze and destroy it on account of their finding themselves confronted with the necessity of concerning themselves with so many things beyond their understanding and, above all, of squandering the greater part

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142 Close, 141.

of their energies upon keeping themselves in power, appeasing friends, quelling malcontents and thwarting rebels.\textsuperscript{144}

The primary objective was one less committed to serving the public interest as a whole and more preoccupied with obtaining or maintaining a position in a system of patronage—serving one’s constituency through a patron-client relationship or clientelism. A popular provision of the patron to his client would have been a position in the civil service or state bureaucracy, which was seen as the only source of employment in Greece’s largely underdeveloped economy. Early parliamentarism was characterized by competition between elites and their respective constituencies rather than based on a contract between the governors and the governed, and the lack of organizational and ideological bases in the Constitutional Monarchy further promoted the “personalistic” system of government.\textsuperscript{145} In other words, it was all about connections, favors, and deals. The rights to dissolve parliament, remove ministers, initiate treaties, declare war, and bless governments, whether minority or majority, and purely based on their liking, were all royal powers until the adoption of the \textit{dedilomeni} principle in 1875, which obligated the King to request the declared leader of the parliamentary party with a majority to form a government. The nineteenth century saw Greece’s parliamentary institutions developed to a level similar to those of the relatively advanced French and British, while the twentieth century restrained the country with a sequence of hindrances from the Balkan Wars (1912-13), World War I (1914-18), and the Greek-Turkish War (1921-22), to the Metaxas Dictatorship, subsequent Nazi Occupation, and Civil War mentioned earlier.\textsuperscript{146} This period has been described as one of \textit{stunted democracy (κακεκτική δημοκρατία)}, and when coupled with the undying spirit of clientelism that has

\textsuperscript{144} Guerin, 357. \textit{Anarchy}, Errico Malatesta (1853-1932).
\textsuperscript{146} Ibid, 157. The Greek-Turkish War was the Greek campaign of Turkey’s War of Independence, resulting in the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne and the massive population exchange sending some 1.5 million Christian refugees to Greece from Turkey.
followed the democratization transition, an image is painted of an incredibly interesting society moving in a suspect direction, if unintentionally so.147

Returning to the democratization process following the fall of the Junta and the return of Konstantinos Karamanlis, the Prime Minister led the transition to democracy with authority and vision, aiming at modernization with extraordinary legislative activity.148 Fotini Ballou refers to Diamandouros as he proposed several characteristic elements of the democratization of Greek politics between 1974 and 1981. The first was “the establishment of democratically accountable institutions, especially a democratically elected parliament, guaranteeing the values of legitimacy, inclusiveness and accountability.” Another sign of progress towards democratization was the widening of the political spectrum through the inclusion of the non-communist leftist party PASOK (Πανελλήνιο Σοσιαλιστικό Κίνημα - Panhellenic Socialist Movement) led by Andreas Papandreou. A third characteristic was the modernization or adaptation of the rightist political party Νέα Δημοκρατία (New Democracy), through the adoption of more moderate stances, and abandoning the anti-communist rhetoric and frequent military intervention. Lastly, though surely not exhaustive, Karamanlis legalized the Communist Party of Greece (outlawed since 1947), “a natural outcome of the cooperation between right and left in opposing the Junta,” and rendered unnecessary the range of institutions responsible for checking communist activity, from army and police tyranny to vigilante groups and spies.149 All of these processes sought the democratization of the Greek political scene under Karamanlis, and on the eighth of December 1974, a plebiscite was conducted to resolve the schism between the advocates of parliamentary democracy and the supporters of constitutional monarchy. The former prevailed with nearly 70%

147 Ibid. Reference attributed to Elias Nicolacopoulos.
148 Close, 141.
149 Close, 142.
of the vote, and political parties were to become a very strong force in Greek politics, which lacked a strong civil society and grassroots campaigns.\textsuperscript{150} Thus, despite the adoption of democratic principles and the true consolidation of democracy—reflected by the peaceful transition from conservative (New Democracy) to socialist (PASOK) government in 1981 after nearly 45 straight years of right-wing democratic or authoritarian rule, and marking the openness and maturity of the democracy through its smooth transition—“the intention of major party leaders to control key aspects of political life and to avoid losing the prerogatives that had accompanied a weak civil society” held the patron-client framework in order, allowing victorious party members to “strengthen their status through bureaucratic clientelism.”\textsuperscript{151} This was practiced regardless of political identification and was seemingly ingrained in the Greek political fiber.

Papandreou’s socialist government was able to improve the military’s image in the eyes of the citizenry—which had been demonized as the slavish hand of the State following the events at the Polytechnic—as well as to mend relations with the United States and NATO. Also, a key element of Greece’s democratization process revolved around European Union membership. The statutory obligations to achieve EU standards led Greece to adopt measures that would strengthen civil society in the late 1990s through increased awareness of social, economic and political rights and the creation of new social structures and groups linked to EU standards, but according to Bellou, despite the steps taken and progress made in democratization and in strengthening civil society, the state bureaucracy retains clientelistic ties, which seems to “be the

\begin{footnote}
\textsuperscript{150} Bellou, 161.
\textsuperscript{151} Ibid, 162.
\end{footnote}
most serious impediment obstructing the comprehensive realization of a fully accountable civil society.”

This tradition of clientelism and system of patron-client relations naturally electrifies political bases and mobilizes the citizenry, each knowing well that their own prosperity rests on the favors they will enjoy as a result of voting their patron, firstly by party and then by candidate, into a position in the Hellenic Parliament. The benefits may be vast or simple, but they are real, and while this tradition of patronage can be traced to the birth of the modern Greek state, or even further into the millet systems of the Ottomans or the Byzantines, the most recent episode, with devastating effects impacting the 2010 debt crisis, lies in the actions of the socialists under Andreas Papandreou, father of the current prime minister George Papandreou:

The late Andreas Papandreou’s strategy in the 1980s was to give the disenfranchised, who formed the bulk of PASOK’s voters, a shot at living like the middle class. If this meant throwing European assistance and subsidies around like political favors and giving pensions to people who had never contributed to social security (such as farmers), then so be it. At last, all those who had been shut out by the right-wing establishment which triumphed in the Civil War in 1946-49 – and which was thoroughly discredited by the dictatorship of 1967-74 – would get to share in the wealth of the nation. The fact that this new middle class was funded on wealth that the country was not producing meant that the economy broke free from all logic and went into its own orbit. PASOK established the National Health System and poured money into education but it also undermined the gains by destroying any semblance of hierarchy, accountability and recognition of merit in the public sector. This meant that no one really knew how much money was being spent nor whether those who deserved it most were getting it. Costs rose while productivity plummeted. A wasteful public sector, in turn, condemned the private sector to inefficiency and lack of competitiveness. New Democracy, especially in the 2004-09 period, made the situation worse by doing almost

\[152\] Ibid, 167.
nothing to cut costs and increase revenues, allowing the economy to career out of control.\textsuperscript{153}

Greece had begun to live beyond its means under PASOK, beyond reality, but New Democracy “is no less guilty of bloating the public sector and buying ‘social harmony’” as the two parties have alternated periods of governance since 1974’s restoration of democracy.\textsuperscript{154} Workers were given what they called for as their party of patrons rose to power, and wages and pensions grew disproportionately to economic production. While this may serve as an example of the government caring about equality and for the demands and calls of the people, it is likewise an example of a failure—a problem that would never have arisen had the politicians not sought and distributed favors or had never existed. Deficits and the country’s debt became inevitable, but the governments continued borrowing to match their promises of wages and pensions, to import more than was exported, and to pay off past debts. The financially irresponsible borrowing continued and membership to the Eurozone veiled the nation’s economic weaknesses, as membership brought monetary stability and low interest rates, stimulating a boom in mortgages and consumer loans.\textsuperscript{155} The deficiencies of the system and this patron-client phenomenon will again be highlighted later, as anarchists cite such details of the establishment in reaction to the 2010 debt crisis. At this point, having laid a relative groundwork through the history of anarchism in the early Greek state and through a brief history of the state itself, it is useful to turn


\textsuperscript{154} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{155} Ibid, “The easy money of the past three decades had a devastating effect on the economy and on the Greeks themselves; they now have to come to terms with the basics of finance – that you cannot spend more than you earn, that you should not borrow more than you can afford... George Papandreou has finally realized that running Greece does not depend only on appeasing the most voracious sections of his own supporters [which drain resources and plague the people] – he has to make the country more efficient and its economy viable.”
back to the responses of the anarchists in recent history in order to begin the process of understanding their aims and place in society.

