



Workers' Inquiry in praxis: The Greek student movement of 2006-2007

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abstract

The history of the militant research tool in Greece is connected with the development of class struggles in the country. Workers' enquiry became known to the Greek scene relatively recently, compared with the rest of Europe, and the first attempts of its implementation began only in the last few years. Additionally, only a few groups of the domestic antagonistic movement go through the process of planning, engaging and implementing a worker's enquiry as this requires careful study, consistency and accuracy; which, in turn, requires a long-term commitment, especially in terms of movement-time. The aim of this paper is to present the history of workers' enquiry in the Greek territory, its findings and some thoughts about the utility of workers' enquiry as an analytical tool. The collection and analysis of interviews showed that the struggle wasn't aimed, as it was presented in the media, to a return to the Welfare State, but it was a radical struggle against the curtailment of liberties inside the university. The analysis also showed, that through this struggle a new political subject is emerging that shows differences from the traditional political figures. In addition, innovative forms of action and new political behaviours make their appearance. Finally, the use of the tool of workers' enquiry showed a series of political advantages: creating bonds between political subjects and subjects for the struggle, the connection between the militants, the exchange of experiences, the deepening over the contents of the struggle itself.

Introduction

In recent years there has been a growing interest in the study of Italian Marxism – workerism – inside the antagonistic movement of Greece. Numerous translations are published that refer to the 'Years of Lead' and many discussions are taking place in an effort to analyse both its theoretical legacy and its failure,

with a glimpse into the future from the scope of the present. During the last few years we witnessed the publication in the Greek language of the works of Sergio Bologna's *Tribe of Moles* (1977), Steve Wright's *Storming Heaven* (2003) and Lotringer and Marazzi's (eds.) *Autonomia: Post political politics* (2007) among others. The purpose of this theoretical research is to find theoretical tools and concepts, which are positioned to allow an analysis of the present situation from a movement perspective, through the rich experience of the Italian autonomous movement. A field of movements has been established in the radical political scene of Greece that has been directly affected by the theory and practice of Italian *Autonomia*, not simply by reproducing them, but by enriching them with new content in connection with the sociopolitical reality of Greek society.

One of the two main analytical tools that the Italian Marxism has provided us was workers' inquiry, as well as 'class composition'. Compared with the rest of Europe, workers' inquiry became known to the Greek scene relatively recently, and the first attempts of to implement it began only in the last years. The first acquaintance with the problematic of research for political purposes took place in 2003 on the occasion of a presentation on militant research in call centres in Germany and England by the group Kolinko and shortly later, a small leaflet was published containing abstracts from Kolinko's research and views on methodology, as well as the transcript of the discussion that followed. One year later followed the publication of *The Road (the Worker, the Machine, and the Method)* (2004) from the group 'Spies club of the 21st century'. The latter publication constitutes a collection of interviews regarding the working conditions of a group of politically active couriers. Although the militants that conducted this research did not have in mind the experience of the Italians communists of the 60s, they had the same purpose in examining the subjectivity of the people working as couriers.

In 2007 a small group of militants, following the footsteps of the workers' inquiry that was reintroduced by Kolinko, conducted what remains until today the most complete research paradigm of a workers' inquiry. In this paper we will present a short review and make critical remarks about this effort, trying to highlight its findings and weak points. This research was published in a book format in 2010 and was entitled *Hear what the students have to say...An antagonistic research about the discourse and action of students in the movement of 2006-7*¹ which was issued under a common signature: 'research team', including

1 The title of the book comes from a renowned motto of the struggle, which went: 'Hear very well what the students have to say: kick all business firms out of our schools'.

'researchers' and 'research subjects'. In its 120 pages we find a thorough methodology based on the legacy of Quaderni Rossi.

While writing these lines, another workers' inquiry is being conducted from a political group named S.K.Y.A. (Assembly for the Circulation of Struggles) concerning the long term unemployed who worked for a five month contract in the public sector entitled *Workfare: the Continuity of Unemployment by Other Means*. Its findings are yet to be published.

