

The Early Days of Greek Anarchism:
'The Democratic Club of Patras' and
'Social Radicalism in Greece'

Edited and translated by Paul Pomonis

During the days of the First International, Anarchism took root in Greece: the first Greek Anarchist publication came out in 1861. The Democratic Club of Patras (founded in 1876) was organised to spread Anarchist ideas. Their newspaper *Hellenic Democracy* brought down a wave a government repression, but the seed had been planted...

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'The Democratic Club of Patras' & 'Social Radicalism in Greece'

Two essays edited and translated by Paul Pomonis

Kate Sharpley Library

2004

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Social Radicalism in Greece
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What is Anarchism?

Anarchism is a political theory which opposes the State and capitalism. It says that people with economic power (capitalists) and those with political power (politicians of all stripes left, right or centre) use that power for their own benefit, and not (like they claim) for the benefit of society. Anarchism says that neither exploitation nor government is natural or necessary, and that a society based on freedom, mutual aid and equal share of the good things in life would work better than this one.

Anarchism is also a political movement. Anarchists take part in day-to-day struggles (against poverty, oppression of any kind, war etc) and also promote the idea of comprehensive social change. Based on bitter experience, they warn that new 'revolutionary' bosses are no improvement: 'ends' and 'means' (what you want and how you get it) are closely connected.

The Democratic Club of Patras

THE PRESENCE OF LIBERTARIAN IDEAS FROM 1860 TO 1875

Starting from 1860, we come across the first organised anarchist action and the first libertarian writings in the Greek territory. Many of these were written and published by anarchists but also by radical liberals of the era, who had been influenced by the activity of the first European socialist groups and who were enthusiastically spreading the libertarian ideas of the European anarchist revolutionaries.

Emmanuel Daoudoglou, a merchant from Smyrna, was most probably brought to anarchist ideas by Italian anarchist refugees. Along with the Italian anarchist Amilcare Cipriani, founder of the "Democratic Club", and other European political refugees he organised a group and participated in the anti-royalist insurrection of 1862. They erected their own barricade at the Kapnikarea area⁽¹⁾, where they unfurled the red banner of the revolution.

Daugoglou spent the years between 1864 and 1867 in the Naples region of Italy and entered the local section of the International Workingmen's Association, which held close links with Bakunin, who happened to be in the same area from 1865 until August of 1867. During that period Daudoglou met Maria Pantazi, a prostitute by profession, who became his companion until his death. In 1870 we trace him back in Athens, where he was killed during a row at the Democratic Club. Following his death, his wife Maria left Greece. We trace her for the last time in 1871 during the Paris Commune. She was executed, along with thousands of communards by the Versailles forces.

We come across the first Greek anarchist publication on 3 (9) September 1861, in issue 334 of Sofoklis Karydis' daily newspaper *Fos* (Light). Entitled "Anarchy" (part 1), it constitutes the leading article of the newspaper. Its writer remained anonymous. The royal police confiscated the newspaper a few hours after its circulation.

In the article, the writer defines anarchy as social symbiosis without established authority: "Anarchy means living without any authority" and "...anarchy, i.e. the total lack of authority". The antiauthoritarian views of the writer led him to declare that "...governments therefore, no matter how benevolent and temperate and just, will always constitute a yoke". All people can co-exist "as equals and similar and live off their labour". The second part of the article, announced by the writer, unfortunately was never published.

The barbaric raid of the headquarters of the newspaper by the police forced the owner to publish an article criticizing anarchism as utopian and unattainable.

This article was reprinted for the first time in issue 32 of the magazine *Nea Synora* (New Frontiers); then again in issue 13/14 of the magazine *Panderma* and finally Nikos Dandis carried out the third independent reprinting in 1974. All these publications considered the writer of the article to be D. Papparigopoulos. However, P. Noutsos in his work "Socialist Thought in Greece" proved, that the writer of the article was in fact the journalist Demosthenes Papathanasiou.

Demosthenes Papathanasiou, was born in the Portaria village of Mount Pelion, at an unknown date, and died in Athens in 1878. A journalist by profession, he worked in many newspapers of the era. He was an editor with *Phos*, with the weekly *Filopatris*

(Patriot) - a periodical which he took over in 1861, with *Nea Ghenia* (New Generation) and chief editor with *Mellon* (The Future).

His opposition to King Otho⁽²⁾, his ideas on the abolition of the state and his defense of the Paris Commune marked all his writings. His stark criticism had upset the powers to be, which on various occasions confiscated his publications. On 21-1-1861 he wrote in an ironic vein in the *Filopatris* "Let our subscribers not be dismayed for not receiving their issues in time.....these are guarded well sealed and secured at the premises of the Public Prosecution Office..." He paid the price for his criticism during the Nafplio revolt, when he got arrested as a ringleader, despite the fact that at the time he was in Athens. He was jailed at the Mentrese prison and was deported on the island of Kythnos. An eye witness of the revolt of Kythnos, he published a chronicle of the revolt in the form of a diary, in the *Nea Ghenia*.

When the Paris Commune broke out he became one of the very few supporters of the Commune in Greece. Through *Mellon*, he promoted the actions of the revolutionaries and adopted a clear internationalist stance. In the issue of 11-5-1871 he hailed the demolition of the Vendome column by the Paris rebels.

We must not fail to mention the journalist and poet Panagiotis Panas, another one who defended the Paris Commune in the *Mellon* of Athens. His basic source of information was the anarchist Flourens. In the newspaper *Ergatis* (Workingman), which he published from August 1875 to September 1876, he printed news on the activities of the Russian anarchist movement and of Bakunin. He translated articles from the Italian anarchist magazine *Plebe*. He corresponded with the official organ of the Anarchist Federation of Jura and in turn the Bulletin de la Federation Jurassienne reproduced articles from the *Ergatis*.

The Heptanesian⁽³⁾ anarchist Mikelis Avlichos (1844-1917) was a satirical poet. He was born in the town of Lyxouri on the island of Cephalonia. He took his primary schooling at the Petritsio Lyceum. The son of a well off family, he left to study at the University of Berne in Switzerland. He traveled for ten years in Paris, Zurich and Venice. At the time Berne was the refuge of Europe's revolutionaries. It was there that he met Bakunin and espoused anarchism. During his trip in Paris he got into contact with the surviving communards of 1871.

He returned to Lyxouri, where through his poetry and oral propaganda, he diffused his ideas. He was restless by nature, endowed with a poetic talent and as usual with people from Cephalonia inclined to satire and irony.

He mercilessly attacked authority, the rule of the clergy, religious prejudice, war and the local rulers. By and by a small circle was formed around him, who came in direct opposition with the locals, who often branded Avlichos a "national traitor" and "Satan". He was gradually led to isolation and he obstinately refused to publish his poems. As mentioned by Kordatos⁽⁴⁾, while in Cephalonia Avlichos had provoked the wrath and the hostility of the rich, the priests and the mob, in Athens he was held in high esteem among the intellectual circles.

The influence exercised by M. Avlichos, didn't affect markedly the ideological formation of the Heptanesian intellegentsia. However, a small cycle of Heptanesian intellectuals, who politically leaned towards Heptanesian Radicalism, came in contact, through Avlichos, with Bakunin and most of the contemporary European anarchist

publications where they published news and articles. Until the end of his life Avlichos remained a staunch atheist and anarchist. His last words were: "Do not cry. Mikelis goes to life".

At the same time, a very important presence on the Heptanesos was that of the encyclopaedist N. Konemenos (1832-1907), a friend of Mikelis Avlichos. Hailing from the island of Corfu, an adept and a defender of Proudhonian ideas, he was one of the firsts to use the term "communism" and to promote women's rights. He adopted and propagated the vision of a communist society based upon collectivity, the society of one thousand members, which he considered the social model that suited best the particular conditions of his beloved island. In his book "Thieves and Murderers", published in Italian, in Corfu in 1893 he wrote:

"...and the conclusion is that only through the change of the system and the abolition of private property 9/10 of all that which is evil can be rectified immediately and almost radically."

"..Towards such a society and such a government I would advice things to be rectified. But if such a thing is not possible, then I would advice you to destroy everything until that time when such a rectification becomes possible."

"It is certain that the principles of communism are spreading daily at the same rate that destitution and poverty are spreading. Revolution, is a terrifying revolution, and cannot delay longer, that is clear."