**VII. Greek Anarchism of the Later Twentieth-Century**

Influenced by anarchists and leftists, 1979 saw another student movement occupy universities across major cities, but the inclusion of the left, both PASOK and the communist KKE, into mainstream Greek politics by the early 1980s meant the institutionalization of much of the left and the rejection of rock, hippy, and freak countercultural outliers. This movement, which spurred mainly from 1968 France and the 1973 Polytechnic uprising, was influenced by the classic anarchists, Bakunin and Kropotkin, and also by Situationists, Panekouk, and autonomist Marxism. The movement featured many who opposed anarcho-syndicalism in favor of direct class war, again creating rifts with the communists of KKE who organized KNAT, a youth organization for the preservation of order to counterbalance the anarchist demonstrations. Still, the movement found strength in the mid-1980s as thousands of anarchists attacked the Hotel Caravel in Athens as a black bloc in protest of the presence of such far-right political figures as Le Pen of the French National Front party.

A new generation had formed, adopting punk counterculture and more violent practices such as confrontational behavior with police (which led much of the left to label anarchists as provokers) and the use of petrol bombs. These violent practices, however, are generally “self-limiting,” and although many Greek anarchists preach ἀνατροπή (overthrow), “the movement

157 Indymedia Athens. “Greek Anarchist Movement.” 2003. http://athens.indymedia.org/front.php3?lang=el&article_id=7194 (2 February 2010). While seemingly written by a blogger, the contents of this article is, in my opinion, legitimate in that it conveys features of the modern movement of anarchism in Greece by one who identifies with the movement, and is thus parallel to primary sources with regards to a underground movement.


159 Schwarz, 7.
quietly recognizes that it has no moral basis for creating rivers of blood. Groups are too small, too anti-hierarchical, and too respectful of comrades’ moral redlines to wage serious war on the Greek system.” Violence may be committed, but it is mostly ritual and insignificant. These anarchists are mostly middle-class young men (and some women):

- maintaining an inexpensive communal lifestyle through intermittent work, grants from tolerant relatives, or bank robbery...
- banding together in collective contempt for capitalism and consumer society [as] one short-term solution... [to the] Greek educational system [which] pours thousands of aspiring artists into a status-obsessed, highly politicized society that cannot afford to employ them.

Violent anarchist groups also exist, but these are not the interest of this research. For the sake of identification, however, these organizations, often deemed terrorist groups, include

- Επαναστατικός Αγώνας (Revolutionary Struggle), Επαναστατική Οργάνωση 17 Νοέμβρη (17 November Revolutionary Organization), and Συνωμοσία των Πυρήνων της Φωτιάς (Conspiracy of Fire Nuclei).
- This last group, also known as the Conspiracy of the Cells of Fire, claimed responsibility for sending 14 letter bombs to embassies in Athens in November 2010, and as a sign of solidarity following the arrest of two members, an Italian anarchist group, Informal Anarchist Federation, mailed a bomb to the Greek embassy in Rome. According to the Italian group via note, the location was selected as a building that “represents the Greek state and its servants, in solidarity with the comrades arrested in Athens and the Conspiracy’s project which, like ours, is based on the actions and methods of revolutionary violence.”

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161 Ibid.
These groups, as terrorist organizations, do not seem to fit the template of anarchist participation that contributes positively to the political process. They rather appear to glorify the violent aspect, stripping themselves and their political and social demands of reasonable legitimacy. That being said, anarchists are often classified incorrectly or thrown into an all-inclusive category:

"Anarchist" is a generic term used by the Greek media and police to refer to ominously dressed youth who congregate in Exarcheia and throw rocks at police. True anarchists (as opposed to children who like to paint the symbol on walls) are a minority in Exarcheia's wide spectrum of anti-establishment ideologies from libertarian socialism to murderous nihilism. Members often use the term "antiexousiastes" (anti-authoritarians).\textsuperscript{164}

Anarchist history, particularly of struggle, resistance and death, however, is worth a closer look regardless of particular classification. The reason being that anarchists of all colors will be motivated by stories of companions who have been wronged, manipulated, coerced, and even killed by the State and its arms.

Accordingly, May 15 and November 17, 1985 saw the deaths of anarchists Christos Tsoutsouvis and Michalis Kaltezas respectively, both by police and both triggering major protests and riots. Tsoutsouvis was a former member of the rebel group Popular Revolutionary Struggle, fatally shot while stealing a car and killing three officers. Fifteen-year-old Kaltezas was shot and killed during street clashes with police following the annual November 17 demonstration that commemorated the Polytechnic uprising.\textsuperscript{165} Both of these occurrences foreshadow the riots in Athens in 2008 following the shooting of another 15-year old. Demonstrations and rioting against police brutality mobilized the public, showing the anarchists were not alone in denying the legitimacy of the state. This is essentially what happens. There is a

\textsuperscript{164} Kiesling, 1.  
\textsuperscript{165} Schwarz, 7.
spark, in this case police brutality, and then the deeper and underlying ideas and frustrations regarding Greek society and capitalism attract citizens from all underprivileged backgrounds to protest and symbolically attack the State through restrained violence against police and signs of capital and authority.

In 1986, a national conference was held by anarchists seeking to unite the different strands, but efforts failed and remained fragmented with the exception of the Anarchist Union established the following year. Athenian anarchists created squats, Lelas Karagiani and Villa Amalias, in 1988 and 1990 respectively, and the acquittal of the policeman accused of killing Kaltezas spurred another wave of motivated demonstrations in 1990. The following year, a new generation of anarchists acted as catalysts in the mass movement of high school students that occupied 1,500 schools and the major universities in efforts to keep the center-right government from privatizing the universities. Patran school teacher Nikos Temponeras was killed in front of the school he and his students were occupying, leading to two days of riots in Athens and the mobilization of 25,000 out of a population of approximately 100,000 in Patras. A final event in the relative activity of the anarchists throughout the late 1970s to early 1990s was the occupation again of the Athens Polytechnic in November 1995 in solidarity with a prisoners’ revolt in Athens’ Korydallos prison. The media labeled the anarchists as hooligans and thugs, and for the first time since the fall of the Junta the police entered and arrested approximately 500 people. The role of the media and the anarchists’ error in causing too much damage to the Polytechnic, while occupied, lost the anarchists popular support and the movement plunged into a period of relative tranquility. They remained without a notable

166 Ibid.
167 Egger, 1.
169 Egger, 1.
presence at the annual November 17 demonstrations for five years. In 2001, following years of internal quarrels and lack of confidence in the movement, anarchists took part in the November 17 events, clashing with police before the American Embassy, the traditional ending point of the annual demonstration.\textsuperscript{170}

Furthermore, in the last decade, Greek anarchists joined comrades abroad, participating in a black bloc protesting an International Monetary Fund meeting in Prague and a European Union Summit in Thessaloniki in September 2000 and June 2003 respectively. The 2004 Olympic Games in Athens and the accompanying exploitation of immigrant workers saw further protests as did the 2006-2007 plans to restructure higher education as part of the European Union’s Plan Bolonya. Less institutionally aggressive but equally relevant, several thousand, including anarchists, protested, this time to the government, regarding the uncontrollable forest fires in 2007 that were destroying fields and the lives of dozens. The fires were allegedly set by developers seeking to clear land for construction. Anarchists also supported immigrants in calling for asylum and respect for human rights claims.\textsuperscript{171}

The events selected and commented upon are by no means exhaustive, nor is this possible with respect to a countercultural movement whose daily activities of squats, informational dissemination, minor acts of resistance and solidarity campaigns are overshadowed by major episodes of resistance and rioting. But we can now place two important events, the riots of 2008 following another instance of a police shooting, and the riots of 2010 following the financial crisis, in a fuller context. In other words, given the above historical background, it becomes possible to contextualize anarchist sentiment and actions, and a clearer portrait of anarchism emerges as a movement that remains perpetually active in various arenas of progressive reform,

\textsuperscript{170} Indymedia Athens, 2003.
\textsuperscript{171} Schwarz, 27-28. “Greek law prohibits construction in forested areas.”
that becomes increasingly active in response to events that electrify the general populace, and that brings attention to mishandlings and excesses of the government. Self-styled anarchists persistently fight battles with riot police in Athens and other cities in urban conflict targeting: banks, public buildings, diplomatic cars and [foreign] businesses with homemade explosive devices made from canisters of cooking gas, but the blasts are designed to create a nuisance rather than to threaten people's lives, and the Greek police, because of a combination of apathy and incompetence, have never clamped down on the perpetrators.\textsuperscript{172}

It seems appropriate to begin with the Greek revolt of December 2008, to explore its root causes and anarchist response. The same will then be done regarding the ongoing events spurred by the 2010 debt crisis and subsequent austerity measures.