Why militant research?

Workers' Inquiry (*conricerca* also known as *co-research* or *joint-research*) as a research tool has its root in the Italian context of the 50s and 60s, marked by industrialization and mass migration from South of Italy to the North. It was initially developed by Alquatti, Pizzorno and Montaldi (Borio et al. 2007). Alquatti believed that certain sociological techniques could play an important part in the reinvigoration of Marxism (Wright 2003). Inquiry intended to establish 'a type of relation, of a method of work of discussion and co-research with the workers' (Alquatti 1961). It is 'the collective, common, systematic, rich and potent research into [a subject's] conditions and modalities of its own actualization' (Armano et al. 2013). As a method, it was an instrument that aimed to construct a new knowledge together with the subjects under investigation from a direct class perspective (ibid) in order to understand 'the levels of awareness and consciousness of the process that implicated workers as productive subjects' (Negri 2003).

Although the terms 'workers' inquiry' and 'militant research' entered the vocabulary of the antagonistic movement in Greece recently, without, any previous research experience, the necessity of carrying out militant research emerged in political circles of the Left and the autonomous- antiauthoritarian movement together with a steady rise of social and class struggles in the period during and after the Greek student movement of 2006-07.

The movement broke out just a few months after the anti-CPE movement in France, in response to a law that the then conservative government brought to Parliament, which included privatizing education and the intensification of studies. Since the beginning of 2006 and for about a year until March 2007, students were in nearly constant mobilisation, organizing marches weekly, occupying schools throughout the country and attempting to block the passing of the law.

The research was carried out by a small group of political activists called *Nomades Antirois* (Counter-flow Nomads) following an invitation issued to conduct co-research with a few militant students². According to the collective author, as stated in the book's introduction, the use of the tool of militant research was employed so to: a) analyse and understand the underlying reasons for the student mobilisation and b) investigate the characteristics of the collective subject that emerged through the movement (political attitudes and behaviours, discourses and forms of action) c) promote and circulate aspects of the student protests that were not widely known, d) contribute in inventing new theoretical tools for the antagonistic movement through experimentation with the tool of militant research e) create relationships between the militants and the new subjects politicized through the processes of struggle or movement, and finally, f) connect subjects in struggle with each other (in this case, students from different universities of the country). As is noted in the preface:

In order, therefore, to investigate the specific mobilisation and subjectivity expressed in its context i.e. the subjectivity that participated in this mobilisation... in order to go into a deeper understanding of the causes of this mobilisation, against the dominant performances [...] in order to highlight aspects of this mobilisation we considered important and to circulate them both in the student milieu and in wider audiences. In order to get in touch with the new subject that emerged from this mobilisation, namely the militant students, but also in order to 'investigate the research itself,' that is, to experiment with the terra incognita of social antagonism, we decided to conduct militant research in this batch of students who lived actively through the experience of this movement (Research Team 2010: 6).

And continues:

We chose to implement research because we recognize the inadequacy of ideologies, as tools for understanding social movements. In specific, we question ideologies as 'plug and think' tools, which can only be applied to reality in order for it to be interpreted. In a few words: we do research, because we believe that we must invent anew the tools that will serve to interpret and thus to change this world (2010: 7).

Finally, they present their view that was fostered by exchanging and connecting experiences:

in projects or struggles that we in participated as students [...] which helps to transmit and spread this experience through time. To do this, not from the separate position of the researcher who seeks to restore 'reality itself', but from the position of the active political *subject* that participated in these protests and in

2 The research group consisted of ten people, although many more were involved in various stages of the research process without however remaining until its final completion (p. 11-12).

struggles in general. Seeking together the ways in which the militants can meet with broader social subjects (2010: 17).

