EGYPT:
Nothing has changed, but everything begins...
Since more than two years, an important wave of struggles has been flowing across Maghreb and Mashrek. One after another, Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Yemen, Libya, and Syria... burst into flames of revolt... Some “dictators” fell, others hang on to the remnants of their power, the repression is fierce everywhere, because the proletarian are determined not to croak on the altar of value without at least selling their life dearly. Struggles against hunger, against misery, against the increase of prices of “basic” foodstuffs, against unemployment, against the impunity of torturers, against the arrogance of masters entrenched in their less and less inaccessible fortresses...

And when “dictators” are ousted under the pressure of “the street” (soft journalistic euphemism for not referring to the genuine subject of these movements: i.e. the proletariat in struggle!), or better said, when the world bourgeoisie and its central apparatuses remove such or such administrator who is not able to control the situation anymore, then “new” faces appear, more credible political “alternatives” appear in order to restore social peace and business law and order. But very quickly, the struggle recovers its dynamics as we can see since two years...

In Tunisia, not a day passes without demonstrations, sit-ins, occupations, wildcat strikes in Tunis, Sfax, Siliana, Kasserine, El Kef, Gafsa, Redeyef, etc., without police stations being burned down by angry proletarians, who obviously don’t believe to any promises made by the administrators of their survival anymore, and who are spreading thus the seeds of an always more global call into question of this world of misery. The “new” leaders (a mixture of “progressive” and Islamist factions) are usually booed off their public appearances as for example on “the revolution’s” anniversary, offices of governmental Islamist party “Ennahda” are set on fire by proletarians who are more than fed up to be always fooled and fucked by the bourgeoisie.

In early February, the murder of a “left opponent” in the middle of the street sparked things off and thousands of proletarians blew up with anger. Chokri Belaid was the leader of the “Unified Party of Democratic Patriots” (what a... bourgeois program!), one of the most important member organizations of the “Popular Front” that must somewhat radicalize its speech under the pressure of the proletariat in order to look like a convincing alternative facing the Islamists and the “vacuum of power” that could be the consequence of the social unrest development. The question here is not whether some proletarians identify themselves with an “opponent” of “Ennahda” government or not. They only expressed a kind of empathy with somebody they consider to be a victim of the same state enemy, while Islamist militias, death squads and other cops hunt and shoot radical proletarians night and day. From then on, it is not surprising that on this occasion our class has increased its offensive and targeted the most obvious and hated representations of this state...

In Syria there is no doubt that the bombing of cities and the massacres, the terrible state repression and its militarization, represent a nagging strength that tries to recruit proletarians in struggle (whether they are armed or not) for one or the other bourgeois factions opposing each other in the attempt to conquer the power and the management of social antagonism. All the international and regional state powers (Russia, Iran and China on one hand, and Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey, France, USA, etc. on the other hand)
push the class confrontation to militarization, in order to make it losing its dynamics of subversion of this world of misery, in brief to deprive the proletariat of its class autonomy... The third camp in Syria (that is to say the proletariat opposed to both poles of the counterrevolution) is on the road to ruin and to be recruited if isolation which it is plunged in is not broken, if the universal content of its struggle (which appears in all the struggles of our class) is not put forward, if it doesn’t quickly find an echo to its struggles, if new insurrectional hotbeds don’t develop elsewhere in order to not give a single moment of rest to the voracious bourgeois anymore...

And it is precisely from Egypt, where drums rolls of our social war resound always stronger, that we can hear the voices heralding determined deepening of social antagonism in the region before it will spread throughout the world.

“Don’t vote for anybody...”