\textit{VIII. Events of December 2008}

On the \textsuperscript{6}th of December 2008, 15-year old Alexandros (Alexis) Grigoropoulos was shot and killed in the Exarchia neighborhood in Athens by special guard Epaminondas Korkoneas, triggering two weeks of protests, demonstrations, occupations, and vandalism—“the most tumultuous and prolonged riots in a European city since 1968…”\textsuperscript{173} Within several hours, protesters attacked police stations and banks in Thessaloniki, Patras, Chania, and Ioannina among others. Seventy luxury shops were smashed and burnt along the posh Ermou downtown, and many made their way to occupy the Nomiki, the law school, Panteion University, and the


\textsuperscript{173} Vulliamy, Ed and Helena Smith. “Children of the Revolution: When a 15-year old schoolboy was shot in Athens in December, it triggered the worst civil unrest in Europe since 1968. Ed Vulliamy and Helena Smith join the frontline activists to talk anarchist protest, political upheaval and police brutality.” \textit{The Observer: England}. 22 February 2009. Also via Egger, I.
Polytechnic. The government sought to categorize the events as “senseless violent acts devoid of any political meaning,” and media coverage, presenting images of chaos and of youth smashing windows and burning vehicles inspired more to do the same, subsequently triggering increased self-censorship on behalf of the media channels. The anarchists were not the only ones mobilizing for the demonstrations. Their actions set the stage for several other groups and their message was one adopted by all—a message of a “polycentric revolt” without leaders, without a single claim (except this one), but rather as a mass comprised of equals, participating and protesting at once from different angles. In fact, the events seemed to surprise the anarchists themselves. Violence, rioting and vandalizing destruction occurred in the name of Alexis, evolving into protests against consumerism, outsourcing, the lack of opportunity in Greece (unless involved as a client in a relationship of patronage), youth unemployment, under-paid jobs, and employment lacking security or representation—a quarter of Greeks between the ages of 17 and 25 are unemployed. Thus, the riots “triggered by police brutality, turned into a revolt against the police in general, precarious and exploitative employment in general, government in general.”

Banners bearing the slogans “Billions for the banks, bullets for the children” and “May ’68 is dead. Fight Now!” are useful in assessing the cries of the anarchists—the former, again, anti-capitalist while the latter seeks to separate the current movement from that of its generational predecessors, calling for a revolutionary spirit that is uniquely their own.

174 Schwarz, 78.
175 Egger, 1.
176 Vulliamy and Smith, 1.
177 Ibid. “Pepe Egger is a political analyst and journalist based in London, at present working on social movements and emancipatory politics.”
178 Vulliamy and Smith, 1. It is worth noting the lack of a single accepted history among anarchists in evaluating their own movement, but the banner referring to May ’68 is not rejecting the events’ influence, but rather seeks to
Grigoropoulos was killed in an alleyway in Exarchia, a quarter of Athens described by many as a “ghetto…of self-styled anarchists” and “a vortex of alternative culture, lifestyle and politics.”

It is a neighborhood where conflict between the people and the police are commonplace, where the inhabitants express their negation of authority firmly and often, and where riot police presence had steadily increased—equipped with pistols, tear gas, and machine guns—prompting the wall graffiti: “on every street corner there are police, the junta didn’t end in ’73.” It is here that the Polytechnic is located, it is here where Nosotros, a place for political discourse and meetings—flying the red and black flag—is located, and it is here where conversation can really shed light on the movement.

Nikos Ioannou, a carpenter from Agrinio, gave an interesting response when asked by reporters from The Observer about the riots of 2008. Referring to the military junta of 1967, he said, “there are similarities between then and now. The means of control have changed, and people enjoy a perception of freedom, but we would argue that the colonels were less powerful than a shopping mall…” Another, addressing the British reporters, suggested, “you are not able to create the kind of uprising in your country that we have created here because the methods of control in your country are far more sophisticated and accomplished. And your people are more subservient.” Both comments are worthy of evaluation. The first, again, seems wary of capitalism, fearing that a world of mass consumption is relentlessly attracting the masses to play

highlight the magnitude of the present, setting it as an even more revolutionary moment and calling the youth to create their own May ’68—matching or surpassing the acts of their parents.

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179 Ibid, 2.
180 Schwarz, 95.
181 Vulliamy and Smith, 2.
182 Ibid. The authors of this article conversed with individuals such as Mr. Ioannou in Exarchia, discussing the various traditions and differences within anarchism—an invaluable source in identifying the views of various anarchists. The views and opinions may change from person to person, but the validity remains when seeking to understand a theory of followers who simply are and who state that anarchism is.
183 Ibid. This is apparently the opinion of Valia, a photographer.
by its rules, to adopt its doctrine, and to seemingly keep the machine, which benefits the few while exploiting the many, in motion. Whereas the colonels’ regime was an obvious force to resist and protest, one whose beneficiaries were clearly outnumbered by their victims, the current enemy is elusive but always present and tempts its prey with the power of capital. It is a system in motion, and one that can be hardly resisted without the presence of a certain worldview—thus the popularity of a rather insurrectionist branch of anarchism in Greece. The second lends itself to revolutionary territory. There is an implied notion that Greece would be the victim of a perfect storm in the weeks after December 2008 with the lack of or presence of certain institutions and a citizenry willing to fight.

This resistance seems to maintain a place in culture. Makis Balaouras, working for the newspaper *Epochi* and involved in the original Polytechnic occupation, refers to the “‘passing of the relay baton’ between the uprising of 1973 and…December’s riots ‘from one generation to another.’” He also cites a legacy of dissatisfaction in Greece, in his opinion stemming from the fact that while Nazi resistance fighters were hailed as heroes throughout the world, the generation that liberated Greece, many of whom were communists, was exiled, imprisoned or executed. Thus, a picture is painted of several themes motivating those who participated in the demonstrations of 2008, certainly not all anarchists. Anti-capitalism is prevalent in the way it affects employment opportunities, which also includes an objection to hiring processes and an underlying system of patronage and clientelistic relations. These relations in turn affect the farmers who elect particular parliament members to sustain their promised subsidies. The subsidies in turn elicit evidence of parliamentary corruption, which ignites protest and demonstration in a society thought to be democratic. The protests are combated by the most

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184 Ibid.
likely agents of the government, the police, who then become physical targets on which to project the frustration and anger of the citizenry. The frustration can spin out of control and ultimately lead to the events like that of December 2008, in which the anarchists, often referred to as *koukouloforoi* or the hooded ones, find a public forum.

David Apter suggests that anarchism “‘attracts because it embodies rage—the particular rage people have when they see man as an obstacle to his own humanness.’”\(^\text{185}\) This resonates well with the opinion that the shopping mall is a more worthy opponent than the colonels’ regime, mentioned above, and is well illustrated in a letter from Yianni Dimitraki, arrested during an armed attack on the National Bank of Greece on January 16, 2006. Dimitrakis, defining himself as an individual halfway between an antiauthoritarian and an anarchist, writes to his comrades in a letter from Korydallos prison, dated June 23, 2007:

I consider that today society is like a train on a track headed for total dehumanization. We are the motor that powers the train, its engine, its passengers, and its wheels. The driver has the cruel face of capitalism and the copilot is the lazy, faceless State. The tracks are not made of rose petals, they are made of blood and corpses, bodies solitary or piled in mounds, of people who wanted to resist or change that frenetic course.\(^\text{186}\)

The anarchist youth counterculture is perceived as less political and serious, differing greatly from the anarchism of Bakunin and Proudhon, though many do claim to read these classics, but general strikes and abstention remain in the anarchist arsenal, and violence is seen only as a “‘psychological necessity’”—passive acceptance is perceived as being “‘equivalent to condoning corruption’”\(^\text{187}\) in this society that “depends only on violence, exploitation, and oppression.”\(^\text{188}\)

\(^\text{185}\) Dillon, 238.