Another anarchist from the Athens circle was Dimitrios Papparigopoulos (1841-1873), the son of the well known historian. In 1861, anonymously and in quasi clandestinity he published in pamphlet-form, a seminal book of his era, "Thoughts of a bandit or the condemnation of society". At the age of 23 he was proclaimed Lecturer at the Law School of the University of Athens and took up working as a barrister. He was interested in ancient Greek and Latin writers and wrote historical and philological studies. His most important historical study was the "Secret Gospels". Another important publication was his "Conscise History of the Greek Revolution". He published two collections of poems and wrote two theatrical plays. The first one, "The Spouse's Choice" was translated in French by Emile Legrand and was presented in Paris, while the second "Agora" was published in 1871 and opened in Athens. Papparigopoulos died in 1873, at the age of 32, following a hunger strike he undertook in protest at the appalling conditions of life in the Greek prisons.

FROM 1875 TO 1880

The period 1860-1875 was marked by the emergeance in Greece of libertarian ideas, which appeared and developed parallely in Athens and the Heptanesos. The character of this specific tradition paved the way for the formation of several revolutionary organisations in various parts of the Greek territory, like Athens, Syros, Messini, Aegio, Filiatra, Cephalonia, Patras. The Patras anarchists of the "Democratic Club", due to the propitious position of the Achaean⁽⁵⁾ port, forged close and firm links not only with their comrades of neighbouring Italy, but also with the respective European organisations, which were at the forefront of the socialist and workingmen's movements at the time. They undertook the initiative to coordinate all groups active in the Greek territory and attempted to form the first local section of the International Workingmen's Association.

The repression unleashed by the Greek state against them, which was part of an arrangement between governments throughout Europe – as proved by a multitude of diplomatic documents of the time – all but totally crushed the antiauthoritarian-socialist movement for a decade.

It should be noted that from 1872 to 1877 the International had espoused a majoritarian antiauthoritarian utterance and came to be known as the “Antiauthoritarian International”. Following the Hague Congress in September of 1872, when the marxist majority expelled Bakunin and a Swiss comrade of his, all national sections reacted and called into question the legitimacy of the Congress, denouncing the false majority created by the marxist members of the General Council.

In September of 1872, in the Congress of Saint Imier, all the participating federations voted for an ideological platform based on libertarian principles with a working class, syndicalist character. In that Congress Belgian, French, Italian, Spanish and Swiss delegates of the national sections, rescinded the decisions of the Hague Congress and founded the Free Union of Federations. During that course the most important role was played by the Swiss Federation of the Clockmakers of Jura, led by James Guillaume, a history and literature professor. In the Congresses that were subsequently organised participated Bakunin, Kropotkin, Malatesta, Costa, Cafiero and others. The bulletin they issued, the Bulletin of the Jurassian Federation became the international bulletin of European anarchists.

THE FIRST REVOLUTIONARY GROUP

A pleiad of historians, most prominently C. Moskov ⁽⁶⁾, consider that the people of Patras came into contact with anarchist ideas through the city's Italian colony. Following the 1848 revolution, Patras was swarmed by Italian political refugees, who formed a very important colony, which kept alive its ties with the metropolitan organisations of Italy. Historical testimonies estimate that the colony amounted to 10% of the total population of the capital city of Achaea. By 1861 however, the majority of the refugees had returned to Italy. In 1871 there were no more than 10 persons left in Patras. Therefore the spread of anarchist ideas in the city of Patras must be traced, either to the cycle of the Heptanesian radicals, who had been promoting libertarian ideas in the previous decades and who kept alive their contacts with the city, or to the cycle of Italian anarchists, like Amilcare Cipriani and Gustave Flourens, who visited Greece.

We can assume that the events of the Paris Commune had a catalytic influence on the radical elements of the Achaean capital and gradually gave birth to discussion clubs, most probably clandestinely in various private houses.

As pointed out by K. Moskov, out of such a club there sprung a group which decided to become politically active.

THE FOUNDATION – THE MEMBERS

The “Democratic Club of Patras” was founded at the beginning of 1876 and it was an anarchist group. The most important members of the Club, known to us by the research undertaken to the present day, were intellectuals and workingmen. Dionysios Ambelicopoulos, who taught mathematics in a high school and was familiar with the socialist tendencies of his time; Constantinos Grimanis, an accountant who used to work

in a store; Panagiotis Evmorfopoulos, a veteran Patran printer and the owner of the Phoenix printing firm, the publisher of many Achaean newspapers; His son, Alexandros Evmorfopoulos, who would later, in 1896, run the newspaper *Epi Ta Proso* (Onwards); Constantinos Bobotis, a lawyer, Georgios Paparretor a rentier who would collaborate in 1885 with P. Drakoulis' *Ardin* ⁽⁷⁾; Ioannis Asimakopoulos, Dimitris Spatharas, Panagiotis Sougleris, Giorgos Stratos. Their meetings were held in a private place, where a splendid library was maintained and which was decorated with pictures of the Paris Commune. Around these members, a cycle, mostly consisting of students, was created, which was regularly conferring and discussing and out of which sprung the first nuclei of propaganda and resistance to every form of authority.

PARTICIPATION IN THE BERNE CONGRESS

The 8th Congress of the International Workingmen's Association was held in Berne, from 26 to 29 October 1876. The agenda of the Congress, which was published in the Jura Bulletin, included inter alia, proposals made by various national federations aiming at the unity of all socialist tendencies and the return of the German speaking marxists, who had been cut off the International in 1872.

On October 22, the Bulletin of Jura published the following passage: “A specific number of socialists from this country, will send to the Berne Congress an address where their ideas on the organisation of labour shall be exposed. They have assigned the composition of this document to comrade Andrea Costa, who is a permanent resident of Switzerland. This will be the first time that Greece will participate in a Congress of the International.”

Two remarks are necessary: At the time, all socialist factions proclaimed themselves as socialist, while in Greece the term “*koinonistis*” was often used. Andrea Costa, an anarchist and a member of the International, later espoused parliamentarism and electioneering and became the founder of the Italian Socialist Party.

The resolutions of the Congress were sent to the Patran anarchists, who accepted them with a letter, dated December 1876, and thus became affiliated with the Bureau of the International in the Jura. The letter was published in the Bulletin of Jura, with the following reminder, dated 7 January 1877: We have received an answer, sent by the Secretary of the Democratic Club of Patras, to the letter directed by the correspondance committee of the Berne Congress. We read inter alia:

“ We received the fraternal letter which you addressed to us as well as the formal abstract of the Congress. Provided that we have interpreted accurately your reasoning, we are persuaded that our ideas and the principles of your program are in total harmony. Desiring to come into closer contact with you, since we believe that our solidarity will result in the triumph of our common ideas, we will initiate as of today a regular correspondance. Please accept the fraternal greetings of all the comrades in Greece.

In the name of the Democratic Club of Patras
Costantinos A. Grimanis”

But what did the Democratic Club of Patras endorse and what did they agree with? The Congress confirmed Collectivism (redistribution according to the labour offered) as the principal element of the International's propaganda. It supported that mutual respect and peaceful parallel development could and should be established between libertarian

and authoritarian socialists and adopted the respect of all means of action selected by every national federation.

The relations that the Patras organisation developed thenceforth, allowed it to come into contact with respective Italian anarchist organisations. The correspondance of the group with the anarchist periodicals *Plebe* of Milan and *Il Martello* (The Hammer) of Bologna bear testimony to these contacts. A letter published in *Il Martello's* issue of 11 March 1877, stated inter alia:

"...On January 20 we sent you a letter, exposing our opinions on the common cause, in which we further added: The type and the fashion of our intervention cannot be identical in every country, as only the citizens of a specific region are in a position to be aware of the means that should be used. The people are not a *Tabula Rasa*, but a book already written and it is upon the people we should base our cause. We also added: Our ultimate goal is the well being of the human race and we strongly oppose those who wish to bring about the gradual emancipation of the people. We are in accordance with you that only through Revolution we may retain our hopes...." (published by M. Demetriou)

From the above passage it is clear that they unreservedly supported the resolutions of the Berne Congress and they unwaveringly espoused anarchism as their ideological identity. We must not forget that during that period there were two opposing views: That of the marxists who proclaimed the "scientific stages towards socialism" and that of the Bakuninists' "direct action".

THE FEDERATION "DEMOCRATIC LEAGUE OF THE PEOPLE"

By the start of 1877, the Patran anarchists must have established contacts with individuals and groups from the Heptanesos, the Cyclades⁽⁸⁾ and the Peloponesos⁽⁹⁾. The meetings and the exchange of views between them culminated in the decision to form a federation under the title "Democratic League of the People". The general assembly of the Patran Club ratified this decision and its charter.