However the cause of involvement with this research was the mismatch between the duration, intensity and qualitative characteristics of the mobilisation with the contents presented as the cause of the outbreak of the student movement. As it is mentioned, while it was a long struggle, a struggle that lasted almost a year with mass participation across the country and not just in the big cities, the public discourse that accompanied it, beyond the dominant discourse of the government and the media, was 'crammed harshly in the context of traditional hermeneutic classifiers, of all political stripes' (2010: 6). For the government it was a mobilisation against the attempted 'modernization' and 'rationalization' of public-State University, a retrograde mobilisation for the defence of the last remnants of an anachronistic Welfare State. On the other hand, for a large portion of the Parliamentary and extra-Parliamentary Left it was a struggle for the protection of public and free education, i.e. to defend the welfare state. It is in this context that the research project starts. Research conducted in the period immediately after the end of the protests, i.e. in May 2007 and was completed, after a break of several months in the summer of 2009 and published in February 2010. This was, as mentioned by the research team, an experimental project; they had no prior experience using this tool for political purposes (2010: 13).

The context

On October 2005 the Greek Ministry of Education announced its intention of renewing the 20 year-old law concerning higher education in Greece and implementing the conditions that were imposed by the Bologna Convention. The draft of the bill included many articles concerning the management and the operation of Greek public universities. More specifically, it contained articles towards the abolition of 'University Asylum'³, the introduction of the maximum years for studying, the permanent expulsion of students that failed to take or pass exams, the abolition of distributing free textbooks to students, the restriction of the student vote in the university's management institutions, the introduction of the minimum time period per semester, the introduction of a new economical-managerial institution responsible for the financial assets of the university, the introduction of the ECTS credit system, the introduction of a four-year economic planning program by the universities and finally, changes in the way professors

3 A measure that was implemented after the fall of the 1967 coup d'état that established freedom of speech and political expression on campuses, including the restriction of police entry to universities areas.

are recruited and promoted. In sum, the spirit of the new bill, a typical neoliberal reform, was towards the gradual privatisation of public universities and abolition of free social services (accommodation and catering) provided to students. The new law aimed to dissolve for good any future student mobilisations by targeting directly the way and the means by which they are organized in order to carry out restructuring in education.

Apart from the new bill concerning the functioning of universities, the -at that time- right-wing 'New Democracy' government had decided to promote the revision of Article 16 of the Greek Constitution the following year, which aimed at officially recognizing private higher educational institutions. Article 16 of the Greek Constitution stipulates that higher education is provided free in state institutions, and that private universities are prohibited.

Following the era of the anti-CPE struggle in France, the Greek students started occupying their campuses on May 2006 through mass assemblies in response to the educational reform and denouncing the dismantling of free education in favour of privately-run services. Their main demand was the withdrawal of the new bill. In just a few weeks over 400 departments were occupied and there was subsequently a mass wave of demonstrations in every major city of the country (including those that have not seen protests for years), which often ended with heavy clashes with police forces. For two months (May-June) there was a total blackout in almost all public-State universities, no classes or exams were conducted in that period. These reactions have forced the government to postpone the Parliamentary vote on reforms that were planned for July until the next academic year.

The second phase of this movement started on January 2007 and lasted 12 weeks, until the end of March. This time the main claim of the students was against the revision of Article 16 and the withdrawal of new bill became secondary. The occupations and demonstrations by students started over again and gradually increased in numbers but not at the mass scale as in the previous phase. On February 2nd, the social democrat party of PASOK withdrew from the voting procedure of Article 16 under the pressure of the student movement, making it impossible to pass in Parliament. Immediately after that, the government as a response accused the social democrats of hesitating and announced that the new bill would be put up for vote within the next few days. In order to calm student reactions, the new bill had its sharp edges rounded but its core remained the same. The bill was rejected again by both the student movement and the professors' association. From then on, the marches took a violent turn usually ending in heavy street fighting with the police and mass arrests with participants numbering over 25,000 people; reaching its climax on

March 8th, the day that the voting was scheduled in House of Parliament. That day, over 35,000 students demonstrated against the reform. It was the biggest demonstration the country has seen for many years and was followed by heavy clashes with the police throughout the city centre that lasted many hours. Although the bill was passed mobilisations continued until the end of March with a steady decline ending them just before the Easter holiday.

