

After Trikala...

On the arrests of Christos and Alfredo

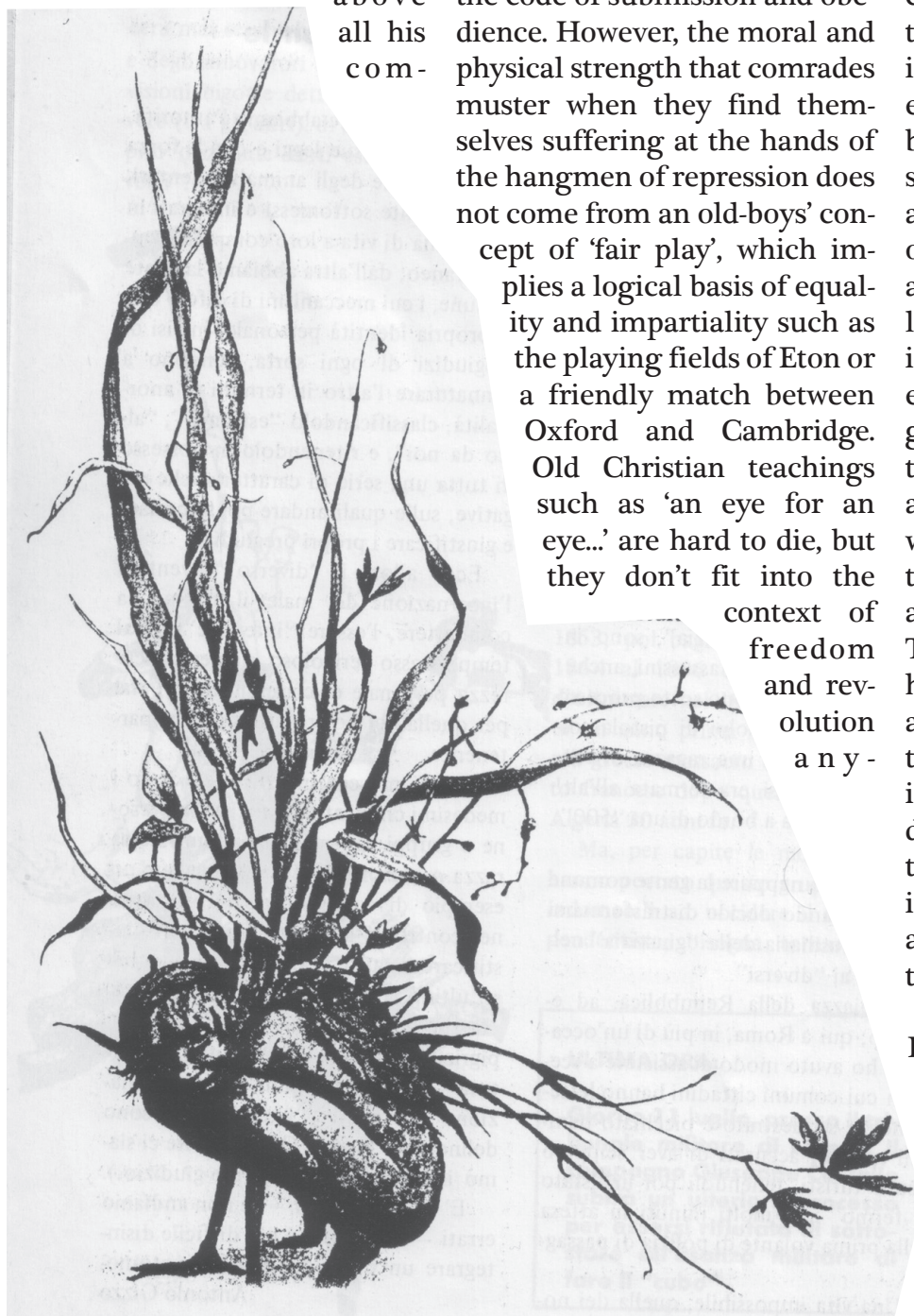
Fair play

Christos dared, but didn't get away. Alfredo was in the wrong place at the wrong time and also lost his freedom. Fair play, some have exclaimed. And who more than an anarchist accepts individual responsibility for his or her actions. Who more than an anarchist can look the enemy and above all his com-

rades in the eyes and claim the ethical premise of his choices. If something goes wrong and he finds himself in the hands of the enemy, he doesn't cry scandal, he knows that capital's acolytes and guard dogs are always ready to denounce, arrest and imprison anyone caught transgressing the code of submission and obedience. However, the moral and physical strength that comrades muster when they find themselves suffering at the hands of the hangmen of repression does not come from an old-boys' concept of 'fair play', which implies a logical basis of equality and impartiality such as the playing fields of Eton or a friendly match between Oxford and Cambridge. Old Christian teachings such as 'an eye for an eye...' are hard to die, but they don't fit into the context of freedom and revolution any-