In the aforementioned letter, published in the periodical *Il Martello* of Bologna, they informed their Italian comrades of all these activities:

"...Presently we will send you the General Charter of the Democratic Federation of the People and the Special Charter of the Patras' Society....In a short while our socialist newspaper, the organ of our Federation, shall appear..."

Panagiotis Panas not only was aware of these activities but was closely linked with them and published the news of the foundation of the Federation as well as parts of its Charter, in the newspaper *Rigas* which he was editing at the time.

"...The Democratic League of Patras, gathered in its 2nd General Assembly, accepted the Charter of the Democratic League of the People, ratified its regulations and programme, inasmuch as it is declared the enemy of all politicians and of all those who endeavour to conserve the current situation by any means, and decided to publish a monthly newspaper under the title "Hellenic Democracy"..."

(issue of 22-3-1877, published by M. Demetriou)

The conservative newspapers however didn't extend a similar welcome to the intentions of the Patran anarchists. On 22-3-1877, the newspaper *Mohlos* (Lever) of

Zante all but admonished the Public Prosecutor of Patras for laxity and held him accountable for failing to intervene:

"....The Public Prosecution Authorities of Patras are aware of this revolutionary socialist society and if they are not, then they should confess themselves totally unworthy of the position they hold; however, if they are aware of the existence of such a society, which is working against the established order and have not yet acted against it, then let them confess themselves in breach of their oath"

On April 8, the Patran newspaper *Forologoumenos* (Tax Payer) joined the fray by writing "...the ground of this city is not conducive to the development of such monstrous ideas". On the same date, 8 April 1877, the Bulletin of the Jurassian Federation, published an article by Dionysis Ambelicopoulos entitled "Study on Socialism in Greece". We cite it in its entirety, since we deem that it is a unique testimony on the history of anarchist ideas in the Greek Territory.

"Nowadays, that modern ideas are spreading so widely and that a new society is in the process of its creation, for the accomplishment of which solidarity between the peoples is the essential precondition, we believe that it is not superfluous to briefly explain which position the Greek people hold within the ranks of the movement. Thus, all our comrades who strive for the emancipation of the peoples, through their knowledge of the Greek people's character, tendencies and needs may effectively help us promote and enhance our common cause in this country.

The Greek people not only fulfill, at least in embryo, better than anybody else all the conditions for the new society, but they are also very expeditious and adaptable with regard to the application of all practical truths, judging by the nation's mores, its tradition and its history.

This people's history in modern times is an extension of its ancient history, the same way that its present government is a copycat of Byzantine corruption. The people do not know, and neither wish to learn of any other history than their ancient one: Out of it, they draw life and using it as a guide they seek to rediscover the lost traces of their ancestors. Some frivolous Europeans label this tendency, as backward; they demand from the people to turn their back on their individuality and to espouse the theory of constitutional monarchy and accept the rule of the rich, which has been imposed upon them. These men do not want to realise that to our people their language sounds stranger than Chinese.

Upon entering the hut of a farmer or the workshop of an artisan and examining the people closer, one will immediately recognize the citizen of Ancient Greece, just in the same way that in the face of the rich of today we recognize Byzantine corruption. Briefly, Greek people have not changed: Only their oppressors have altered their form. The people have inherited the virtues of their ancestors: They show no violent tendencies; love of equality is their sole passion; more than any other people they are dominated by the passion for personal freedom and are sacrificed for it. The biggest part of the crimes committed in Greece today result from the oppression of personal freedom. Our people love equality and it is with great pleasure that they share all their civil rights with foreigners: Living proof are those thousands of Italians in the Cyclades, the Heptanesos and in Patras who enjoy all civil liberties. Although in Greece, we are not spared from Jesuit intrigues and their anti national machinations, not a single voice has

been raised against this liberalism. The people consider it a matter of honour to share their political rights with foreigners and to offer asylum to the persecuted. On Corfu, Cephalonia, Zante, all Hebrews enjoy civil rights and some have been elected in local councils, under the acclamation not just of the people, but of the clergy too. The Greek people are clever and brave, generous with their enemies; their frugality is proverbial. They have not learned to bow, they believe that all are equal, they address everybody in the singular and do not separate people by race or origin. This is the character of the Greek people.

Everything that befell this people, following the defeat of the Achaean League⁽¹⁰⁾ (at 183 BC) was just an anomalous situation which attracts our attention only on those rare occasions that the latent national spirit emerged in protest at the imported authority and corruption. Recent studies on the Middle Ages confirm this clearly.

Following the end of the Peloponnesian War⁽¹¹⁾ (at 404 BC) there begins the retreat of the people from the center stage of the Polity (republic). Following the fall of the Achaean League the people lost once and for all the primacy: the rich and corrupt flattered the conquerors and thenceforth cut themselves off the nation. Thus the Byzantine embryo was concocted. The West endured the Middle Ages and the East endured Byzantium. From those days, there ceased to exist any relation between the rich and the nation, between Byzantium and Greece. On the contrary, those two poles have, to the present day, formed two opposing camps, that of the tyrants and that of the oppressed. This struggle is to be found everywhere.

The people are not carrying any stigma from that era and they will soon become masters of their destiny. Every form of corruption and tyranny has been amassed inside the government. It could not have found a place anywhere else: society was more or less equal and radical equality was the people's legacy. The clergy, as we will see below, have always stood and will always stand by the people. Thus, as the people had lost the initiative, the corrupt took over the government: Which explains why the Greek people hate everything emanating from the government.

We, Greeks, do not need to teach the people that decentralisation and the independence of the Municipalities must form the keystone of the people's organisation and that concentrationism results in its death. Our people have learned all that from their own history and are convinced about these truths.

The Greek people have named the regime that in the West is called Republic, Constitution. As far as the constitution goes, we are equally advanced as Switzerland, America or France. Universal suffrage, for instance, has long ago been established in Greece.⁽¹²⁾

We deem it superfluous to remind that universal has not brought about the expected results. On the contrary, corruption was legitimised (despite the fact that there is no aristocracy in our country and despite the fact that the clergy is on our side), because elections take place in the shadow of the bayonets and are decided by the many governmental machinations.

The people are not favorably inclined towards the constitution, it is only the bourgeois who label themselves "constitutionalists", just like in the West they call themselves "republicans". Consequently, the Greek people, politically speaking, grasp the new ideas.

What in the West is called communism or socialism, the Greek people express it using the term Democracy, rule of the People. It is exactly the same thing that Thucydides⁽¹³⁾ expressed in the speech he attributed to Athenagoras of Syracuse. Modern Greeks speak exactly the same way.

There are two elements which in the past heartened the resistance against the Turkish reaction: The *kleftes*⁽¹⁴⁾ (the bravest among the people, who were living armed in the mountains) and the lower strata of the clergy. Those champions of Hellenism deserve special attention, because their physiognomy is unique throughout history.

From the moment when the *kleftes* achieved their goal – national independence through the revolution against the Turks (from 1821 to 1830) – they disappeared from the center stage, since the reason of their presence was lacking. A more detailed report on that subject is of no interest to this present study.

Contrarily to what is happening elsewhere, the lower clergy are no strangers to society and do not form a particular class. They live the same lives as the people and remain loyal to them. Due to the fact that the clergyman gets married, he is familiar with all the needs of a family; The Gospel lies by the plough and only after having toiled in the fields all day long, does the clergyman go to church. He is just a simple peasant, uneducated the same way those he coexists with are, but pure at heart and honest and ready to sacrifice himself for the people he belongs to. That is why during all the revolutions, the lower clergy have seized the initiative: they were the first to lay down the Gospel and unsheathe the sword. In the folk songs that praise the revolution and the feats of the *kleftes*, the priest and his wife, their daughter and her loves play a primary role. The Greek clergy not only do not possess any special privileges but they are deprived of every civil right and are prevented from taking office in the government; and if by any chance they get involved in public affairs, they find themselves punished like criminals. From the one hand this is a major injustice, but on the other it protects them from many evils. That is, the clergy have never been able to ally themselves with the oppressors; on the contrary they remain their enemies. The priest's opinion on political and social issues is considered of no greater importance than that of the peasant's.

In Western Europe, the so-called separation between Church and State would be hailed as a success, but in Greece even the existence of such a question would appear silly. Therefore, our clergy have nothing to do with the clergy in the West and it would be an aberration to attack them. The people would consider you their enemy and they would rather not join in your endeavour. Because in the priest they have always found a companion. So, we must expect help from the lower clergy and consider them as our allies.