Theoretical tools

This research approached the student movement through the meaning of *Experience*, an analysis of the subjective dimensions of the actions of the students as a collective entity. The concept of *experience* is central to the analysis proposed by the research team. This is a borrowed term from the concept of 'proletarian experience', extracted from an article of Claude Lefort (1979)⁴. The concept of '*Proletarian Experience*' as analysed by Lefort in his article (1979), is used however with a different meaning by the research team studying the student movement. We will not dwell here on individual differences, focusing instead on a number of points that we think are of value in the way in which the concept was implemented in this inquiry.

The research team describes in the first part of the book the reasons that led to the use of the concept of experience, stating that this was the most suitable conceptual tool for the nature of their object of study: an analysis of the action, attitudes and behaviours that could neither be reduced in the simple internalisation of rules and roles nor in the sum of rational choices (2010: 16-17). As stated:

Let's look at an example from the results of the processed data: the ways in which students acted were not determined entirely by the political background and the history of their family. Political influence from home may have existed and originally played a guiding role in the spontaneous attitudes towards mobilisation for instance. But explaining attitudes and perceptions under the weight of the influence of family relations (or other institutional factors) would be like acknowledging that there is no possibility of self-motivation and initiative from the struggling students themselves, no possibility of rupture with recurrent (historical) political frameworks for action [...]. For this reason we turned to the given experience of the struggle in order not to overlook the issue of relationships and conditions that shaped them and to highlight the subjective dimensions of action, but not to confine ourselves exclusively to them (2010: 17).

4 This article was translated and published in Greek in an effort of seeking conceptual tools for workers' inquiry and was discussed along with other texts. The translator was a member of the 'Research Team'.

The analysis of the 'meaning of action' is examined through the circumstances, in different 'situations of action' as the authors call it, i.e. the relationships that the subjects have with universities, the institutions and the student movement (2010: 16). The concept of *Experience* here refers to the subjectification process itself, in a way that a collective subject is formed through the disputed issues raised in the protest (2010: 17).

Methodological Choices

Starting from a constructivist framework, the analysis of experiences was made with the use of qualitative methods from the social sciences, namely in-depth individual and group interviews as well as the use of open questionnaires. The inquiry borrows (without naming it) some of the principles of grounded theory (Strauss A., Corbin E, 1997). Rooted in symbolic interactionism, Charmaz (2000, 2006) has advocated for a constructivist grounded theory emphasizing on the 'interpretive portrayal of the studied world'. Unlike traditional grounded theory, Charmaz points out that theories are constructed through 'a construction-reconstruction of reality' (2006: 10) rather than being discovered. It should be said however that the research team doesn't explicitly reference these sociological methodologies but only the militants of the student movement. Despite all that, there is however a sociological background that put forth as issues for discussion with the interviewees posed as problems of methodology. The academic references are transcribed in this inquiry in political terms. As stated:

By the time we started the research our focus fell less on achieving some ideological and political agreements and more on exploratory processes, in the gradual clarification of our political view through the actual process of research and data analysis. So an approach from such a basis meant practically for us the following: Instead of using our political perception as the sole tool for analysis and interpretation of the student struggle, we put the latter in the torment of the essay data that the research itself gradually brought to light. Our main purpose was not to let any political position impose on the data a priori, without at least establishing a comparison and conjunction with it. More specifically, this meant that our opinions evolved gradually during the research in the context of our ongoing interaction with the collection of data and creating relationships with the subjects of our research (2010: 11).