When the “dictator” Mubarak had been ousted, the whole bourgeoisie trumpeted that “democracy” will be established, that the “sovereign people” will participate in the working-out of its future and that its voice will finally be heard. But very quickly the bourgeoisie grew disillusioned because the election of the constituent assembly in November 2011, as well as the presidential election in June 2012 (with more than 58% of abstention) and the referendum on the new constitution last December (when an abstention record rate of more than 68% was reached), i.e. each round of the electoral circus was rejected by important sectors of the proletariat in a real active boycott. Near Tahrir square, somebody tagged on a wall: “Don’t vote for anybody. Nobody will keep his promises. Nobody listens to the poor. Nobody gives a damn about.” Nevertheless the state succeeded to mobilize some millions of useful idiots who make themselves accomplices to the election orgies. And it is thanks to “the people” that the “Muslim Brotherhood” and other Islamists are (temporarily!) the “new masters” of the country. We can therefore see very well how, through this democratic myth of the “sovereign people”, two contradictory poles oppose each other within the same population: on one hand “the Egyptian people” that took part in the elections and therefore in the consolidating of the democratic dictatorship, and on the other hand of the social barricade the proletariat in struggle that refused these elections and through direct action continues to express its contempt (certainly still confused and limited) of democracy.

We also have here to emphasize the very strong answer that militants who call themselves “Comrades from Cairo” addressed to “Occupy Wall Street” (OWS) in November 2011. OWS, by way of “solidarity”, wanted to send some “election monitors” in Egypt in order to make sure the election farce “goes smoothly”... Here is what “Comrades from Cairo” declared: “Truth be told, the news rather shocked us; we spent the better part of the day simply trying to figure out who could have asked for such assistance on our behalf. We have some concerns with the idea, and we wanted to join your conversation. It seems to us that you have taken to the streets and occupied your parks and cities out of dissatisfaction with the false promises of the game of electoral politics. [...] Why then, should our elections be any cause for celebration, when even in the best of all possible worlds they will be just another supposedly ‘representative’ body ruling in the interest of the 1% over the remaining 99% of us? [...] Is this something you wish to monitor?” Despite the obvious limits of this text, we can only express our genuine solidarity with the reply of “Comrades from Cairo”. In fact, what OWS proposed means that the capitalist world would be divided in minimum two parts, with different situations and different tasks to assume: on one hand the “Western” and rich world where elections and parliamentarianism are not on the agenda anymore, and on the other hand the “underdeveloped” countries or the “Third world” where the tasks of the proletarian masses are to defend a progressive faction of the ruling class and to use bourgeois means like elections... This is of course completely false, paternalist and disgusting as for our fellow brothers and sisters all over the world who confront the same enemies, the same oppression, the same exploitation, and who use the same arms and the same means to revolutionize this world, to abolish class society.

But since the Islamist Morsi was elected president, it has been obvious that this bourgeois faction will very quickly become discredited as it is not able to deal with its essential task, that is to say to manage the capitalist social relation in the interest of the ruling class, and at the same time to pretend to satisfy the illusory promises of changes and “welfare” that a few millions of useful idiots (“the Egyptian people”, working and voting) believed to. Facing disillusions, wage cuts, increases in prices of basic goods, facing an always fiercer repression, the proletariat resumed its offensive and just elected president Morsi has been...
contested in the streets with as much force and determination as Mubarak was some months ago...

“Not making things profitable for the capitalists”

The operation of maintenance of social peace in Egypt (which moved away, after only eighteen days of demonstrations and proletarian strikes, a “dictator” too cumbersome and incapable of managing the capitalist social relation in business’ best interests) didn’t bear fruit at all. One of the first measures to restore capitalist law and order taken by the military clique after the Mubarak’s fall was to ban strikes (“which destroy the country”). Nevertheless we must put forward that since two years the proletariat has been refusing all labour discipline, all sacrifice, in brief, it tried in its way to “not make things profitable for the capitalists”, to paraphrase comrades of the KAPD in the early twenties. Last October, that is to say scarcely some weeks after the presidential elections, the “World Bank” revealed its “concern” (at least) about the scale of social discontent in Egypt where more than 300 strikes were recorded for the first two weeks of September, most of them in the key sectors of the economy belonging to the army. More than 2,000 strikes were registered in September and October despite the repression and criminalization of workers militants.