The superior hierarchy is mostly corrupt, Byzantine rather than Greek. Their debaucheries have already been exposed in public and they have consequently fell in the people's esteem. That is the reason why, added to the fact they are extremely few of them, there is no need to pay attention to them as they can do us no harm. The people grasp very well the financial problem and are aware of the ways to conceive it. They are saying: What have we earned since we gained our national independence? We all fought and burned down our huts, during the revolution of '21 to free ourselves; but who profited from it all? The rich. The people, who used to be poor and slaves, saw no improvement in their lot. 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 the capital.

When one discusses with a man of the people about his present situation, about revolution, about social and financial reforms, he marvels at the brightness and the readiness of spirit of his interlocutor and believes himself to be in the presence of an experienced revolutionary. If you ask him for his opinion, he will reply: "What you are saying is right; but today there are no people capable of carrying out social reforms. On my own I can accomplish nothing. I have no bread to feed my children tomorrow morning. There is no other way in order to eliminate this capitalist riff raff but to raise the whole people in social revolution".

If you talk to him about social reforms, he will assume some sort of back thought from your part, some treachery, because all the so called liberals have deceived him, and he will reply to you thus: "We do not believe your words more than those of the others, because they have always deceived us and we have learned this by now. Have you anything else to tell me? Can you by any chance get me a job?"

Judging by such answers, it is evident that the Greek people are well disposed towards the ideas of socialism. Such a people deserved a better fate; but the rule of the rich and the Byzantine corruption, the inescapable conclusion of historical events, have stood on his way to progress.

Socialist propaganda must be organised in Greece, in accordance with the findings of this here study."

THE PUBLICATION OF THE NEWSPAPER "HELLENIC DEMOCRACY"

The publication of a newspaper had been decided and announced. It finally came out at the beginning of May of 1877 under the title *Elliniki Dimokratia* (Hellenic Democracy), Newspaper of the Democratic Club of Patras and with the frontispiece "Revolution is the Law of Progress". Alexandros Evmorfopoulos was designated responsible for the printing.

On the front page of the newspaper, the article "A kind of a programme" informed the readers that:

"Every newspaper customarily exposes, for the sake of those it addresses to, its program, i.e. what its aims are. But for this newspaper, such an endeavour is needless. Because, since it is the organ of the Democratic Club of Patras, the Charter and the Programme of the Club are identical to the programme and the principles of our newspaper. We will march straight on. We will tell the People what they should do in order to liberate themselves of every evil. We will fearlessly uncover all machinations employed in order to flay us. We will tell the truth without fearing the government. Whether it puts us in jail, or leaves us alone, we don't care. As for the other journalists, to those who will insult us we will give no reply; to those, on the other hand, who will sincerely attempt to discuss with us whatever social or political issue, we will reply with the proper politeness and decency. Hellenic Democracy is open to all the People. Whoever so intends, may write his ideas or his pain, provided they are written in common language and do not oppose the principles of the Democratic Club, on which we will ponder in our newspaper. If some employee, anywhere, is afraid to speak the

truth, we promise him to keep his name secret under all circumstances, so let him write without fear..."

In fact, the newspaper was published as the organ of the Patran Club and not as the organ of the Federation. It is remarkable that all the articles were written in "...simple language...", in the language spoken and understood by everybody. This position of theirs as regards the language problem⁽¹⁵⁾ at a time when Psicharis⁽¹⁶⁾ and the demoticist movement had not yet made their appearance, places them at the forefront of the demoticists. It is possible that they had read N. Konememos' study on the language problem (1873) or perhaps some of them, might have come in contact with him, through the cycle of P.Panas. Konememos had been living in Patras since 1869 serving as the Consul of Turkey, though this capacity of his must have excluded the possibility of open contacts and public meetings.

Then, the paper published the Charter of the Federation, entitled "Charter of the Democratic League of the People"

"CONVINCED

that poverty and ignorance are the people's biggest plights

that out of those two evils stem every social misery

that, therefore, our liberation from poverty and ignorance must be the highest cause for everybody who wishes to sincerely work for the benefit of our Homeland.

That this liberation is of interest to us all;

because it aims to bring about general equality as regards the rights and the duties of all, and shall certainly result in the liberation of our enslaved brethren.

That in order for the suffering people to be liberated, they must themselves rise up and seek their liberation and the first to contribute are those who are conscious of their duty

BELIEVING

That the liberation depends, in great part, on the political emancipation of the People
And based upon our History and on the belief that every Human Being was created free and master of his destiny

WE ARE ESTABLISHING

The Democratic League of the People

In order to seek with all our strength the application of the Democratic Regime under the following conditions:

A. Total decentralisation and perfect self-administration of the Municipalities, i.e. every Municipality to be totally independent and self ruled

B. Total freedom of the human being

C. Every authority to be submitted directly to the rule of the people

The Democratic League of the People

Considers its enemies all those who endeavour to conserve the existing order

Recognises as its Law only Truth, Justice and Morality

And accepts as its members every union or individual who may accept this here Charter.

The charter of the organisation looks like a political manifesto, accessible to all. Social revolution is the saving solution for all the evils that stem out of poverty and ignorance. All must assist through their struggle towards total freedom of the individual.

The State shall be replaced by the free unions of decentralised and self administrated Municipalities. Direct democracy is the path of decisions. Whoever supports the state is an enemy.

Then followed an analysis of the charter, which covered approximately four pages. In turn this was followed by an article on the Paris Commune by the communard Arnold, a text on the Eastern Question and the news of the Benevento insurrection translated from the Italian anarchist periodical *Plebe* of Milan, citing Carlo Cafiero as the ringleader of the insurrection, noting his acquaintance with Marx and Bakunin.

Yannis Kordatos has salvaged an excerpt of the Italian report:

The *Koinonistai*, it is written, have been fighting for a week now in the villages near Naples. At Letino, a small municipality in the Benevento Province, they burned down the Municipal building and distributed items of need to the peasants, then formed a provisional government. At Gallo, another small municipality, they seized the funds, burned down the tax registers and distributed the money to the People. The crowd was pleased with the ways of the revolutionaries, that is, waging open war against the current order of affairs”

Indeed, in April 1877, Cafiero, Malatesta, Ceccarelli and Stepniak, along with 30 comrades invaded the Benevento Province. During their retreat from Gallo, governmental troops arrested Cafiero and his companions. Cafiero spent a year in jail awaiting trial; eventually in August 1878, he was acquitted of all charges. Cafiero wrote some of his most important books in jail, for instance his book “The Power of Capital”, published later on by the People’s Editions of Milan. He moved to Marseille in 1878, where he worked as a cook. In October of the same year, he and Malatesta were arrested and deported to France. He went to Switzerland where he met Kropotkin.

Of interest is the text of the Patran anarchists on the Eastern Question, i.e. the emerging Balkan reality created by the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the national awakening of the (Balkan) peoples. Deeply internationalist, it denounced the class origin of nationalism, which in the Greek territory took the form of the *Megali Idea* ⁽¹⁷⁾. It deemed that the irredentist preaching of every political authority aimed to lead the people astray from their problems, namely poverty and ignorance, and thus defend the interest of the bourgeois class, the rich. Some marxist historians have accused them for these points of view. That is, that their petit bourgeois anarchism prevented them from grasping 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.

“We believe that it is our duty under the present circumstances to let you know of our opinion on the Eastern Question. Or better still, to tell you where our interest lies in this Question, as well as under any similar circumstances. We will tell you a few good words, true and irrefutable and let everybody decide what it is there for him to do.

The Eastern Question as well as any other nationality question, has served the diplomacy and the rich as a goad and as a game of cards depending on the circumstance. When we have peace, as they call it, they entertain themselves at the expense of the people over these issues, like a game of cards in the café. When the interests of the rich call for war, they goad us on, just like the farmer goad his ox, with a view of getting ourselves killed and kill as many as possible for their own advantage.

This is a well-proven fact and all it takes is just a glance at today’s war ⁽¹⁸⁾ to persuade each and everyone about the veracity of our words. Leaving aside the fact that if we examine the affairs of our land, they speak for themselves about this truth.

The Czar and his minions declared that they want to liberate their fellow Slavs from the Turkish yoke. But this is a lie, because if they truly loved freedom they would have first liberated those millions of Russians who are slaves in their own homeland, and then care for the freedom of the others. In order for you to comprehend what they mean by freedom, they who have it on their lips every day, suffice to learn that in Russia whoever dares speak against the aristocracy and the rich, is sent to Siberia and there he’s buried alive, without any hope, but the hope of his own death. Imagine this: Death being the only release; you can now figure out what kind of life is in store for them. Many thousand young people out of the finest blood of the Russian youth rot in the quarries and the graves of Siberia, just because they dared cry “Long Live Freedom”. And following all that, the Czar is hailed in Europe as a liberator.