\(^\text{186}\) Schwarz, 39. Dimitrakis was injured, shot by the police following crossfire, and was later accused of seven robberies and several counts of attempted homicide under antiterrorist law. These charges, perceived as “trumped up”, led anarchists all over the country to call for his release.

\(^\text{187}\) Dillon, 238.
There is a shared belief between the generations in the “‘possibility of total and instant transformation of society’” and that “‘anything can be achieved, even if it seems impossible.’”189 The “motivation for changing the present world results from a dissatisfaction with the performances of national governments that not only fail to respond to many human problems, but are exploitative and oppressive.”190

Many who participated in the demonstrations of December 2008 were not anarchists and took offense to the allegations that they had made no demands. They pointed to prominent calls for police disarmament and the resignation of the current New Democracy government (which was soon replaced by George Papandreou’s PASOK).191 The socialist government came to power in 2009, but it would be the end of a cycle. It would be the end of the successive governments that folded to their own supporters only and who had created massive deficits by financing public sector jobs and pensions and offering subsidies and further assistance—this was initially done, as mentioned earlier, by Andreas Papandreou’s PASOK in order to grant those who had been long disenfranchised during the years of the Civil War and the military dictatorship a chance to live like the middle class. The time had come to fasten the belts of the nation, and the time continues at this very moment.

IX. Greek Crisis of 2010

188 Schwarz, 39.
189 Dillon, 239.
190 Weiss, 2.
191 Villainy and Smith, 4. Citation from the words of Panos Garganas, an editor of a radical leftwing paper of the Socialist Workers Party SEK (Σοσιαλιστικό Εργατικό Κόμμα), Workers’ Solidarity.

Smith, Helena. “Greek Socialists Achieve Resounding Win in Snap Elections.” The Guardian. 5 October 2009. http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/oct/05/pasok-wins-snap-greek-poll (19 February 2011). Replaced by snap elections in October 2009—seeking to reestablish legitimacy following five years of government marred by scandal and failed handling of natural disasters (tragic forest fires) and a faltering economy—while elections were not required until September of 2011, Costa Karamanlis’ New Democracy party was defeated as Papandreou’s PASOK won 43% of the votes and 160 of the 300 available parliamentary seats.
The Greek debt crisis of 2010 launched Greece into a serious struggle. The government was pitted between the demands of the European Union that would elicit a bailout and the threats of the International Monetary Fund on one front, and the demands of the Greek people, outraged and concerned for their livelihood, on the other. The people were likewise caught between the calls for austerity measures of their own government and the demands of external, international institutions on the other—a circumstance that could be perceived as the latest in the long stream of forces impinging upon Greece’s sovereignty, from the Ottomans to the Protecting Powers and from the Nazi Occupation to the United States. At the very least, it would offer the Greek citizenry yet another confrontation with the notion of trust. George Papandreou had broken with the past, was standing firm against the opposition parties, unions, and even his own supporters, and he had

finally realized that running Greece does not depend only on appeasing the most voracious sections of his own supporters—he has to make the country more efficient and its economy viable. But the sacrifice will come to nothing if the public administration and the education system are not reformed radically so that they can serve the needs of their country rather than narrow political interests.192

However, as true as the above statement may be, the voting and implementation of austerity measures was, has been, and will continue to be particularly difficult on many Greeks, as the system of clientelism and patronage, the distribution of cushy civil servant employment, and the gross over spending and massive government deficits can all be blamed on their own government. Yes, the Greek citizenry is partially responsible. Yes, the people have benefited from this system of patronage and assistance, but never as a whole. A different base of supporters is rewarded following each round of elections, and the rules of the game have become

192 Konstandaras, 2.
instilled in the people, engraved as a piece of culture. Politicians and citizens have both sought to act in their own self-interest, and the lack of institutional interception has kept the phenomenon long alive. Thus, the government has finally realized the necessity for change—or is finally attempting to do something about it—but the citizens feel they are paying for the wrongs of the government through austerity measures. It is not difficult to acknowledge the dissonance. Cases can be made on either behalf, but this is precisely all that is required for those in the anarchist movement, long lurking and awaiting their moment; a pinch of justification that can be used to mobilize the general public. According to an anonymous Greek anarchist posting on a blog:

This crisis has been the creation of Goldman Sachs, among others, which helped Greece hide it's true debt in order to gain membership in the EU, and is now betting that Greece will default on repaying that very same debt they helped hide. Greece is also being forced to pay more to access credit, which exacerbates the crisis as the interest payments on Greece's debts rise, creating a vicious cycle of increasing interest payments and increasing hesitance to loan Greece money. At the same time, the very banks creating this vicious cycle are taking out bets that Greece will default on it's payments, giving them an incentive to keep the cycle going. These actions, along with other speculative attacks to try and push Greece into default by banks with bets on default are the cause of this crisis, but the Greek people are its victims, and the crisis seems to only be getting worse.  

Demonstrations against the austerity measures occurred and continue to do so, and the anarchists have once again emerged upon an arena laden with ordinary citizens, frustrated and distrustful of the government. Farmers, civil servants, all assemble in great numbers, protesting on their behalf, and the atmosphere is electrified. The will of the people is manifested in the multitudes

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present, frantic, passionate, emotionally charged and almost romantic—essentially, an
anarchist’s perfect storm.

The concerns and confusion of the Greek public can be projected to reflect the views of
many anarchists as well. It is certainly worth noting that many Greeks have played by the rules
all along and acknowledge the country’s need to stabilize. While undoubtedly affected by the
austerity measures—likely contributing to their frustration at the requests of many of their fellow
citizens—certain actions, such as the crackdown on tax evasion, will not greatly affect their
lives. On the other hand, many do indeed have qualms with the government and the system, and
are justified, even if partially responsible. According to Transparency International, bribes paid
to Greek officials rose 50 million euros to 790 million euros in 2009. Greece’s public and private
sectors are witnessing corruption thrive, and hospitals (33.5%), tax offices (15.7%) and town-
planning offices (15.9%) are among the worst offenders. Banks (10.8%) and lawyers (9.0%) are
not far behind, and Greece ranked at the bottom of Transparency International’s Corruption
Perceptions Index for 2008 amongst the 27 European Union members, scoring a 3.8 out of 10
where 10 indicates “highly clean” and 0 indicates “highly corrupt.” Identified as a problem
with “very deep roots,” Costas Bakouris, head of TI’s Athenian Office, suggests that the problem
is not due to a lack of legal provisions for curbing corruption, but rather to the failure to or
selectivity in implementing the existing laws.