Last November and December, some people kicked up a fuss about the fact that the new project of constitution imposed by the “Muslim Brotherhood”, and therefore ultimately by the state of the capitalists, which these Islamists and other militaries are only the political representatives of, contains “liberticidal” measures (as it was said by all the liberals and other worshippers of this hypocrisy that is the democratic dictatorship). But these manoeuvres were only badly hiding other measures of the same constitution that consolidates the anti-worker repression and is just the continuation of the numerous arrests and trials against workers’ militants involved in the rise of wildcat strikes. And it is against this umpteenth attempt to muzzle our class that thousands of fighting proletarians took to the streets in Cairo, Alexandria, Suez, Port Said, Ismailia, etc., that they assaulted the presidential palace, that they clashed with the cops but also with the Islamist militias, and with the thugs of “Muslim Brotherhood” military branch, that they burned down dozens of their offices all over the country. Let us also emphasize that while expressing thus all its contempt towards the Islamist “new power” (“democratically elected”, let’s remind it), our class brothers and sisters wanted also to commemorate the important and bloody struggles of November 2011 (known under the name of “battle of Mohamed Mahmud street”), boycotting the election of the constituent assembly, when more than forty of our class fellows died.

All this rebellion, all this revolt, all this deep-rooted refusal to get submitted to laws and labour standards of General Capital, all this in spite of the democratic election toys that are served up to our class, in brief all this sabotage of the national economy let the Egyptian economy in quite a catastrophic state of crisis. The local currency, Egyptian pound, must be devalued, the monetary reserves of the Central Bank, that were 36 billions $ in January 2011 (that is to say just before Mubarak’s fall), were only 13 billions $ two years later, hardly enough to pay three months of basic goods importing. The Egyptian government urgently needs 15 billions $ to balance its budget; but so far only Qatar accepted to lend 5, what is far from being sufficient. Last summer, president Morsi had negotiated a loan of 4.8 billions $ with the IMF, but the accentuation of wildcat strikes and social unrests postponed this agreement. The “subliminal” message from the IMF is that Egypt has to first of all restore law and order as well as social peace in the country, and to stop subsidies to “vital commodities” granted by the Egyptian government, which will inevitably cause a new wave of unrest… More and more the local as well as world bourgeoisie is reaching a dead end in its systemic crisis...

As January 25th, 2013 approached...

On this day that officially marks the second anniversary of the beginning of “the revolution” that had toppled Mubarak, the proletarian forces once again massively expressed themselves in the streets while clashing with the forces of conservation of this old world. These events don’t represent a “second round of the revolution”, and even less a “second revolution”, but it is the same movement of our class, the same process of questioning what exists, it is the same movement that continues, that develops and affirms itself always stronger. And there is not only continuity in time, i.e. the fact that there has been no “cessation of hostilities” between proletariat and bourgeoisie since two last years. It concerns also the content of the struggle, its reflexion through which the movement clarifies not only against what it stands here and now, but also what it fights for in the historical context. For many of those who revolted against Mubarak it is clear today, that in reality they have been revolting against any personification of the capitalist relation of exploitation. It is about continuity of deepening of the rupture sketched in January 2011 which has been gaining...
bright colours in an unavoidable process of radicalisation. Our class doesn’t content itself with some cosmetic changes (e.g. various rounds of the electoral circus, new constitution, “freedom of the press”, etc.) combined with various measures aiming to get the national economy on its feet again and therefore to increase the rate of our exploitation.

Learning from the violent confrontations last November and December, some more determined and advanced elements of our class developed the offensive and security of proletarian rallies while organizing autonomous fighting groups which fight back all the attempts of Islamist thugs to quell our movement. All the medias had a field day with the story of "anew group of Black Bloc in Egypt"... Sensationalism, what a crap... But it is since weeks and months, in fact already since before "the revolution" of 2011, that the proletarian associationism (stemming from the dynamics of the movement of struggle) develops, strengthens, and consolidates itself in Egypt as well as all over the world where our class raises its head after decades of suffering, submissiveness, silence... Many militant expressions and structures re-emerge from the depths of this social maelstrom and age-old confrontation between antagonistic forces of both social classes, propounding the forces and weaknesses of our class, its limits and its incomprehension: “libertarian socialists”, “revolutionary unionists”, “revolutionary socialists”, “anarchists”, “communist”, “Black Blocs”, “Ultras”, “Hooligans”, etc. are some of the names these minorities label themselves with or the bourgeois medias paste on their activities, their ruptures and their hesitations.

Starting on Friday January 25th, important demonstrations and riots shook all the country, showing thus the exacerbation of the global crisis (“socially”, “economically”, “politically”) and the simplification of antagonism between sectors of the proletariat in struggle and the latest political alternative (the “Muslim Brotherhood”) pushed by the system of management of capitalism.