The European governments and the rich of Europe understand all this, because they themselves speak the same language and treat their own peoples the same way. But it goes without saying that it serves them not to reveal anything. However, they are getting themselves ready for any eventuality. What do they care? Are they going to get killed themselves? It’s the poor who’ll bear the brunt.

The pashas on the other hand shout that the Qu’ran and Mohammed are in danger. And the Turks, fanatic, ignorant and stupid, blind to the fact that for the pashas the pouch is both Qu’ran and Mohammed, they march onwards and then you have what have you. But let us not talk about Russia and Turkey, let’s talk about our own land and our own affairs, just as they lay in front of our eyes and we see them clearly every day. But in order for us to grasp where our interests lie in the Eastern Question, we must first stop our ears to those words, that they are using to deceive us. We must stop our ears, when they’re speaking about ethnicity, sacrifice, self-denial and other similar lies, because those people who pronounce them don’t believe a word of them, they are charlatans. The biggest proof lies in 1821, ⁽¹⁴⁾ when they fought for their own interests at our own 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. Another proof is 1854, Crete and Howarth. ⁽¹⁹⁾

During those times, when the people spilled its blood, they sat home, others in Europe, quietly nibbling our bones and earning 20% interest on their loans. Still, they shouted loyalty and homeland...

We must understand that those who are calling for the liberation of our brethren, do not seek but to enslave them. They do not seek but to eat out of our exertion and our sweat and to keep us in misery. They can afford to eat all they want, they can afford to send their children to school and thus they do not care about our children, which, we, deprived of the means to feed them and dress them, put to work from their 7th year of age and thus watch them squander their youth toiling from dawn till dusk.

What do the rich care about the People and those who toil? Interest is being paid and the workingmen toil for them. The peasants sow for them. The herdsmen produce butter and meat for them....That is the sole, bare and naked truth. And these men have to audacity to claim to be patriots. It has been a short while now that, in order to blind us,

they have ordered the construction of two military camps, they have bought a few hundred guns and a machine to make cartridges, they have sent *Paralos*⁽²⁰⁾ to Istanbul and now they lay awaiting at the Parliament to see what other bravery they are going to do.

But if, as the saying goes, push comes to shove, they will tell us: either you all perish or we conquer Istanbul. And while we will be marching to the border, they will be heading for Europe, while the bravest among them will sit at home earning interest on their money and the rest will stay in Athens to govern the State vessel. But they will contribute 50 drachmas each for the national fleet so that some rag tag history will put them down as benefactors of the Nation.

Let us, once and for all then learn that the Turks are not to be found just in Epirus⁽²¹⁾ and in Thessaly⁽²²⁾, but also inside our own home. 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 choose. With this in mind, we have founded the Democratic League of the People, and whoever so wishes let him come and work along with us, if he desires to resolve the Eastern Question in the favour of the People.”

STATE REPRESSION

State repression against socialist ideas, which as we have seen in the Greek territory were mainly in the internationalist – anarchist vein, started during the Othonian regime. The arrests, the confiscation of newspapers, the deportations to islands of many liberal and radical journalists and intellectuals, who beyond their criticism to royalty, propagated libertarian views, became a favourite and common State practice. This was dictated by the agreements struck between the European secret services, a fact confirmed by recent research in the diplomatic archives of the era. Those tactics were in line with the respective practices throughout Europe, initially against all socialist factions and the International and subsequently against all those who defended the Paris Commune. Those persecutions, in France in 1871, in Italy in 1873, in Spain in 1874, hampered the functioning of the various sections of the International as well as of anarchist organisations. Already from the beginning of 1870, European governments had formulated a plan of criminalisation of every internationalist activity.

“...It appears that domestic legislation alone is not sufficient to repress the evil that is nowadays spreading throughout Europe and they are considering the need of curbing it internationally...” (excerpt from a letter of 1872 by the Greek ambassador in Paris addressed to the Prime Minister D. Voulgaris, published by M. Demetriou)

It is in that context that we have to study the rapid repression of the Patran anarchists, which followed the publication of the Hellenic Democracy.

The existence of the Democratic League was widely known during March and April of 1877 and to this P. Panas and his cycle must have contributed greatly. The bourgeois newspapers of the time, depending on the information they possessed, considered the organisation non-existent, childish, adventurer or outright dangerous. The *Forologoumenos*, the newspaper of the Patran merchant class, labeled them bought off organs of anti Hellenic motives...” and called for the intervention of the Public Prosecutor. The orders of the financial oligarchy to their political partners were clear. The circulation of the newspaper was just the occasion. Using extraordinarily rapid

procedures, the Public Prosecutor of Patras commenced criminal investigations and preferred public prosecutions against all members of the Democratic Club. Very soon, as evidenced from a relevant letter of theirs, four (six according to Kordatos) members of the organisation were arrested and imprisoned. From prison, they sent a letter to their comrades of the anarchist federation of Jura. On June 10, 1877, the Bulletin of Jura published the following:

Greece enters in its turn into the accord of civilized nations, whose governments sleeplessly strive through active measures of pressure, towards the maintenance of “social order”.

In confirmation, we have received the following letter:

Prison of Patras, 15/27 May 1877

At the time of writing this here pamphlet, the following:

Dionysis Ambelicopoulos

Costantinos Bobotis

Alexandros Evmorfopoulos

Costantinos Grimanis

We are in prison due to publication of the first issue of the newspaper Hellenic Democracy, a copy of which you shall shortly receive.

Greetings and Solidarity

Constantinos Grimanis

Further below in the article, signed by J. Guillaume, additional information is passed on to the readers:

We have recently received the first issue of Hellenic Republic. This issue features the program of the “Democratic League of the People” that we have already reprinted, as well as explanatory elaborations, a call by the Democratic League to the Greek people over the Eastern Question, local news, an article pertaining to the Paris Commune and a brief report, which was first published last April, referring to the insurrection attempt undertaken by Cafiero and his friends.

The Greek government saw in this publication a menace to “social order” and imprisoned the editors of Hellenic Democracy. Thus, miraculously, it has thrown them, willy-nilly, onto the revolutionary path. From our part, we are forwarding the expression of our warmest sympathy to those courageous men who have first raised the banner of modern socialism.

James Guillaume.

As noted by M. Demetriou, “...the main points of the indictment, as published in the newspapers of the time, were as follows:

They stand accused

- a) Of conspiring, convening in secret in a private dwelling at fixed hours, with the intention of overthrowing the currently established regime through violent means, and to remove from His throne, our ruler George the 1st ⁽²³⁾, with a view of establishing democracy in Greece.
- b) Of attempting, by composing a club, convening as above and coming into contact with persons unknown, to stir civil war, through the application and execution of

koinonistikai or socialist reforms, calling the people to revolt against the established Laws and to the plunder of the property of the well off by the penurious classes.

c) Of offending HM the King George through the publication and circulation, herein as well as elsewhere in the Kingdom, of the paper Hellenic Democracy issue 1, opening with "Revolution is the Law of Progress" and closing with "Thus act the *koinonistai*".

All conservative newspapers hailed the arrests of the anarchists. The *Mohlos* exulted "We have been totally vindicated". The *Forologoumenos*, just a few days after the arrests wrote, "...our society feeds in its bosom poisonous snakes which conspire against lawful order...". The republican newspapers kept silent, choosing not to mention a word. The cycle of libertarians of Athens, along with Panagiotis Panas and Rokkos Hoidas, the Heptanesian member of the Greek Parliament, who had openly declared himself a "*koinonistis*" were left as the sole defenders.

Those arrested did not renounce their beliefs but they refused to reveal to the investigating authorities anything related to the Club or the Federation. They justified their stance by their commitment to secrecy by oath, a practice that reminds the bakuninist organisations of the era. Following persistent agitation by R. Hoidas they were released and later on acquitted from all charges. In a speech he gave, Hoidas castigated the arrests undertaken by the Public Prosecution Office of Patras and defended those arrested based on their constitutional right of freedom of thought and expression.

On August 27, 1877 the Bulletin of the Jura Federation published the following:

".... A letter from Patras, sent by one of our friends, provides us with a few details on the socialist movement in Greece, as well as a translation of the article that led to the imprisonment of the editors of Hellenic Democracy. This article, which we cannot reproduce in full, was written according to the international socialist revolutionary view. After proving that the questions of the East (as well as all ethnicity questions) are but one of the means used by the bourgeoisie to exploit the people, the editors conclude the article thus:

"We must therefore learn once and for all 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. That is, all those who wish to work for the benefit of the proletariat should join us."