where at all. The seeming objectivity of the law: a (the crime) = b (the punishment) only exists in the daydreams of the bourgeois. Accountancy is comforting, it induces sleep. For the professional bank robber some level of calculation might exist: yes, robbing banks can also be a job, one where the risk factor can be more easily calculated than days on end enduring boring slave-labour, being slowly poisoned by toxic substances, risking falling from a building under construction or having one's hand cut off by a circular saw. He can use the law (nothing to do with 'justice' in the real sense of the word) to estimate his potential losses and gains in terms of dignity, free time and quality of life. So long as he is discreet, doesn't start wanting too much, become extrovert and disdainful of capital and the State, or shoot a cop. Then the balance swings and he must defend his freedom at all costs. In the case of the contrary the best he can hope for is a volley of bullets, the worst, decades behind bars in segregation units. Power must defend itself against folk heroes too, and once the media have done their dirty work, the rest is easy.

For the anarchist the discourse is different. He or she who refuses to exploit others or to be exploited in exchange for a wage has put themselves in another logic to that of capital in order to be better equipped - in terms of time and



and a mind free from the burden of compromise and self-loathing - to enter the qualitative versant of reality. Money loses its godlike omnipresence to become a mere expedient, which is often reduced to a minimum. The comrade doesn't save money, nor does he save himself. Liberated from the logic of exchange work, study, play and attack intertwine as components of a revolutionary projectuality that overflows without measure. In that dimension, in a consciously chosen life without guarantees, the need for money is not eliminated but it is removed from the pivotal position that it holds under capital. Not that one can live outside capital. But one can have a different, unsubmitting relation to it, the better to fight it. Freed from the brutalisation of work, one's thinking and powers of observation become more acute. For the revolutionary, lack of money is never an excuse for not facing up to one's responsibilities in life and in the struggle. When it becomes a necessity in order to move forward, one can also decide to look around, take stock, observe the workings of the enemy and also, why not, to find the means necessary to confront some concrete necessity. This is not so difficult once the 'moral split' imposed upon us since birth has been healed and we are at one with our conscience. A comrade becomes a real danger to capital and a target for its guard dogs and good citizens from the moment in which he stops selling his strength, ingenuity and intellect to a boss in exchange for a wage and turns them against the whole system of exploitation and plunder, aka capitalism and the State. It's not a failed robbery to give him the status of public enemy - so much flaunted by the Greek media in the case of Alfredo following his arrest, - but the fact that he has had the affront to turn his knowledge and ideas against the State and capital and, even more perverse, to share them with others in a dimension of complicity.

Because the anarchist does not conceal his knowledge in secrecy in order to raise its quota on the shelves of the grocer's shop of Academia but spends hours, days, nights over books, malfunctioning printers, improvised collating tables, interminable post office queues, to disseminate versions that any comrade can have access to. That's the last straw. Confirmation of a diabolical mind that must be destroyed at any cost. And this destruction mustn't come about in an open dazzling manner. ... Please. We are civilised! We are against the death penalty. The Junta were overthrown on November 17 1973 by our brave students and worthy citizens, a fact that we celebrate every year on that day, peacefully of course... don't believe what you read in the press about police beating up hundreds of young people mercilessly. We are a democracy... No, we are the home of democracy, the foundation of civilisation.. So, what was that story about the giant and the fly? How many fleas and lice does it take to drive a man insane? How many men can you lock up in a cell before they all go crazy? How low do sanitary conditions have to go before all succumb to sickness and disease? What did you say? Concentration camp? Crematorium? Who do you think I am, Hitler? We are socialists and we have a social war on our hands...

No, here we are not facing objectivity, equality, impartiality. We are facing the enemy, the servants and structures of a murderous system based on the submission and exploitation of millions of people all over the planet. All of our imprisoned comrades, no matter where they are and under what circumstances they were arrested, are being held hostage not for the 'crime' on the arrest warrant, but for their real crime, the crime of freedom, the crime of being anarchists, rebels and revolutionaries. And that is why we must not abandon them.



Life, not history

Here we are again with the problem of robbery thrown in our faces as we suddenly find ourselves confronted with a problem that has been isolated from reality as a whole—which as continual movement defies the logic of dissection and historicism—and everyone feels obliged to express themselves on the subject. The lens of judgement focuses on a couple of anarchists following a bank robbery, and from that moment on time imposes itself on those who had simply gone out that day for their own reasons, without consulting law books or asking anyone for their approval. And so begins a transformation in symbol, in history, a transformation in thing. And when free activity is obstructed by the counterpart and the law imposes itself, civic consciousness is re-enforced to the detriment of the individual and their dreams and desires, no matter how confused and repressed these might be. What are the man and woman lurking in every zealous citizen really condemning? Perhaps not the robbery as such, but its failure? Who does not rejoice in their heart of hearts when anonymous robbers succeed in sackaging a bank, emptying a security van or lightening a jeweller of some of his booty? Without loss of blood and, why not, with a bit of style? In the last analysis everyone backs a winner. We feel recompensed in some way for the injury suffered throughout the whole of our lives. On the contrary, when such attempts fail, the logic of judgement takes over. And could it not be that the same thing happens in the anarchist movement? All anarchists are in favour of certain things, in theory. So long as everything remains within the anonymous flux of life, we all agree that the bosses are thieves, judges assassins, journalists liars and fabricators of images for spectacular representation. What matters is that everything proceed discreetly without creating any fuss. But when comrades feel they are confronted with the need to openly take sides, obliged to do so by a specific event—one that has failed to boot—the turgid waters of opinionism divide. And who knows whether behind some of the silence, the outright condemnation or the gossip, the same thing does not happen. Couldn't these guys have been more discreet... of course they could have done what they liked... After all expropriation is part of our History... but they might at least have got away with it, without stepping on other people's toes, with-