It was a methodology of work that inseparably combined with the working hypotheses, collecting/interacting with data and the development of analyses and conclusions (2010: 15-16). At the various stages of the research, the interpretations concluded by the research team were presented to some students, while in July 2008 a presentation was organized for the presentation of the first findings of the research (2010: 38). As the authors state:

'we did not have some prefixed methodology that wanted to test it empirically, but instead and consciously, we felt and believed that the very process of approximation of a hypotheses must go hand in hand and evolve in parallel with the way which we work and the instruments we use in order to answer it and the many methodological choices we made were defined by the immediate condition of the research: the practical and specific problems we faced while involved actively during the process' (2010: 15).

Finally, the inquiry combined individual and group interviews. Individual interviews examined the direction of subjects (life trajectories), who were active in the student movement, but also subjects that disagreed with it and took positions against the protests. On the other hand, group interviews were used to 'outline some of the features of that broader social subject' (2010: 18) of students with criteria of their common bond to the movement (for example students from the occupation of the Economic University of Athens). The authors considered the use of semi-structured interviews and open questionnaires to be helpful in shifting the discussion to the justification of the acts that students narrate and to rethinking the experiences of the movement (2010: 18).

The sample of the research

The inquiry consists of twenty-four interviews with students from various universities and schools of higher education, mainly from Athens and some from the countryside, lasting from one to two and a half hours of which the twenty were recorded⁵.

The sample was selected through mutual acquaintances with students active within the movement. It was grouped into three general categories: a) students with previous political experience (students of left and anarchist political groups and organisations), b) students with no prior political experience that politicized through the processes of the student movement and c) students who were not active in the movement (not necessarily against the mobilisations, but remained passive). In the first category there were five interviews, eleven in the second and four in the third. Although the research team was supposed to collect a larger number of interviews, due to certain problems in the conducting the interviews, this wasn't feasible⁶. Nevertheless, if we accept these categorizations that were a

5 The selected transcripts of the recordings can be found in the address <http://anti-research.blogspot.gr> (in Greek).

6 The research team critically exposed the reasons for this failure, locating them in difficulties entering the research field after the protests, but also in a series of subjective and objective difficulties (2010: 31-32). Furthermore as stated from the outset, the nature of the research project was experimental and uncertain 'to the end' (2010: 15).

result of the research conducted, the quite limited number of the sample has as a result of the research being oriented on the analysis primarily geared towards the second category (b) and less to the other two, (a) and (c). Also, as the research team itself states, it was not possible to get interviews from members of several left-wing student factions who participated in the protests (2010: 31). This fact leads sadly to a partial picture of student motivation and made it more difficult to answer the central questions of the research.

Moreover, the second category (students without previous political experience that were politicized through the process of the student movement) focuses mostly on students that create a qualitatively important portion (in a sense that highlights the emergence of innovative forms of action), but are a minor tendency of the movement, which later was called the 'autonomous tendency' of the student movement (on the fringes of the left and the anarchist movement).

In our opinion, this is one of the weaker points the research. The problem in setting up the sample has to do with the 'snowball sampling' that was chosen initially⁷; it allowed to overcome the problem of entering the field, but since it wasn't possible for it to be crossed with other sampling techniques, the population of the sample was fairly one-sided in relation to the questions that it wanted to investigate.

The questionnaire

The research team presented a detailed questionnaire, which was co-formed with some students and finalized after some pilot interviews (chapter 2). The questionnaire consists of three parts: a) profile of the interviewee, b) the student's conditions, c) relation to the mobilisation (including different parts for respondents who participate or not).

Chapter 2 of the book analyses the organization and the political rationale of the questionnaire. The research team gave special attention to the formation of the questionnaire because this resulted in the axes of the analysis presented in the main part of the book.

7 'The most appropriate way to schedule an interview proved through some acquaintances of the students. Our acquaintances were the ones who brought us into contact with the sample and allowed, essentially, our entry point in the field of research, because they recommended us to others to be interviewed so the range of our options opened widely' (2010:33).

Presentation

The size of the sample may have been too small, however the range of issues being discussed with regard to the student movement of 2006-2007 is really great in number. The second part of the book unfolds the analysis, which has been divided into six axes with separate subchapters, each of which discusses various aspects of the students' experience. The organization of the presentation follows a path analysis starting from the description of the crisis of institutions and existing political-organizational forms to the emergence of the subject of student protests.