Similarly, Greece has a problem with rampant tax evasion, causing the country to lose as
much as $30 billion a year, and “perhaps the biggest obstacle to tax collection is Greece’s
clogged legal system… Leandros Rakintzis, Greece’s auditor general, said that Greeks could

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194 Konstandaras, Nikos. (2010, March 5). Corruption Thriving, Watchdog Says: Bribes Paid to Officials on the

195 Ibid. Yiannis Mavris, director of Public Issue, a polling firm, suggested that “Greece’s fiscal crisis is inextricably
linked to graft” and that the problem has “very deep roots”.
appeal tax levies — and that when they did, it routinely took 8 to 10 years before a case was settled. Mr. Rakintzis said there were more than 300,000 cases backed up in the system. \(^{196}\)

Furthermore, the tax evasion has been to such an extent in the past that amnesties have been offered every few years, including last September when George Papandreou’s PASOK offered a program “allowing many taxpayers to settle their outstanding debts by paying just 55 percent of the bill.” \(^{197}\) The amnesty programs seem detrimental to society, sending mixed signals to evaders and to those who cooperate alike. The tax code is also perceived as being unfair, allowing pop singers and athletes to pay low rates, and Mr. Rakintzis insists that “for a tax system to work, taxes have to be fair across the board and penalties have to be enforced.” \(^{198}\) Only 324 homeowners claimed to own pools in 2009, while satellite images showed over 10,000, and many doctors claimed to make some $25,000 a year while the offices they rent cost twice that amount. General secretary of the Finance Ministry, Ilias Plaskovitis, submits that a good deal of legislature has been pushed through this year seeking to “restructure state assets that are losing money” and to overhaul the pension system, but some are calling for jail sentences of some twenty years for major offenders of tax evasion, and Plaskovitis suggests the establishment of a system of arbitration that will remove tax cases from courtrooms. \(^{199}\)

This leads to difficulties, particularly when exploring the anarchist mindset. From the perspective of the anarchists, the auditor general has expressed the necessity for a fair and equal tax system, but he is an agent of the government. The tax evaders and cheaters are bending the rules through evasion and bribery, but they do this out of self-interest and distrust of their

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\(^{197}\) Ibid.

\(^{198}\) Ibid, 2.

\(^{199}\) Ibid.
institutions and politicians. In theory, it would seem that anarchism would appreciate the attempts to fairly distribute tax responsibilities, but has the government simply failed in earning such legitimacy?

The Greek people did not vote for Papandreou in the snap elections of October 2009 to implement monetarist policies, and this has led to their anger and dismay, but the government is attempting to implement such policies not only due to external pressure but in order to finally make an effort to get Greece on the right path. Salaries of state employees are being cut, pensions are falling, and unemployment is rising. Novelist Petros Tatsopoulos suggests that this economic crisis is not only Greece’s fault. “There has been a chain reaction from the (subprime mortgage) crisis starting in the US two years ago, and Greece was the weakest link in the chain reaction.”200 Others suggest that the citizens are partly responsible as they “are electing the same people every time…[The officials] take the money, most of them; they are corrupt. And now they ask [the people] to make sacrifices.”201

Takis Theodoropoulos, a novelist and cultural commentator, points outs that “the past five years have been a social, as well as an economic, disaster, marked by an obsession with materialism, the rejections of traditional Greek values, and a belief that people could spend as much as they liked without ever having to pay.”202 Alexis Papahelas, the executive editor of the newspaper, Kathimerini, blames the “dead weight of the public sector as the biggest factor dragging Greece down, making the government deficit impossible to deal with, and killing enterprise.” He notes that “it’s been the dream of every kid coming out of high school or university to be appointed somewhere in the state apparatus – to get a permanent job on good

201 Ibid. Words of John Maravelakis.
202 Ibid, 3.
money and not necessarily work hard. That’s over. It delivered jobs for a while, but now the state is bankrupt.” Thus, the state is blamed for the current crisis. The people bear responsibility as well, but they fight, not surprisingly, refusing to pay the bills for what they perceive as wrongs committed by successive governments in Greece’s recent history. They fight and plead their cases before parliament in greatly organized demonstrations of the multitudes—not necessarily in terms of cohesiveness of message and claims, but certainly with regards to mass mobilization and representation of a wide variety of interest groups. The riot police line up before the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, just in front of parliament, and allow the voices of the many to be heard, that is, until the envelope is pushed and the people make an effort to approach the parliament building—often led by a small minority, and often the anarchists. When asked whether or not the Tomb would be under assault, an anarchist’s response was negative and claimed that the monument was respected. “It is not the enemy, the cops are not the enemy – it’s the people inside who are the enemy, but they don’t come out.” In natural disagreement, another states that “people gave their lives in the war so that this monument to freedom could be built. Now the police stop the people from getting to it. The monument is shit. Today we have lost our freedom.”

Thus, these are the anarchists’ concerns as well. They fear the lack of opportunity, the faltering economy, the engrained system of patronage, the culture of bribery, the selective implementation and enforcement of laws, the austerity measures in general and unequal distribution. They do not fear some random aspects of society that have no ground in reason. They share the concerns of the people as a whole. And the people often allow it. “Greeks have a

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203 Ibid.
204 Ibid, 4. The response of one of two students holding red flags and sharing that his friend holds two degrees but remains unable to find employment.
205 Ibid. The response of another young man who had been listening in on the previous conversation.
deep well of tolerance for those who rebel against authority, and generally accept the occasional low-level violence that can break out during demonstrations, such as smashing store windows or torching the occasional car.”206 They are disenfranchised for the same reasons, and often adopt the feelings of all who are most ostracized and reflect them accordingly, creating a worldview that is harshly depressing but terribly hopeful. It is thus the actions and aims of the anarchists that do not resonate well with society as it is known. The average person, the logical person, will likely sit at a table if given the opportunity and present his case to those who will hear it, willing compromising and seeking the best solutions for all parties involved. This does not seem to be a part of the anarchist vocabulary. Rather, the situation is perceived as being so dire, so lost, that there must be a bottom-up remodeling of the system en route to creating a society that will never again fall into the dreadfully cyclical pattern of exploitation and profit, of victory and defeat, of rich and poor, and of ruler and ruled.

Dimitris Hadzisokratis, on the other hand, also involved in the Polytechnic occupation of 1973, suggests that:

what happened last December was an explosion, not a revolt’ and that ‘the situations are entirely different, we were rebelling against a dictatorship, they are rebelling against a democracy. We had a set of demands and goals…Who are they fighting, exactly? It is amorphous, it has no aim, it will reach an impasse and will be judged as pointless.207

Prime Minister at the time, Costas Karamanlis, likewise labeled the actions “mindless”. And this is precisely where the greatest amount of attention is necessary in explanation. If the concerns of the anarchist’s are justified, adopted and borrowed from the various demands made by the general citizenry, where is it that anarchism goes astray? Where does it become mindless or

207 Vulliamy and Smith, 4.
receive its rather ill reputation? Is it the violent and insurrectionist nature with which it seeks to alter society? And again this only characterizes the insurrectionist branch of anarchism. Is it the refusal to communicate and civilly compromise? Is it the passionate rioting and protests coupled with internal strife and lack of substantive solutions and suggestions? Maybe it is simply the theoretical essence of anarchism, the rejection of the State, police, and of every source of authority in the name of autonomy, that makes anarchism appear so mindless, utopian, and practically unrealistic; perhaps this is why it is disregarded as nonsense. But should it be so easily excused as such? It is worth a look at how and where anarchism fits into a set of theoretical claims about authority.

X. Autonomy vs. Authority

The State’s defining characteristic is authority, the right to rule, and the citizen or man’s primary obligation is autonomy, the refusal to be ruled by anyone other than the self. The conflict between the autonomy of the individual and the authority of the State, between the right to rule and the obligation to refuse such subjugation, thus seems to be nearly impossible to harmonize, and as man fulfills his obligation to make his own decisions,

he will resist the state’s claim to have authority over him. That is to say, he will deny that he has a duty to obey the laws of the state simply because they are the laws. In that sense, it would seem that anarchism is the only political doctrine consistent with the virtue of autonomy.

The anarchist may comply with the laws of the State temporarily or under certain circumstances, as it is occasionally in the best interest of individuals to surrender their sovereignty (as in the


209 Ibid.
case of surrendering to the treatment of a doctor or to the counsel of one with whom cooperation would bring benefit greater than the blind maintenance of autonomy). The anarchist may even question the possibility of truly eliminating the State as an institution in the future. But the anarchist “will never view the commands of the state as legitimate, as having a binding moral force.” The anarchist lives thus as a man without a country, a citizen of the world as a whole, whose allegiance feels no greater connection to his place of birth than to the foreign lands upon which he passes or to the faraway states on which he will never set foot.\textsuperscript{210} The legitimacy of all states is equally rejected, respecting the natural obligation to remain autonomous.

The State is a collection of individuals, maybe one, who maintains and exercises supreme authority over a particular area or over a certain population. The State’s authority, or authority in general, is its right to command, and thus, the right to be obeyed, which should be recognized as different from power, which is seen as the ability to compel compliance through means of force or threatening coercion.\textsuperscript{211} “To claim authority is to claim the right to be obeyed. To have authority is then—what? It may mean to have that right, or it may mean to have one’s claim acknowledged.” The claim may very well be acknowledged as, according to John Locke, the State is certainly the highest authority, but its right to command seems to be less than absolute.