The day after, the announcement of the death sentence for 21 football supporters of Port Said provoked unrest: police stations are assaulted and set on fire as well as offices of “Muslim Brotherhood”, some armed groups attack the central jail and try to release the convicted... In three days over forty proletarians are killed by cops, which led the government to impose the state of emergency and a curfew in Port Said as well as in the industrial cities of Ismailia and Suez. But the population overtly challenges this decision while organizing night demonstrations and football matches in the streets, which soldiers who are supposed to enforce this curfew take part to. After some days, this curfew is “eased”, if not definitely abolished because a lack of confidence in the obedience of soldiers...

In the same mood of defeatism among the “security forces”, let’s note that at the same time cops demonstrate asking the government for more repression, more armament for “defending themselves” and repressing “armed thugs”, other sectors of the police take to the streets all over the country, from February 12th, to express their refusal to be used as instruments of repression against the population.

We also want to emphasize the contempt of our class towards the “variable-geometry” attitude (what a surprise...) of the bourgeois opposition (mainly represented by the coalition of “National Salvation Front”) during these events. The NSF, always lagging behind the movement of our class, afraid of its vigour and its radicalism, trying in vain to channel it, finally signs an agreement with the “Muslim Brotherhood” condemning “all forms of violence” on the eve of the important demonstration of Friday February 1st, in order to try to take control of the movement and to pacify our anger. But our class replies sharply to these bourgeois “opponents” as well as to the government and once again (and during several days) the presidential palace is assaulted... All the subsequent calls from the FSN to the “fall of the oppressive regime and the political domination of Muslim Brotherhood”, trying thus to stick close to the state of mind of the radicalized movement, are fruitless because these professionals of politics are so much discredited among the demonstrators that there is only a last handful of useful idiots who still believe in their lies...

This being said, we don’t want here to argue on the content of February 2012 events, which are the cause of the death sentences in Port Said, when more than 70 people being at a football match between the local club and a club from Cairo were killed during clashes. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that some sectors of the military deliberately and knowingly tried to punish the “hooligans” of Cairo known for their involvement and their militant activities in the social unrests that has shaken Egypt. On the other hand, the fact that “hooligan” proletarians of Port Said could be used as mercenaries in this disgusting task, it is not yet proven, and even though it was the case, this would not be the first time in the tumultuous class struggles history that some proletarians defend (temporarily) the interests of the bourgeoisie and its state against
their own interests and those of the whole of our class... Whatever this shady affair was about, proletarians in struggle in Port Said clearly demonstrated which side of the social barricade they stand these last few weeks...

Indeed, from Sunday February 17th, important proletarian sectors of Port Said started on, outside of any union structure and any political party, a campaign of “civil disobedience”, consisting in blocking all economic activity in the strategic industrial zone of the Suez Canal while imposing general strike, forcing some ships to be rerouted, erecting roadblocks and barricades to the main approaches to the town, blocking railway lines and roads, organizing flying pickets so that workers of other factory come out on strike, closing schools and public administrations, refusing to pay governmental and local taxes, boycotting the payment of electricity bills, physically clashing with the cops, attacking and setting on fire their dens, what made several dead in both sides, etc. What seems to characterize this development of the struggle is self-organization of the angry masses, who equip themselves once again with autonomous structures (“popular committees”, etc.) taking in charge the various essential aspects of life, like the distribution (for free or not) of food, like the question of the production (what is to be produced and why?), the refusal of labour and school system, etc. Because of all these expressions of a rupture with the established societal order, some militants said (maybe a bit quickly) that this experience of struggle in Port Said is “a reality without precedent” as well as “an experiment in a new form of living, producing and existing”, and they went as far as calling it the “Egyptian Paris Commune”...