out defiling the noble History of the movement. Anyone who accepts the crystallisation of parts of reality does so because that is the way they themselves live and perceive reality. And a foiled robbery here, a foiled robbery there, things begin to get heavy for those who work for the History of the movement. But where are the heroes of yesteryear? Poor Anarchy! The same thing can happen in the opposite direction, through a mythisation of armed robbery as thing in itself. And so we end up with the logic of supporters—those for, and those against. On the other hand, anyone who does not believe in history and has their own projectuality as life in movement, does not fear, or rather does not recognise, the concept of failure. They recognise comrades' individuality in a projectual context. They see their attempts as an affirmation of this individuality. They work with them to prevent it from being impaired, opening up new, different moments for its expression. They continue to act against the enemy, thus reaffirming their own individuality, with one more reason for doing so. Each according to their own choices and methods, not for History, but against the existent. In freedom, for freedom. The robbery itself is a false problem.

The passion for freedom

Yet one more episode in the chronicles of repression is now well-known to all: on October 1 Alfredo Bonanno (from Italy) and Christos Stratiopoulos (from Greece), two anarchists who have already been hit by repression on a number of occasions, were arrested in Greece following a robbery, and imprisoned in the small town of Amfissa. It is not our intention to comment on their action, which nevertheless has our full appreciation, nor will we indulge in other details concerning the comrades' arrest, which have been abundantly exposed in previous leaflets and communiques.

On the contrary, what we feel the urge to do here is to remind all the comrades reading these lines that Christos and Alfredo are still being detained in the concentration camp of Amfissa and that it is the case to reflect upon this with greater determination.

Everybody now knows something of the conditions of detention in Amfissa. No living being should be placed in such a hellish place. Hence we wish it to be destroyed once and for all along with all the prisons and detention centres of this world, a desire we and many other comrades have been stressing over and over through written words and sometimes (far too few, we are afraid) through deeds. We all agree on much-debated points such as the attack on this system of exploitation that builds jails and represses every form of rebellion, and are for the total destruction of all prisons. We also agree that support and solidarity be given to imprisoned comrades everywhere. We want all our comrades free, along with each and every rebel currently detained in the dungeons of whatever State and, having our own concept of social retribution, are against prison even for our enemies.

It is within this context that we want to emphasize the specific case of Alfredo, whose age and state of health - alas - have also become part of the chronicle. It is quite obvious that his continued detention under the present conditions is a precise political choice, backed up by law—where power is taking to the ultimate degree its revenge on an anarchist revolutionary who has always been a sworn enemy of authority in all its forms. It is time to act regarding Alfredo's situation, which is becoming extremely serious, as well as to denounce the widespread barbaric conditions that continue to exist in the Greek jails in spite of a protracted hungerstrike undertaken by thousands of prisoners last year.

Benefit gigs and counterinformation can be important initiatives. Sporadic actions against the symbols of power are beautiful acts of solidarity. But all of these remain isolated in the absence of a constant attack on the State and capital as a whole, which includes working to extend the struggle to involve the exploited inside and outside the walls of infamy. This is a necessary road within which to elaborate specific actions, including those aimed at not abandoning individual comrades who find themselves in particular conditions in the hands of the enemy.

Let's act now to keep the struggle against every kind of prison alive and effective until all prisoners are free and all prisons are destroyed, first and foremost the invisible walls that enclose

mind and body in daily habit and unquestioning rituals of dissent.

Let's show our comrades hostages of the State that we are with them in the ardent struggle for life and dignity, that the passion for freedom is not just a slogan, but a fearsome torrent of love and destruction.

FIRE TO THE PRISONS



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Christos Stratigopoulos
33100 Fylakes Amfissas
Greece.

You can send money for the support
of the comrades to:
Conto corrente postale n° 23852353, directed to A.
Medeot - C.P. 3431 - Trieste (Italy), with text
“sottoscrizione arresti in Grecia”.

Background and articles:
<http://www.aftertrikala.blogspot.com>

Writings of Alfredo Bonanno:
<http://pantagruel-provocazione.blogspot.com>

Solidarity poster in different languages:
<http://arobberyingreece.blogspot.com>