Regardless, the authority of the State is acknowledged by masses and for various reasons. “The force of the traditional is engraved so deeply in men’s minds that even a study of the violent and haphazard origins of a ruling family will not weaken its authority in the eyes of its subjects.” Thus, for some, or in fact many, it becomes sufficient to acknowledge the state’s claims of authority merely because the State, or perhaps lord, king, or parliament, has always been worthy of such authority. Whether by virtue of extraordinary characteristics—of relentless

\textsuperscript{210} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{211} Ibid, 3-4.
military might, oratorical flourish, spotless demeanor—or by virtue of guaranteed patronage, the acquisition of authority has been acknowledged.\textsuperscript{212} The people may follow blindly or under the assumption that they are actively participating in the decision making process, but the fact remains; they are short of being autonomous.

The act of granting one’s obedience to the authority of another may seem to be a mark, at least in a pure sense, of religious zealots and their followers, revolutionary radicals, or uneducated and long disenfranchised masses, but in a modern world characterized by bureaucracy and institutions “authority is granted to those who occupy official positions…We become so conditioned to respond to the visible signs of officiality, such as printed forms and badges…” that even the individual who perceives him or herself as a conscious democratic citizen may fall into the realm of rather instant submission and obedience to an unknown authority, marked only by a sign. Why and under what conditions does one man have supreme authority over another? Accordingly, under what conditions can a state, in other words the macrocosm of this relationship, exist? States obviously do exist, and it can be inferred that men believe it to have the authority it claims to have and to be legitimate, but they may be wrong. There may be good reasons to obey rather than defy the State, for prudence or simply because the State offers benefits or instructs the citizen to do what he would have done in good conscience anyways. But this does not make the State legitimate. It is possible that all previous beliefs in authority have been wrong, and it may even be impossible for a State with a right to be obeyed to exist.\textsuperscript{213}

According to Wolff, “obedience is not a matter of doing what someone tells you to do. It is a matter of doing what he tells you to do because he tells you to do it...” And thus, legitimate

\textsuperscript{212} Ibid, 6-7.
\textsuperscript{213} Ibid, 7-8, 10.
authority “concerns the grounds and sources of moral obligation.” It is a fundamental assumption of moral philosophy that men are responsible for their own deeds, and it follows that men are metaphysically free, *id est* in some sense capable of choosing their actions. The obligation to take responsibility for one’s actions derives from man’s freedom of will coupled with his capacity to reason concerning his options and selections. Accordingly, any and all people who possess both reason and freedom of will are obligated to take responsibility for their own actions, whether or not actively engaged in an unceasing process of reflection, investigation, and deliberation with regards to the thought process, and thus moral philosophers often categorize children and madmen as individuals not entirely responsible for their actions. To the extent that moral autonomy is the simple condition of taking full responsibility for one’s actions, people can elect to obey the commands of another body without attempting to determine the merits of the command, in other words, individuals can naturally forfeit their autonomy at will, but the individual remains responsible for his or her actions.\(^{214}\)

The responsible individual thus arrives at moral decisions expressed to him or herself in the form of commands, giving laws to the self and self-legislat ing. The individual is then *autonomous*—originating from the Greek ἀυτός (self) and νόμος (law)—and shows obedience to the laws set for oneself without being subject to the commands of anyone else. Again, the ends may be the same, but the means will differ. The individual may make the same decision as was directed by a given authority, but the autonomous individual will do so in response to his or her own legislation and not *because* it was commanded by another. In this sense, in the political

\(^{214}\) 9,12-14.
sense, through a combination of Kant’s freedom and responsibility, the individual is morally autonomous and free.\textsuperscript{215}

But then what becomes the objective in a political system or environment? Can the autonomous individual cohabit with other such individuals to form an autonomous state of autonomous individuals, all obedient to the orders and commands originating in their wills alone? What would be the fate of order and productivity, or would these not be of principal concern? The balance of autonomy, authority, order, productivity, possibility and reality have been subjects of great concern for all who tackle questions regarding political system, and the notion of sacrifice seems to be an obvious given. Individual autonomy may be sacrificed for order, for security, for economic stimulation and progress, for the safe passage of the ship of state, and as a realistic alternative to a government of autonomous individuals governing themselves—a pure democracy. As the importance of autonomy dwindles in the preferences of policy makers, however, the State’s wellbeing and the health of other organs and objectives is placed above that of concern for the liberties of the citizenry, inviting an anarchist counter—a reminder of the importance of the individual will. The objective of the anarchist is to achieve pure autonomy—the differences between anarchists regard the preferences given to productivity, collectivism, individualism, et cetera—and the endeavor and appreciation in the achievement of such pure liberty and freedom is not monopolized by the anarchist mindset alone, but for realistic reasons of applicability, democracy, in a variety of forms, has emerged as the nearest ideal through compromise.

All forms of representative government compromise with the ideal of autonomy and self-rule, and thus the only way to preserve individual autonomy while achieving collective self-rule

\textsuperscript{215} Ibid, 14.
is through unanimous direct democracy. If every individual participates directly in the legislative process, bound by the laws he or she has passed and bound only by those laws for which he or she has voted, the ideal is essentially achieved, but real democracies are found primarily in representative parliamentary or majoritarian forms. According to Rousseau, majority rule of any kind is a compromise with individual autonomy, and representation is not much better than voluntary enslavement.\textsuperscript{216}

It seems impossible to define a measure that gauges the extent to which a system of representation reflects and fails the ideal of unanimous direct democracy, and indeed it is as the representative varieties are a matter of ideological and group interest, benefitting some and impeding others. In the words of Hanna Pitkin, “representation means, as the word’s etymological origins indicate, \textit{re-presentation}, a making present again…\textit{in some sense}…something which is nevertheless \textbf{not} present literally or in fact.”\textsuperscript{217} There seems to be no better or worse form of representative democracy, but rather differing forms that benefit differing groups in a shifting conflict of interests.\textsuperscript{218} Representative government’s legitimacy and moral authority seems to result from its accurate reflection of the peoples’ will over which it rules, and in this way it is seen to be not simply a government for the people, but government by the people, even if indirectly (set through representatives which the people themselves have elected to represent them). The individual thus obeys what the government passes as legislation, regardless of content, because the State’s will—legitimized through elected representatives—is the individual’s will, its decisions are effectively the will of the populace, and accordingly its authority serves as the collected authority of a given individual and his or her neighbors.

\textsuperscript{216} Ibid, xix.
\textsuperscript{218} Ibid, xxi.
However, representative voting by a congressman, parliament deputy, et cetera, without direct endorsement or approval from his or her constituents, is a flawed expression of the will of the people, subject to much deviation through a variety of means from bribery to simple change of heart. In this way, voting independently from their constituent citizens, the representatives cannot claim to have kept the will of the people intact and autonomous, for everybody’s voice was not heard. Neither did they directly assist in the legislative process, nor was their voice directly heard and transmitted by their so-called representative—the agent in government responsible for establishing government by the people. But still, the citizen is compelled to obey the laws passed by representatives who are not obligated to vote as a particular citizen would, and who in fact are unequipped with information regarding the specific preferences of individual citizens on particular bills. In other words, it is nearly impossible to offer the citizenry a pure voice in the political process through representation, since following the election process, every decision is the official’s own and cannot possibly reflect the varying individual preferences of his vast constituent base. Given a scenario in which there are four issues up for debate with some seventy-two possible stands through combination on the day of election, proper representation would require those seventy-two stands to be reflected by seventy-two candidates holding those logical positions. Without this option, it is impossible to provide every citizen with even a choice of a candidate whose stances match his or her own, and thus the possibility of being properly represented by a genuine agent of government becomes impossible or unrealistic.

Representation thus sacrifices aspects of individual autonomy, and the same can be said regarding majority rule based democracy.