More specifically, the analysis starts with the description of the student status and relationship of the students with their departments (professors, classes, relationships with fellow students, laboratories, food, housing, technical equipment, etc.) (axis 1). It continues with the discussion on the provisions of the new law (imposition of a ceiling on studying time, the abolition of university asylum, and the privatization of education) that the government tried to pass and was the reason for the outbreak of student unrest (axis 2). Then, it proceeds to describe the organizational forms of this mobilisation, i.e. the collective bodies of the students (the General Student Assembly of each department and the General Coordination Assembly of all departments) and the emergence of new organizational formations by the movement (Axis 3). The next axis (4) describes the original initiatives taken in this struggle by a portion of the mobilized students, while the fifth (5) axis discusses problems encountered during the movement (the role of repression, rivalry between student factions, the role of media, organizational problems, connection with other social subjects etc.), where interviewees are asked to make an overall assessment of the student movement. Finally, the sixth (6) axis goes from the evaluation of the movement in the analysis of new political attitudes and behaviours after mobilisation. The book closes with a chapter of conclusions. This chapter summarizes the conclusions of each axis, proceeds also further in the formulation of the reasons that led ultimately to the voting of the law despite the protests by making some critical comments on the issues raised by the struggle. In the latter part of the findings the research team attempts an evaluation of the same tool of militant research, as implemented in the process of student research⁸.

8 'Despite the countless problems and difficulties we faced towards the completion of this inquiry, the process of creation changed us ourselves because it changed at the same time the nexus of our relationships. This is perhaps, the most important consignment that left us' (p. 119).

Because it is not our purpose here to present thoroughly every chapter and subchapter of the book, we will make some critical remarks of the analysis presented concerning the deeper reasons of the student mobilisation.

The suggested analysis

The research seeks a series of factors that were viewed as the causes of mobilisation through a description of the 'student condition' that the students face. The students of the sample however, do not invoke the -viewed as prominent- reasons of mobilisation, for example the deterioration of the existing technical infrastructure of the laboratories, problems with relationships with their professors, the prevalence of a climate of competition among students to obtain the degree, the problem that some of them face working simultaneously in precarious conditions, and were thus unable to attend classes (2010: 46-50). For example, the result of interviews with students (2010: 47) that came from affluent or lower social classes do not link their participation in protests with obtaining degrees that can ensure a place in the labour market, which was one of the main slogans of the left parts of the movement ('degrees with value').

In our opinion, despite the interesting work on the discourse of the subjects that inform us about a number of important parameters in relation to student status, nevertheless certain objective aspects of this process are not examined from the view of the changes that are imposed by institutional factors and government policies. In addition, the inquiry does not consider the way which these changes are part of a wider framework of international transformations in education (e.g. Bologna process). The research team's stated intention was to remain at the subjective level of editing experience, nevertheless these transformations define the forms of action that are described and define the framework within which the subjective attitudes are shaped. This is because there was already a discourse by the Left parties that examined proportions of the draft bill which the research team believed was missing an analysis of social relationships created in the student movement.

A second point regarding the deeper reasons of mobilisation is that the knowledge of the provisions of the law itself was not particularly widespread among those who protested despite the fact that there was much say about it. *'A pretty impressive remark, compared to the overall knowledge of the law, is that the knowledge of the articles of the law, was not one that lead to the mobilisation of students, but rather the opposite. That means that first comes the mobilisation -for various reasons, among which is certainly a cloudy knowledge of the law- and then, as the mobilisation continues and through the processes of the struggle, they [the students]*

deepen to the spirit of the law and the strategy of the Ministry' (2010: 51). Although the settings provided by the law which was to be voted included reduction of the duration of the study time (this meant that students who had not completed their studies after 6 years due to objective difficulties, for example working simultaneously while studying, risked losing the ability to enrol) or buying the needed university textbooks which, at that time, were provided by the State; only a few students raised these issues as a reason to participate in the mobilisations (2010: 54-59). In contrast, a category of politicized students interpreted the Article of the law for the abolition of university asylum as a straight attack against socially fought gains and an attack against the squatted spaces inside the campuses that produced a political discourse and action (2010: 51-54).