As we have already written in a previous issue, the editors of the Hellenic Democracy were released only temporarily while remaining under strict surveillance. The government indicted them once again. The letter from Patras, an excerpt of which we are publishing, commented:

"We are convinced that the solution of the social question is not possible without social revolution, and those who think otherwise are mistaken. Revolution is not just a means, it is a principle that should be stated: No matter the cost, we must realise our ideals. That is why we condone the Benevento events, not as a circumspect act, but as a necessary act. Circumspection, as perceived by our enemies, is worthless under those

circumstances, the people must engage in concrete practice before arriving to revolution".

Local chapters of the Democratic League of the People are being founded in Athens, Syros, Messini, Aegio, Filiatra, Cephalonia. Let us hope that it won't be long before Greece becomes one of the local sections of the International."

EPILOGUE

These are the last facts available on the Patran anarchists of the federation of the "Democratic League of the People". Information on the latest activities of the organisation is vague. The wave of repression unleashed against them by the Greek State as well as the pressure applied on them by their social and familial milieu, led some of them to back away from action. The remaining members of the organisation had to move conspiratorially, retaining until the beginning of 1880 their contacts with antiauthoritarian organisations abroad. But these contacts were also gradually severed due to the decline of the International's sections. The continuing supra State repression, product of the pan European agreement of the early 1870's, led the local federations to a prolonged clandestinity that weakened communication between them.

The presence of the Patran anarchists as well as of their other comrades, about whom very little is known to the present day, marked through the libertarian character of their ideas and their actions, the emergence of socialism in the Greek territory. Their ideas were not forgotten. They created a revolutionary tradition, which in the coming decades would nurture organisations which would defend with unrivaled courage anarchist socialism

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NOTES

- 1 Area in the center of Athens, in the proximity of the royal palace.
- 2 King Otho (1815-1867): Bavarian prince who became the first king of independent Greece in 1833. He was ejected in 1862.
- 3 Heptanesos: The seven Ionian islands (Corfu, Cephalonia, Zante, Lefkada etc)
- 4 Yannis Kordatos (1891-1961): Historian and politician, he was among the founders of the Communist Party of Greece and acted as its Secretary General from 1920 to 1924, before being expelled.
- 5 Achaea: The north-western part of the Peloponesos peninsula.
- 6 Costis Moskov (1939-1998): Greek leftwing historian.
- 7 Ardin: One of the best known pioneering Greek socialist newspapers, published in 1885 by Platon Frangoulis in Athens.
- 8 Cyclades: Archipelago in the Aegean sea.
- 9 Peloponnesos: Peninsula in southern Greece.
- 10 Achaean League: Federation of various cities and regions of Peloponnesos, that flourished during the Hellenistic years and was dissolved by the Romans.

- 11 Peloponnisian War: War fought between Athens and Sparta, that lasted from 431 to 404 BC and ended with the capitulation of Athens. It marked the end of Classical Age.
- 12 Which of course it hadn't, women were allowed to vote in 1948.
- 13 Thucydides (470 – 400 BC): An Athenian aristocrat, general and the leading historian of the Classical Age, He wrote the History of the Peloponnisian War.
- 14 Kleftes: Klephts, bands of Greek brigands active in the 18th and early 19th centuries, similar to the Slav hajduks or the Muslim çetes. They provided the backbone of the first rebel groups during the Greek war of independence, thus acquiring national iconic status.
- 15 The Language Problem: The conflict between everyday spoken Greek (demotic) and katharevousa, the official State language of written and oral speech. The conflict started with the creation of the Kingdom of Greece in 1830 and raged on until the fall of the military regime in 1974.
- 16 Yannis Psicharis: The leader of the demoticist movement, he caused an earthquake when in 1888 he published his book "My Journey", which is considered the starting point of the demotic literary prose.
- 17 Megali Idea: Literally, the Great Idea (of a revived Byzantine empire and the recovery of Constantinople / Istanbul for Christianity), it served as the vehicle of Greek nationalism in its expansionist years, from 1830 until 1922.
- 18 The Russo-Turkish war of 1877, caused by events in Bosnia-Hercegovina.
- 19 1854 refers to the failed insurrection of Greeks in Thessaly, Epirus and Macedonia against the Turks which broke out in 1853-54 during the Crimean War.
- Crete was a major bone of contention between Greece and the Ottoman Empire throughout the 19th century.
- Howarth is admiral Augustus Carl Howarth (or Howarth Pasha), 3rd son of the 3rd Count of Buckinghamshire who for decades rented his services to the Ottoman Empire, rising to the post of Chief Admiral of the Ottoman fleet. In 1877, acting as the commander of the Ottoman fleet, he contributed to the suppression of the anti Turk insurrection in Thessaly.
- 20 Paralos: Ceremonial ship of the ancient Athenians, it used to escort the Athenian fleet during its campaigns.
- 21 Epirus: Region in the North Western part of Greece, wrestled away from the Ottoman Empire after the 1st Balkan War of 1912.
- 22 Thessaly: Region in Central Greece, incorporated in the Kingdom of Greece in 1881.
- 23 King George the 1st (1845-1913): Prince Wilhelm I, son of King Christian IX of Denmark; he became King of Greece in 1863, following the ejection of Otho. He was murdered in Salonica in 1913.

Social Radicalism in Greece

Reformists – Utopians – Anarchists

(end of the 19th – begining of the 20th century)

Social radicalism, which grew in Europe during the 19th century, marking future history with movements, revolts and revolutions, had an important influence in Greece. According to M. Demetriou: "...The ideas of social radicalism were introduced in Greece from Europe, with its ideological radiance and revolutionary traditions, in the 1870's. In Europe, that period was marked by the 70 days of popular revolutionary power of the Paris Commune (1871)... At the same time, important social processes and changes, hitherto unbeknown to Greek society, took place. Socialist groups and labour unions were created... debates over socialism emerged and the first references to Karl Marx as the leader of the First International were made..."

In Europe, 19th century was marked by the rise and eventual dominance of the bourgeoisie; the rapid development of the productive forces; the development of the countryside; the big urban centers; the development of the proletariat and the emergence of socialist ideas. On the political level, absolutism fell and bourgeois democracy or constitutional monarchy were established. Of course, the victory of the bourgeois class had not been easy, but only came about as the result of hard fought struggles. In 1848 Europe was shaken by bourgeois democratic movements, social struggles and workers' revolts. The supremacy of the bourgeoisie was consolidated, but at the same time the social radicalism of the working class and its allies was affirmed.

Subsequently the bourgeois liberal regimes further entrenched their power, and the working class increased in numbers. However, its revolutionary ardour was dampened, as a result of the improvement of living conditions. Skilled workers found themselves in an advantageous position and among them sprung a syndicalist bureaucracy as well as social democratic tendencies and views. Still, the labour movement organized, assertive and imbued with class and internationalistic consciousness increasingly acted in solidarity with the national aspirations of the workers of other countries. The conjunction of class and internationalist consciousness, led the labour movement to various forms of international solidarity which culminated in the formation of the 1st International, whose fast demise was brought about by violent internal strife. In the following years capitalism further developed, while noteworthy events were the Paris Commune, the foundation of the Second International and the growth of anarchosyndicalism.

Contrarily to what went on in Europe, economic development in Greece proceeded at a very slow pace. In the second half of the 19th century, Greece witnessed a massive influx of the population into the big urban centers. This led to the hypertrophy of the services sector and the petit bourgeois strata, but it was not followed by a respective industrial growth: There were very few artisans and workers and too many professional small traders and brokers. In the countryside, there were small land owners, oppressed by the international division of agricultural production (single crop monoculture of raisin), as well as propertyless peasants brutally exploited by large estate owners, as was

the case in Thessaly. However, the exodus of the rural population did not lead to widespread proletarianisation, but remained motivated by petit bourgeois aspirations of employment in the small trade and in the services. Consequently, Greece lacked the clear cut class contrasts, which developed concurrently in Western Europe. However, the antagonisms between exploiters and exploited, intensified by periodic crises resulted in the deterioration of the condition of the lower strata.