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220 Ibid, 33.
Majoritarian democratic politics may be seen to serve as a replacement for the rule of arms that reigns superior, through sheer numbers, in lawless societies. Militarily speaking, and in terms of force and power capabilities, the majority is the superior body in a given society, and this group must be the primary decision-making force, ruling by the ballot. If this is not the case, the unpleased and unheard majority can easily turn to force. Following such logic, the majority wills itself and the remaining populace in a drive to achieve something closer to their own autonomy, while a member of a minority group, regardless of sort, will be unable to do likewise. The members of the majority will the law and are accordingly bound by it, but they remain autonomous by submitting to their own authority, to the commands they set for themselves. The members of the minority, on the other hand, opposed the law and voted against the measure, but despite deliberation and rejection of a particular measure, the alternative is forced upon the members of the minority by the superior majority.\(^221\) Pierre Proudhon saw democracy as “nothing but a constitutional tyrant” and the ballot nothing but ‘a cunning swindle.’\(^222\) The classic example of anarchist suffrage irrationality concerns the mass mobilization of anarchists in 1930s Spain to vote and oust the monarchy, while coupling this perceived success with abstentions that led to the election of an anti-labor candidate in the 1933 elections.\(^223\) This irrationality is interesting to note as anarchists were able to organize and mobilize, putting themselves in a position to reject what they opposed while simultaneously rejecting the opportunity to elect a superior option. This “irrationality,” however, makes some sense, as it appears consistent with the anarchist motive to reject authority. Why would they then assist in the election of a regime that they would oppose as soon as their oaths were read? The goal is the

\(^{221}\) Ibid, 39.
\(^{222}\) Dillon, 235.
\(^{223}\) Ibid, 236.
obliteration of the State, not a shift in power. Contrarily, why would it not be in their best interest to at least vote for a more pro-labor candidate? Were they offering criticism with no solutions or supporting their solution through abstention? The latter is much more likely, fearing that such political participation may increase the anarchists’ chances of being blinded by the process.

There is thus a failure or at least great difficulty in uncovering a form of political association that comfortably combines moral autonomy with legitimate authority. The State has been described as a necessary evil by many political philosophers, forced upon the citizenry as a result of their inability to demonstrate and abide by the principles of morality, or as a weapon of one class against the others in an eternal struggle for personal advantage. The State could thus be seen as a product of an amplification or macrocosm of human tendencies, both great and terrible. According to both Marx and Hobbes, the State would be unnecessary in a community composed of only good willed individuals. But if authority and individual autonomy are truly incompatible, which they seemingly are, that is in their pure states, philosophical anarchism must be accepted and all governments must be judged as bodies lacking legitimacy whose order and commands should be investigated and evaluated under every circumstance prior to obedience and submission, or conversely, the obligation and objective to achieve autonomy must be dropped, particularly in the realm of politics, and the people must submit themselves to the government, whatever the form of the regime, authoritarian or democratic, which appears to be the most legitimate bearer of justice and benevolence. The latter may appear to be the more sensible option, sacrificing a portion of individual autonomy for the achievement of a working political system that contributes to development, both within the state and within the general populace in a mutually beneficial order, and establishes a general order and the rules of the game by which all are to play. This option relieves the individual of his or her responsibility to retain complete
autonomy, but simultaneously strips them of this very possibility. The most purified form of individual freedom and liberty is attacked with the retreat and withdrawal of autonomy. To give up on the commitment to moral autonomy is impossible. If one accepts the commands and rule of others from force of necessity willingly, and surrenders his or her duty to endlessly evaluate the merits of the performed actions, then the individual, grown and autonomous, is but a child, no different. The permission given to another to determine the principles by which one must behave and what one must do rejects the freedom and reason that dignify humans and their individuality. The concepts of authority and submission thus strip men of their dignity while simultaneously crowning others with the right to be obeyed—a seemingly blatant presentation of an inherent inequality between people.224

The political state is a social institution, and that being the case, it is but the entirety, the societal sum total of the beliefs, expectations, habits, and interacting roles held by its citizens and subjects. “When rational men, in full knowledge of the proximate and distant consequences of their actions, determine to set private interest aside and pursue the general good, it must be possible for them to create a form of association which accomplishes…” the same ends without the seemingly inherent deprivation of each citizen’s individual autonomy.225 Even if this must be possible, it is incredibly, and maybe unfortunately, unlikely. The State is ingrained in the mind of the individual as a given. One is born a citizen of a state, and consequently of the world, but is subject to the rules and commands of a superior whose authority was established prior to conception and without his or her own approval. Upon proper age, suffrage is granted and autonomy is enhanced, but the rules of the game are set and the laws of the worldly State are long established. It is thus not only a matter of constitutional concern, though criticisms of

224 Wolff, 70-72.
225 Ibid, 78.
representational and majoritarian democracies have been pointed out—non-omniscient representatives, failure to provide candidates for every possible stance combination, wasted votes, and tyranny of the majority, et cetera—but a concern that emerges upon taking a step backwards. The existence of the State itself is taken for granted to the extreme that it has become seemingly impossible to imagine being born into a world any different than the one here and now inhabited—without governments. Citizens, feeling lost without directions, have become conditioned to believe that leaders and rulers—whether God, President, King, et cetera—are necessary, essential to define their own existence.226 It seems that as an individual tries realize his right and duty to be his own master in the modern world, “the more completely he becomes the passive object of a technology and bureaucracy whose complexities he cannot hope to understand.”227 Authority is assumed, submission is accepted, and in many respects the complexity of the world has clouded the ability to see that the state’s very existence is not naturally occurring.

XI. A Better Understanding of Anarchism

A common anarchist assumption is that nature will optimally flourish when left unbridled and to itself, and that it is the interference and domination of rulers that disturbs the natural balance and order. There is therefore a natural “cosmic optimism” assumed in anarchism’s belief that the natural order is upset due to blocks in the natural societal flow and that unfettered freedom and natural laws will ensure the emergence of a spontaneous order. Anarchists perceive the State as an “extraneous burden placed on society” that can be discarded and as what is essentially a recent development in societal and political organization. While a pure anarchic organization, marked by no concentration of force or controls, is unlikely—as stateless

226 Marshall, 645.
227 Ibid, 17.
organizations often continue to utilize sanctions of approval and disapproval—society may be organized without governing forces or laws in a peaceful manner. The State was born only with the emergence of inequality in the economic realm. The surplus created in society needed to be appropriated, thus the emergence of private property and class relations, and laws were enacted to protect said property. The State is seen as an oppressor and as a cause of social evil. It is controlled by the powerful and steered by the rich, serving the interests firstly of the classes of the elite. Like Marx, William Godwin saw the rich to be “directly or indirectly the legislators of the state” at all times, and Kropotkin saw the State as a mechanism allowing the ruling minorities to build monopolies. Anarchist solutions differ, however, upon realization of their revolutions, ranging from *laissez-faire* economic systems with the inclusion of private property, right-leaning and libertarian, to voluntary communism.

Anarchists find commonality, however, and are distinguished from other forms of political allegiances, namely from liberals and authoritarian socialists and communists, by their rejection of the State. They criticize the modern democratic state, pointing out its fundamental contradiction that celebrates freedom and equality of the citizenry while simultaneously restricting citizen liberties and preventing the direct participation of all people in the legislative process. They likewise argue that the State’s coercive nature outweighs the protective qualities of its police, prisons, and armies, protects more aggressively the interest of the rich and powerful, and accomplishes the tyranny of the majority at best and the tyranny of the minority at worst.