In any case, the inquiry shows that the causes for the outbreak and participation in the protest were not univocal, but quite complex. This led the research team to the conclusion that the reasons should not be sought only in the student status, but to the general issues raised concerning the students' social life: 'absence of a collective dimension of things, dominance of individualism, isolation and emotional misery as the central problem, not so much of student life, but in life in general. [...] They fail to understand not only the role for which they were earmarked by the university but also the one the labour market wants from them' (2010: 114). However, the limited sample does not allow for exporting safe conclusions thereon. This is, in our opinion, the reason why the research team refers to various causes for the outbreak of the protest without analysing them all the same. Instead, research is directed at finding a sense of distance from the meaning given to the public and free education by the leftist student factions as opposed to that of the grassroots.

The argument of the research team is that militant subjectivity is formed at a critical distance from the existing organizational institutions of the mobilisation i.e. the General Students Assemblies of every department. The reason for this distance is that the grassroots of the student movement criticized the way decisions were made in the General Assemblies, describing them as the confrontation line between the leftists political student factions rather than a tool of expression of the mobilizing students. The bureaucratization of processes excludes the majority of the base from intervening actively in General Assemblies. So, while voting massively in favour of occupying the schools, most students did not participate to the same extent in their support; on the contrary, 'the dynamic of the demonstrations and growing radicalism could not be expressed within them' (2010: 78). As a result, there was a distance between the content of the movement that came through General Assemblies (e.g. a fight for 'degrees with value') and the content made by the grassroots.

By analysing the subjective experience and the impact of the student movement in political behaviours the research team presents a typology of change in attitudes before and after the movement in different categories of the sample. An analysis that attempts to identify in time the relationship between 'individual behaviours and collective practices' (2010: 110).

So for a group of students with low participation in the student movement, the effect it had in shifting their attitude is detected even at the level of everyday life. In this way, attitudes manifested before the movement only potentially existed. For example, as stated by a student of the Economic Department: *'while I was never a racist if I saw in a bus an old lady insulting an immigrant I would not have said anything, now I'll talk'* (2010: 101).

On the one hand, students without previous politicization, derived however from families with political tradition, before the movement had adopted an attitude of distance from political activity on the basis of views that were transmitted to them from the immediate social environment. For example, one student from Media & Communication Department states: *'This transfer of experiences and discussions around 'historical issues of the Left that I heard from a young age at home, obviously influenced me. Another thing was that from a certain age and onwards, I felt that due to the fact that my father had withdrawn from political activity, made me not want to bother with it'* (2010: 102). But this attitude has changed drastically with the effect of the movement, as described by another student from the Economic University of Athens: *'Before, I was never in a collective group, I thought that acting individually was the only way to do things. Through the occupations and all that I understood what it means to be together with other people... you reach other levels, get over your fears and all that...'* (2010: 102). There was a change that was related to a change in the level of day-to-day relations: *'there was also a need, after the end of the student movement [...] to reunite with people who fought together to do things collectively'*.

On the other hand, students with previous political experience who actively participated in the student movement describe the possibilities that were opened for expanding the possibilities of organization, communication and cooperation between student activists from various schools on the basis of specific issues raised by the struggle and not vague ideological abstractions. The creation of this 'sense of community/community belonging' (2010: 105) acquired through the movement played a decisive role in linking initiatives and organizational attempts created in its aftermath. In addition, another change in attitude at the level of everyday life was the break with a 'certain elitism' (2010: 105) of politicized students towards the rest of the students, a change in the way they see the courses at the university and an enrichment of political experience. Some

typical quotes from students: *'I knew theoretically what bureaucracy meant, but when I saw how it works in practice, It formed a better image in my mind'* (2010: 105) says a student from the Technical University. Another student from the Medical School adds: *'I do not care to change others, but to tell them this is who I am, and now you tell me who you are, to see what we can do together'*. A student from the Economic University of Athens describes: *'Before I said, I have to do work, lessons and stuff like that; and now I say I'm going to schools simply for the lessons and I'm not being paid'* (2010: 105).