During that period, and more precisely from 1870 onwards, socialist theories appeared in Greece, and as stated above, socialist groups and labour unions were created. Strikes seeking shorter working hours and better wages broke out. Several turned to armed clashes with the forces of the state and on many occasions they ended victorious. According to Kordatos' "History of the Labour Movement": ".....Heeding to their class instinct, the workers undertook strike actions, which often brought success to the nascent labour movement". Such were the cases of the tobacco workers' strike in Volos on 23/2/1901, the steamship sailors' strike in Piraeus in 1910, the tobacco workers' strike in Piraeus, the rail workers' strike in Piraeus in 1910, the big strike in Lavrio in 1910, the tram drivers' strike of January 1911 etc. These strikes were characterized by violent clashes with the forces of state and in some cases from machinery breaking and destruction of workplace installations. In the same period, peasant movements emerged and armed revolts broke out, especially in Thessaly (the Kileler uprising) and in the Peloponnesos. Socialist theories met with favourable response from workers and peasants.

Socialist theories and organizations varied. Accordingly, their methods and activities varied as well. Some were reformist, usually mere groups of intellectuals who did nothing but discuss between themselves about the abolition of poverty and injustice. Their activity was not subversive; they declared that by peaceful means the people should seek the improvement of its condition. Most important among them were the "visionary leaders", and their main representatives, Platon Drakoulis and Stavros Kalergis.

Platon Drakoulis published the magazine "*Ardin*", through which he propagated socialism, arguing for its superiority in respect to the other social systems. His actions were not subversive and he was characterized by his propaganda in favour of the historical necessity of a socialist paradise of social harmony. "...A radical theorist and not an activist, he didn't elaborate on the dynamics of social antagonisms, he did not set objectives. He borrowed freely from various sources, from the gospels and Kropotkin, from Chartism and Plato's Polity, in order to demonstrate the moral superiority of his vision -its historical necessity" wrote about him Michalis Demetriou. On 14-9-1885, Drakoulis wrote in *Ardin*: "It must be made clear that our aim is not subversive, as some fear and as many imagine. We seek a gradual and not a violent change in the state of things. We are enemies of unruliness, of paralysis, of subversions. On the other hand we are enemies of injustice and tyranny. Everybody says that the existing social order is bad and anomalous. That 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 man and the next is not eradicated."

Another personality among the reformist socialists, a leader as well, was Stavros Kalergis. Kalergis, the founder of a socialist club in Athens, published the newspaper

"Socialists". In 1891 he published "The worker's enrolment", in which he stated the necessary means for the establishment of the socialist polity, which we cite herebelow: "1) Creating clubs, aiming at the promotion and support of socialist ideas in various cities, townships and villages or neighborhoods 2) Publishing books, periodicals and newspapers with the same aim 3) Organising excursions to the countryside 4) Setting up halls aiming at the development of socialist ideals as well as socialist libraries 5) Supporting parliamentary delegates and mayors from the people, so that eventually the socialists shall gain the majority in parliament thus bringing the social question to its resolution 6) Organising of peaceful demonstrations and submitting memoranda to the parliament 7) Calling strikes aiming at the satisfaction of the demands of injured workers.

However, apart from the reformists, there were other socialists whose discourse and action was endowed with a subversive character. Their objectives were the abolition of private property, of the state and of every authority. It is the case of libertarian socialists or anarchists. In Athens and Piraeus their actions mainly revolved around syndicalism, while elsewhere (particularly in the Peloponnesos) they participated in peasant movements, revolts, armed demonstrations which ended in bloody clashes with the forces of the state. Moreover, there were anarchists, who followed the path of individual terrorism. Finally, there were Christian anarchists, who preached about the approaching end of times. As stated by M. Demetriou: "...These were not marginal phenomena, but ones that had a wider importance. They often represented the outlet of sociopolitical currents of the era, which remained impulsive and lacked guidance". Anarchist ideas became known in Greece either from Greeks who had spent time abroad and had espoused revolutionary ideas, or by Italian anarchist refugees, many of whom became active in Greece, especially in the Peloponnesos. From 1870 onwards, the ideas of Bakunin, of Reclus, of Cafiero, of Kropotkin, of Emile Henry became familiar among many Greeks. As stated above, the Greek anarchists represented four tendencies: anarchosyndicalism, peasant anarchism, individual terrorism, and Christian anarchism. Therefore we deem it necessary to deal with each tendency separately and thus refer to the individuals and the groups that were active at the time:

1) ANARCHOSYNDICALISM.

In the end of the 19th century and in the first decades of the 20th, anarchosyndicalism exploded in several countries of Western Europe, Latin America and the United States. The defeat of its pinnacle, the Spanish Revolution, signaled its subsequent decline. Its main features were the belief in the merit of union struggles and the spontaneous proletarian revolution; the post revolutionary syndicalist structuring of society; atheism; decentralization; organizational autonomy; the objective of society run by unions, workers councils. In the past the majority of anarchists espoused anarchosyndicalism.

In Greece, anarchosyndicalism did not take roots. However, its contribution in the first major strike actions and in the creation of the first working unions was very significant. It should be noted that at the time, there were few industrial centers and the numbers of permanently employed industrial workers were limited to a few thousands. Still, those few industrial centers repeatedly became the battlefields of social clashes. The most important were Lavrio, Hermoupolis and Piraeus. The living standards of the

workers were particularly low. The working day lasted 9-12 hours and even 15 hours, while the wages ranged from 75 to 240 golden drachma, which dropped by 30-40% in provincial cities. Anarchosyndicalism first manifested itself in Syros, in the wake of the monetary crisis triggered by the devaluation of the Russian rouble, which at the time was used for the payment of wages. In February 1879 strikes with protectionist demands were called in the tanneries and the shipping yards. The magistrate of Syros labeled this first strike activity as "the initial manifestation in Greece of the clash between labour and capital". Owing to the scab activity of both the employers and the prefecture, the strike in the tanneries was accompanied by violent clashes with the militia, which left one policeman dead and many workers injured. Anarchosyndicalist ideas were propagated by Italian and French workers. The revolutionary traditions of their home countries and their political awareness made them suitable to act as catalysts. During the strike they created a "Workers' League". Three years later the organization of anarchist workers of Syros issued the "People's Gazette", which lasted briefly, from July to November of 1880.

Other important anarchosyndicalist organizations were the "Cosmos" League, constituted mainly by former Kalergite youths as well as the League of Anarchist Workers of Athens. The Anarchist League "Cosmos" spoke about the abolition of competition between human beings, the abolition of capital and the passing of private property and of all resources under common ownership. The culmination of its activity was the big strike in the Lavrio mines (a milestone in the history of the Greek Labour Movement). The strike, which sought higher wages, measures of social welfare, the establishment of Sunday as a day of rest as well as the implementation of security measures to curb the number of accidents in the mines lasted for 20 days and acquired an insurrectionary outlook. It was accompanied by damages to buildings, explosions, clashes, beatings of representatives of the bosses and it was bloodily suppressed by the army and the police.

As for the League of Anarchist Workers of Athens, we do not know the date of its creation. We are aware of the views of its members from a memorandum they sent to the International Congress of Paris in 1900. Here follow two brief excerpts:

"...The Anarchist Worker's League of Athens rejects any form of parliamentary and legal action, and acknowledges as the only route of subversion, that of direct and antiparliamentary action

Deeming that any representation and legislation is nothing but the negation of the absolute freedom of the individual,

Deeming moreover, that authority corrupts even the best among men,

We conclude that we have nothing to look forward to either from parliamentary socialist democracy or from the parliamentary delegates of the revolutionary groups...."

"The League of Anarchist Workers of Athens does not acknowledge within its ranks any form of Administration or Commission, anything that could be construed as a government, as authority".

This was the last manifestation of anarchosyndicalism in Greece and after 1910 it petered away.

2) PEASANT ANARCHISM

In the last decade of the 19th century anarchist ideas met with favourable response in various rural regions of Greece, especially in the Peloponnesos and in Thessaly. Their propagation in rural centers was followed by spontaneous peasant mobilization, which in certain cases had an insurrectionary outlook. 1896 was a landmark year, as in Achaia and in Ilia, numerous acts of defiance against the laws of the state broke out and many violent attacks against authority took place. In 1895, 1896, 1898 as well as in the period 1903 - 1905, armed demonstrations of farmer workers were very common. Peasants took over villages or junctions, thus forcibly preventing the tax collectors and the armed forces of the state from entering the villages. On several occasions, bloody clashes broke out, which caused death or injury to many gendarmes. The situation in the countryside of the Peloponnesos during that period can be summed up thus: There were no big estates, while landless peasants were employed for a few months a year in the cultivation and the harvest. Small land owners, dependent on the international division of agricultural production (single crop farming of raisin), had fallen under the yoke of the big export houses and the usurers. On the other they were oppressed by the state through unbearable taxes. The state, ever so exigent, sent its tax collectors, bailiffs and gendarmes to the villages. The peasant, witnessing in the one hand his income dwindle away and on the other the agents of the state invade his home to impose fines or to arrest him for debts, rose against the state. There lies the reason behind the radicalization and the dynamism of the peasant movement. K. Vergopoulos, in his book "The Agrarian Issue in Greece. Social integration of agriculture" states that the agrarian issue had not so much to do with the question of land but resulted from social and impersonal conditions. Referring to the socialist groups of the Peloponnesos he wrote: "Similarly, the libertarian socialist groups of the Peloponnesos did not target the rich farmers, but almost exclusively the raisin merchants, the usurers and the anti-peasant state policies. The peasant uprising of Pyrgos in 1898 channeled its violence against the whole system, represented locally by the state tax collectors". Elsewhere in his book Vergopoulos states: "In brief, it became increasingly obvious that the radical dynamism of the peasants could be expressed directly in an anti-bourgeois and anti state direction, without having previously undergone an anti employer phase".