Anarchists further criticize the Marxist State and the communist revolutions of Russia, China, Vietnam, and Cuba that have demonstrated proletarian dictatorship and the inability of the State to wither away after concentrating political control. “It is the Marxist-Leninists, and not the

228 Marshall, 12-14.
229 Ibid, 18-19.
anarchists, who have been naïve in thinking that, after a society had suffered the centralization of authority and the concentration of power, the resultant State could then gradually be dismantled.” The State in such situations, under banners of classless equality and sociopolitical liberation, manipulates its citizenry, redefining reality through force and rhetoric.\textsuperscript{230}

Anarchists are cosmopolitan and internationalist, going beyond the narrow associations of tribe, class, race, or nation. They do not submit to the tyranny of merit, whereby individuals who are more intelligent bear greater authority and influence. The anarchist objective, finding all relationships involving power to be imperfect, is not to redistribute power, though this does seem to serve as a temporary goal, but rather to decentralize it into dissolution.\textsuperscript{231}

Anarchism opposes large-scale centralized industry and agriculture, and is not committed to policies of “economic growth and mass production and consumption.” There is no value to economic growth that is for its own sake. The advantages of self-reliance and self-sufficiency are emphasized by anarchists, and their message has been adopted by the New Left and Green movements, which support a decentralized economy comprised of small-scale units that balance field and factory. The Anarchist stand is thus not outdated, useless in the face of industrial progress and economic complexities arising since the nineteenth century, but rather increasingly relevant through its “small is beautiful” outlook that has gained credence in the presence of environmental depletion.\textsuperscript{232}

Anarchists may be anti-political, offering no detailed or specific plans of action in terms of social program, but rather for revolutions and social liberation. This alienates them to the counter-cultural extremities of society, but preserves a theoretical purity that ruthlessly and

\textsuperscript{230} Ibid, 644-645.
\textsuperscript{231} Ibid, 647-648.
\textsuperscript{232} Ibid, 652-653.
relentlessly criticizes the political Left and Right alike, denouncing authority, submission, and power in the name of human equality and freedom. Acting as a perpetual check on the powers of the State, they offer a persistent reminder of these ideals and more than occasionally support other democratic movements that are pursuing a libertarian and progressive direction, despite being found on the political periphery. Participation in local politics likewise supports the anarchist mindset, not undermining it, as it maintains the preferential treatment of decentralization and regional autonomy. Anarchists are thus involved in the political process as critics, uncompromising but relevant nonetheless. Violence, in incessant debate amongst anarchists, is most often perceived as two sorts: violence of the oppressor and of the oppressed.\(^{233}\) Utilizing the latter, it is often justified to attack the State, which is seen as the mover of societal evil, and to counter the occasions of state terrorism, which far outweigh the occurrences of anarchist violence.

Anarchists have never achieved their ideal of complete freedom in a non-coercive and decentralized society. Not necessarily utopian, it questions the status quo, looks to human potential, and strives to further advance the libertarian tendencies of society. That being said, utopia includes the imaginative edge and creative power necessary to envision a society organized differently than the one here inhabited. It could be said that the realities of the twenty-first century were utopias of times long past.\(^{234}\) Anarchists lay the groundwork for social progress, even through destruction. They seek to shake the general public; to wake them and remind them of their inherent inalienable liberties and potential when unbridled. And in so doing, the anarchists have lent their voice to social progress from the drive to prevent environmental destruction to women’s suffrage. Thus, while dangerous in its own right as an experiment,

\(^{233}\) Ibid, 657-658.
\(^{234}\) Ibid, 662.
anarchism has served as a driving force and as a promoter of disenfranchised political claims; as a vehicle on the streets that clashes itself with riot police and State forces while simultaneously illustrating the extent of civil disapproval. It lays the groundwork for demands of other groups to be heard, from struggling farmers to the betrayed immigrant population.

**XII. Conclusion**

Anarchism should not be dismissed as intellectually lacking, but as a journey toward the ultimate ideal. There is no anarchism in the pure sense. The application of anarchist principles to the realities of social living is the aim, and thus the objective of anarchism is to “stimulate forces that propel society in a libertarian direction.” Anarchism is not the miraculous remedy that will cure all social ills, but presents itself as a guide that will lead in a positive direction. The expansive availability of consumer goods, the minor concessions that allow one to be contented and to drop his critique, and the innovative techniques of mass indoctrination are thought to corrupt the minds of the citizenry. This “Bourgeoisification has sapped the revolutionary vitality of the masses [and] it is precisely this divorce from the inspiring values of socialism, which, to a large extent, accounts for the venality and corruption in modern labor and socialist movements.” It has become the objective of the anarchists to reverse this negative progression.\(^\text{235}\)

The anarchist mindset is a human mindset. It is not dark and grim, seeing only destruction as the means and ends, but progressive and optimistically seeks to bring forth the product of positive human potential. Anarchist tendencies can be found the world over and live in anyone who has ever envisioned a society that functioned without the constraints of fear and coercion or felt disenfranchised or without a voice and who wished to break the yoke of his

\(^\text{235}\) Dolgoff, 1.
oppression; in anyone who has experienced betrayal at the hands of the State or who has but wondered if the world could operate without the restrictive bands and boundaries of states and statutes; in anyone whose heart has pained in witnessing the privileged trumping the lowly and the blinding qualities of capital in an inescapably plutocratic or pluto-centric world; in anyone who has simply desired increased liberties or true equality across peoples of varying races, creeds, orientations, et cetera; and in anyone who simply wonders what it is that makes oneself inferior to another or who subscribes to the ideas that societal evils have been brought about by manipulations of human nature. The ideas exist and are far-reaching, shared across many platforms, but are seldom put into action.

The conditions in Greece, historically and spanning to the present, provide an arena for anarchist development—a perfect storm of sorts—and for considerable justification of such development. The Ottoman occupation (1453 – 1821), the imposition of Bavarian and Danish lines of appointed crowns rather than Greeks, the German occupation during the second World War, the American involvement in the context of the Truman Doctrine in the early stages of the Cold War that led to the Greek Civil War and eventually to supporting the military Junta’s seven-year dictatorship, and now the European Union and International Monetary Fund’s forced austerity measures in the wake of the 2010 debt crisis: these are simply periods of international intervention in Greece that hindered sovereignty, exacerbating the domestic circumstances—lack of opportunity for Greek youth, government corruption, financial irresponsibility of the state, submission only to the demands of constituency, client and patron relationships seeping through all societal contacts, widespread tax evasion—that have generated a deep rooted skepticism and lack of trust in Greek governmental institutions, in the capitalist ranks, and in government and states in general. The actions of anarchists, when turning to violent means—and this by no
means characterizes the majority—are subjects of great debate, utilizing violence to combat what is perceived as the State’s brutality and indifference in the face of citizens begging for mercy. Even the violent means are ritualistic and symbolic, intentionally directed at buildings representing their enemy—the State or capitalism—and rarely at the people themselves. The less flashy majority of anarchists support their cause through peaceful protest, squats, conversation and demonstration, in solidarity with their company as they push for the rights and humane treatment of immigrants in Greece, for an end to worker exploitation, for an end to government corruption and police brutality, for a sovereign but committed and trustworthy Greece, for an end to capitalistic fervor that blinds man, for less bloodshed, for increased liberty and equality, for mutual understanding and international cooperation, and ultimately for a democracy so advanced along the progressive libertarian path that it can do away with the bonds of the State and its coercive nature. Anarchists may never achieve this ultimate, allegedly utopian aim, but their persistent and critical nature and unceasing drive towards humanity’s untapped potential has, continues to, and will forever lead society in a progressive direction—so long as the violent means do not become a meaningless and recreational mark of the majority—supporting and accomplishing acts of increased equality and liberty along the way and serving as a constant reminder of aims in the purest sense. To lose sight of these aims would be to admit defeat. To label them utopian or unrealistic may bear truth, but to dismiss them as a useless objective altogether is to distort the target.

The place of the anarchists on the political spectrum is valid and holds a unique value. Is it not the role of the State to promote order and stability for the ultimate benefit of its citizenry through both economic and social means? Would it not be noble to envision and aim for such a result at a time when the training wheels of the State are no longer necessary? Is it the State or
what the State accomplishes that makes its existence seemingly crucial? When the State exists for the sake of its own operation, it has a vested interest in its own survival besides the well-being of its citizenry. It is then the role of the anarchist to remind society that the aim is ultimately not for a successful State, but for the successful organization of free peoples, realizing the extent of positive human potential. While unlikely to be achieved in the purest sense, anarchism seems healthy for society, criticizing, checking, and pushing society in a libertarian direction, even if slowly. This is the aim of the Greek anarchists. Far from being a band of conspiratorial terrorists—aiming, if at all violent, only for infrastructural destruction—the anarchists raise their black flag in opposition to oppression and coercion, to authority and inequality, to corruption and indoctrination, not only in the name of the disenfranchised, but for the equality and liberty of all people.
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