Finally, a category of politicized students did not participate (or participated minimally) in the movement for reasons of principle, accusing the protest as reformist, not having all those revolutionary features that were considered politically correct. Adopting a political attitude of rejection towards the requests and forms of action of the student movement, this category will entrench behind its political identity and eventually retire from the protest. The gathered material from this category of students highlights the self-critical dimension of interviews. Some characteristic excerpts: *'we preferred the security label of anti-authoritarian, rather than collide within our schools with people...'* says a student from the Architecture school. *'Working with a more centralized way of organization, we gathered 20-30 people in an amphitheatre to decide what to do while our schools were occupied, I think that it was bad for the socialization of our discourse and actions...'* (2010: 110).

Concluding this presentation, the research team describes some general political characteristics of the militant subjectivity of students. Selectively, we will dwell on just a few points. There was a 'weakness' of self-determination in the political activity of students coming from traditional political labels (left, right, anarchist). A weakness that is interpreted *'not as a failure of political expression, but the reverse: a trait indicative of the fact that traditional political labels have ceased, in the minds of the struggling to have the importance they once had'* (2010: 115). The argument of the research team was that the discourse used by those in struggle characterize those who emerge from the student movement and give particular importance not on how one defines oneself, but of what they do and how. Also, another feature is the change of the meaning of political work. Work was situated more at the level of day-to-day relations with various social subjects and on less political denunciation of liberalism in general. In addition, we note the absence of requests, to change laws, and the emphasis on forms of direct action and marches in the street.

Nevertheless, we should be cautious if and how these characteristics can be generalized beyond a minority tendency of the student movement. At this point it would be interesting to compare and contrast with other categories of students

who were politicized through the movement from the base of leftist student factions. This is one of the drawbacks of the analysis suggested by the research team directly related to the way of setting up the sample.

Conclusion

In conclusion, despite its weaknesses, this militant research is one of the most fertile attempts of analysing the student movement of 2006-7. Undoubtedly, the most important weakness is located to the fact that some of the minority characteristics' trends that took part during the movement are generalized to other parts of the movement without having sufficient empirical grounding. The mistake was not the number of interviews conducted, even Romano Alquatti himself argues that statistical representativeness is not a target (1961), but the interviews which the research team based did not foresee to cover other cases like interviews with students that had no politicization and remained as such ever after the struggle or rank-and-file members of the leftists' organisations. So it is not a problem of scope that is resolved by conducting more interviews but a problem of more targeted interviews (like, for example, to Greek students throughout the entire Left spectrum) in order to support better the empirical data and enrich the argument of the distance between formal and informal discourse of this movement. The research team's argument of this 'distance' is based mainly to the mainstream image of the struggle, about which the team is precisely informed because its members actively took part in trends of the student struggle.

On the other hand, if these features are seen through their real contexts, then we are in front of an analytical framework for interpretation and analysis of the behaviours of the political space of the autonomous/libertarian trend in the student movement. In this sense, the primary material of the in-depth interviews on which this inquiry is based, although very limited or inadequate for answering the central hypotheses of this research, does not fall short in heuristic value. But more from that, it contributes decidedly to open a discussion of how the 'objective and subjective conditions' (2010: 119) of politicization and political activity in general, change through social struggles.

This inquiry does not deduce the action of the student subject to its conscience nor to its identity. In contrast, like it is shown in different aspects, its formal conscience and political organisation wasn't necessarily what helped the struggle move forward.

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