It can be unreservedly said that the peasant mobilization, which took place in the 1890's, was anything but the jerky reaction of the down trodden, as argued by Marxist historians. On the contrary, it seems that the peasants were clearly conscious of their class enemies. Which explains the favourable response to anarchosocialist ideas in the Peloponnesos.

Anarchist ideas first spread in Patras by Italian anarchist refugees. At the time, 15% of the population of the city were members of the Italian colony, within the ranks of which various radical ideas clashed. In the 1870s, anarchosocialists founded the Democratic Club of Patras. The Club maintained very good relations with the anarchists of Bologna and Milan and it addressed the Conference of the Bakunist IWMA, held in Berne on the 26th October of 1876. In December of the same year it adhered to the resolutions of the International. In May 1877 it published the newspaper "Hellenic Democracy". From its very first issue, "Greek Democracy" was persecuted, accused of conspiring to overthrow the existing order, of inciting rebellion and plunder as well as offending the King. In the

Charter of the Democratic Club of Patras they stated that they strove for the establishment of the Democratic Regime under the following conditions:

A. Total decentralisation and perfect self-administration of the Municipalities, i.e. every Municipality to be totally independent and self ruled

B. Total freedom of the human being

C. Every authority to be submitted directly to the rule of the people

The Democratic Club of Patras had a brief existence. However, from then on, anarchist activity never ceased in Patras.

In 1896, a group of anarchosocialists took over the newspaper "Epi ta Proso" and turned it into an anarchosocialist organ. The main contributors of the newspaper were the printer Ioannis Manganaras, the poet Panagiotis Tsekouras, the lawyer Vasilios Kalliontzis and others. The newspaper attacked the merchant class, described the misery of the popular strata and criticized politicians. It propagated the ideas of European Anarchists (Kropotkin, Reclus, Malatesta Ravachol etc). When important events occurred (e.g. the Lavrio strike) it put out small extraordinary editions. Moreover, the group translated and published in pamphlet theoretical texts, which constituted the small sociological series of the newspaper. However, the group did not restrict its activities to the publishing of the newspaper and the pamphlets. Manganaras and Karabilas organized lectures and public debates in Patras and the surrounding villages to propagate their ideas. When the raisin crisis broke out, causing many raisin workers to lose their employment and leading to the foreclosure of many small farms, successive marches and armed demonstrations broke out, while black flags of protest were unfurled. The newspaper "Epi ta Proso" spotlighted the mobilization, explaining the situation to the weak of heart and rousing the bold to action, while its members took active part in the demonstrations. Manganaras found himself leading the big demonstration organized by the peasants of Achaia and Ilia. His public speech calling for direct action, led to his arrest and condemnation by a Criminal Court, while the police prosecuted the newspaper on numerous occasions during the big strike of raisin workers and small farmers.

In order to demonstrate the views of the group we are citing some excerpts from Epi Ta Proso:

"...Yes, our ideas are high and noble. We have already said so and we will keep repeating it, because we want man to become what he is destined to be on earth. We want him to be totally free. Free and not a slave. Free in his will. Free in his thought. Free in respect to his peers. Free in learning. Free in love. Free from prejudice. Free from every vice, passion, habit and malice; free from plunder, theft, cruelty, lie, envy, brutality, hatred etc We want him free from and not slave to money. We want him equal with all his peers. We want him equal when facing the strong. We want women to be equal to men. That is how we want man and that is what we are striving for."

"...By saying Anarchy we mean, that humankind following the natural law of the endless march towards perfection, will develop up to that point of Progress, whereby all human beings on Earth, liberated from biological needs, free from prejudice and cognizant that natural freedom is voluntary solidarity between social beings, will not need personal authority or power in order to desist from evil.."

Next to the Patras anarchists, there were the anarchists of Pyrgos, who published the newspaper "Neo Fos" in 1899. In the 1890s the Pyrgos anarchists participated in the

peasant revolts, distributed leaflets, and organized public debates in the villages. The Pyrgos anarchists, who according to M. Demetriou were "supporters of direct revolution to overthrow the established order" did not believe in reformist struggle. They adhered to the view that the workers were not interested in alternations between bourgeois regimes, lest of all in attempts at modernization within the frame of the established political system. They rejected the so called political struggle aiming at choosing between parties or regimes, such as monarchy and parliamentary democracy. Still, they published at the "Neo Fos", some letters by readers under pseudonym, who were opposed to such views and who supported that the workers and the peasants should be interested in a better political selection than the existing one. In the elections of 7-2-1899, Neo Phos wrote: "No, we do not vote. Parliament is not for us. Neither are the laws, nor the gendarmerie, nothing that is part of the established tyrannical regime; they belong to those who steal,.... who oppress, who poison us daily". The main watchwords of Neo Phos were Liberty, Solidarity. We are citing a few excerpts from texts edited by P. Noutsos:

"ASSOCIATIONS WITH MUTUAL AID, FREEDOM AND HAPPINESS"

When the peasant and the worker hears about socialism, he feels that he will be working as a brother with other human beings in the fields or in the factories with no one there above his head, without being grumpy or caring whether one works two hours or two hours and a half. He does not tolerate being lectured about state or authority which will supervise and direct him; he understands that when he will feel hunger he shall eat without having to ask for anybody's permission; when he will feel like working he shall go out and work without having anybody above him. He grasps very well that the world will consist of associations, big unions with mutual help and freedom and happiness; he understands that the merchants are parasites, flaneurs and that they will not exist in the future society.

In another issue they wrote:

"...Under the influence of our ideas, certain peasant demonstrations against the usurers took place in our town; they demanded among other things the abolition of taxes. The gendarmes and the bailiffs who had been sent to the villages to collect the taxes were chased away by men and women, holding arms, stones and clubs..."

This concludes our reference to peasant anarchism. It should be added that attempts were made to spread anarchist ideas in the rural centers of Thessaly. However, these attempts were not met with success. Reformist ideas and practices prevailed and anarchists were absorbed by them. The most important political endeavour, which gathered around it the local socialists, was the Labour Center of Volos, which issued the newspaper "Worker". A little later, the newspaper was renamed "Worker-Peasant" and a representative of the Center took part in the elections for the 1st Revisory Parliament (August 1910). The dominance of the reformists can be observed in the agitation of the landless peasants, whose demand was to acquire land.

Another form of action we come across is anarchoterrorism

C) INDIVIDUAL TERRORISM

We come across manifestations of this phenomenon mainly in the Peloponnesos. On the one hand the socioeconomic situation already described and on the other the

persecutions of socialists, as well as a strong belief in direct action, led some to individual terrorism. On 3-11-1896, the cordwainer D. Matsalis attacked two "respectable citizens" killing one and seriously wounding the other. In court Matsalis declared he was an anarchist and that he had acted on his own. He committed suicide by biting off the percussion cap of a stick of dynamite. On the 1st of May of 1898, A. Theodorids attempted to kill two Patras usurers, but only succeeded in injuring them.

D) CHRISTIAN-ANARCHISM

It appears that the term is a misnomer. What we are dealing with were supporters of Christian socialist theories, professing the abolition of the privileges of the kings and the wealthy, promoting a fair society, which would protect the workers under just and wide rulers. Extremely dogmatist, their objective was not to transform the world but to retire from the worldly affairs. The most important examples were the Brotherhood of Patras and the Armageddon Movement, who supported that the world was inescapably condemned to be destroyed. Another Christian Socialist was Marinos Antypas, whose propaganda played an important role in the Kileler uprising. Several Christian Socialists became active in the forming of labour unions.

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