In the following days, this campaign of direct action very quickly spread like wildfire to other cities of the zone of the canal, Ismailia and Suez, as well as to those of the Nile delta: violent confrontations between bourgeois “security forces” and proletarians who are more and more determined to do battle broke out in Mansura (several dead), Tanta, El-Mahalla El-Kubra, etc. which seemed to be beyond the control of social peace partisans... and up to Alexandria and Cairo. Moreover since March 5th, dozens of police stations in most of the governorates in the country are affected by a strike of cops who refuse to be sent to the front to quell strikes and demonstrations. All this marks once again an important level of dissolution of state repres-

sion central apparatuses... This question of “security” becomes nodal for the state to such an extent that the government considers the creation of “private polices” to restore law and order or as proposed by the Islamist “ultraconservative” group Al-Gamaa Al-Islamiya the organization of "security militias" in order to “protect private property and banks”...

At last we have to mention the explosion of violence which followed the confirmation of the death sentences for the 21 of Port Said on Saturday 9th March and especially the verdict of not guilty for many police officials or their symbolic sentencing. In Port Said demonstrators tried to block the Suez Canal, while in Cairo police buildings were torched. The same happened to the headquarters of the “Egyptian Football Association”, what shows the lack of interest that important active and combative sectors of the proletariat do feel towards football and sport generally, which doesn’t fulfil its social purpose of distraction and fuel for nationalism anymore. Stadiums are deserted by proletarians who have better to do while taking to the streets, while discussing “politics” and while attacking the deterioration of their living conditions... Groups of football supporters, either the “Green Eagles” of Port Said or the “Ultras Devils” and “Ultras Ahlawy” of Cairo are involved in social movements and often constitute their “shock troops”. Even some well-known football players turn away from this aspect of the society of spectacle to get involved in the movement of our class...

We would like to finish this short text on the class struggles in Egypt with some programmatic considerations, which don’t come out from our brains but are the direct result of this movement that takes place in front of our eyes. These are also “lessons” we can draw and that other revolutionary minorities already drew from the struggles of the past. Either at the time of the proletarian movement in France in the years 1870-71, better known under the name of “Commune of Paris”; or at the time of the revolutionary process that shook the world in the years 1917-21 and especially in Russia, as well as during the councils’ republics of Bavaria and Hungary in 1919; or even in Spain in 1936-37, etc. In all these moments of high struggle of the proletariat, capital was able to encourage all the possible democratic alternations. Facing a common enemy (the proletariat) that threatens the very foundations of the expanded reproduction of the prevailing social relation, all the bourgeois factions that only yesterday (formally) “hated” each other, either unite

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1 See the text published by the Italian militant blog infoaut.org “Egypt: The self-management of Port Said and the workers’ struggles” available in English on Anarkismo website: http://www.anarkismo.net/article/25022/
The state is a social relation

Anyway, all this to say that, contrary to all the idealistic beliefs conveyed by the dominant ideology, and therefore also by a large number of proletarians in struggle and militants, contrary to how the state is grasped generally, that is to say while being reduced to an “apparatus”, an “institution”, or a simple “structure”, the state is not a “neutral” tool that the proletariat could take in hand and use as such for its own purposes or even something that could be transformed from “vertical” decision-making into “horizontal” decision-making (fetishism and misery of federalism!). A large number of revolutionaries of the past, whether they were “anarchists”, “communists”, “Marxists”, “revolutionary socialists”, etc., always grasped the state as a “tool” or quite simply as “the government”.

The state is a social relation, composed of various apparatuses (government, parliament, police, army, employers, unions, political parties, school system, etc.) combined with many ideologies that make it strong (parliamentarianism, religion, positivism, authoritarianism, etc.). In this way we can only support what Malatesta affirmed at the end of the 19th century, that the state is to be found even within our associations...

The state is a social relation that reproduces even within our struggles, and which we vehemently fight against.

The state is a social relation and as such it appears in Egypt where all the bourgeois factions are candidates for managing it: from the military that assumed the “democratic transition period” after having “sacked” the incapable Mubarak, to the Islamists and their magical potion of divine ultra-liberalism, and finally the next candidates like ElBaradei and other charlatans who are all the same... And it is sure that all the tendencies of leftist rainbow are waiting behind the scenes for their turn...

The state is a social relation and at the present level of the development of class societies (and capitalism is the ultimate outcome of this development as a synthesis of previous modes of production), the state can only be the state of the capitalists, and therefore it can only be destroyed through the force of social revolution, through the movement of subversion of this world that will terminate all shapes of exploitation to hand over to the communist society...

What change? What revolution?

We clearly distinguish ourselves from all those (“here” as well as “there”) who call for “more democracy”, we refuse this false dichotomy between “dictatorship” and “democracy”, because it is everywhere the same state, the same dictatorship of profit and money that is imposed against our human needs, it is everywhere the irreconcilable antagonism between the class of the wealthy and that of the dispossessed that rules, whether this democracy is a “parliamentary” and “multiparty” one or a “military” and “one-party” one... And this democracy produces many ideologies, which become material forces, like that of the myth of the “sovereign people”, that is to say this force which negates in action class antagonism. Under the democratic dictatorship of value, the proletariat dissolves into “the people” and ends up side by side with its historical enemy, the bourgeoisie, in the defence of the interests of nation and economy. Whether it is in Tunisia or even more in Egypt, this “sovereign people” that chooses a new master while voting is in direct opposition theoretically as well as practically with the proletariat, of which important sectors refuse this infernal comedy. It is not only bourgeoisie against proletariat, but also and especially people against proletariat... And in return, the proletariat has to organize its struggle against the people...

We entitled this text “Nothing has changed, but everything begins…”, to make obvious that we are sick and tired of all these “changes” and these “revolutions” the bourgeoisie talks about, and that they are nothing but only premises in the light of the huge upheavals we are waiting for and which all of us will be driving force of. In fact, everything begins and it is especially necessary that everything continues, that the movement of subversion of this world doesn’t stop, at least not before we reach the resolution of the social contradictions and antagonisms, not before the whole humanity is free, and free itself from its age-old and thousand-year-old chains...

But we know that at the same time, a lot of things have already changed, a lot of things are changing... Such events as in Egypt, in Tunisia, in Syria (in spite of the huge repression that tries to suppress our energy under a deluge of fire and blood, of ashes and rubbles), in Greece, in South Africa... and wherever our
class raises its head and struggles for living such
events transform us, fill us with energy, give us other
perspectives than this ruthless and pitiful survival
which we would be condemned to on the altar of
submissiveness to God Capital. Men and women who
throw themselves headfirst into the struggle already
have another conception of life, they already forge and
reach a “political” consciousness, that is to say that
they transform their relation with other men and
women who are in struggle, their relation with the
world... Fear begins to go over to the other side...

“The history of all hitherto existing society is the his-
tory of class struggles” as the good old Karl Marx
said... But if there are always class struggles, even
when the proletariat seems to be impassive, ex-
hausted, invisible, absent, we must emphasize that the
development of the struggles in the world since some
years shows us that we begin to go from a period of
class struggles of “low intensity” (as the bourgeois
and their stupid militaries coarsely say) to a period of
“medium intensity” before approaching struggles of
“high intensity”. This last quality of the struggles
will mean the global af-
firmation of real rev-
olutionary process on a
world scale and will

consider theoretically as well as practically the question
of the destruction of the capitalist social relation, of
the tyranny of value and of the world based on the
production of commodities...

Proletarian comrades in struggle in Tunisia, Syria,
Egypt,... in South Africa, China, Greece... and eve-
rywhere else in the world... capitalism doesn’t
have anything else to offer us than always more
austerity, misery, exploitation, repression, war,
death...

The struggle for living, for developing a classless,
stateless society without exploiters, without
bosses, police, armies, jails, etc. goes through the
elimination of all the bourgeois factions that man-
age our everyday life and keep us in misery: “dic-
tators” and “democrats”, the “right” and the “left”,
militaries and civilians, ultraliberals and Social
Democrats, Islamists and secularists...

Let’s develop internationalism, let’s break the na-
tional frontiers (as well as frontiers between dif-
ferent sectors) poisoning the struggles of our
class. Let’s develop revolutionary defeatism: the
best solidarity with proletarians “over there” is to
struggle “here” against the same enemy, against
our own bourgeoisie, against our own state,
against the world state of capital.

Let’s not make things profitable for the capitalists!
The economy is in crisis, may it die!
The enemy is capitalism and the dictatorship of world market!
The objective is everywhere the same: social revolution!
Destruction of capitalism and the state!

Class war
February/March 2013
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“Victory for workers”