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Beyond the Structure of Synthesis

g.c.

Instead of an anarchist organisation of synthesis we propose an informal anarchist organisation based on struggle and the analyses that emerge from it.

Anarchists of all tendencies refuse the model of hierarchical and authoritarian organisation. They refuse parties, vertical structures which impose directives from above in a more or less obvious way. In positing the liberatory revolution as the only social solution possible, anarchists consider that the means used in bringing about this transformation will condition the ends that are achieved. And authoritarian organisations are certainly not instruments that lead to liberation.

At the same time it is not enough to agree with this in words alone. It is also necessary to put it into practice. In our opinion an anarchist structure such as a structure of synthesis presents not a few dangers. When this kind of organisation develops to full strength as it did in Spain in '36 it begins to resemble a party. Synthesis becomes control. Certainly in quiet periods this is barely visible, so what we are saying now might seem like blasphemy.

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Beyond the Structure of Synthesis

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This kind of structure is based on groups or individuals who are in more or less constant contact with each other, and has its culminating moment in periodical congresses. In these congresses the basic analysis is discussed, a programme is drawn up and tasks are divided covering the whole range of social intervention. It is an organisation of synthesis because it sets itself up as a point of reference capable of synthesizing the struggles taking place within the class clash. Various groups intervene in the struggles, give their contribution, but do not lose sight of the theoretical and practical orientation that the organisation as a whole decided upon during the congress.

Now, in our opinion, an organisation structured in this way runs the risk of being behind in respect of the effective level of the struggle, as its main aim is that of carrying the struggle to within its project of synthesis, not of pushing it towards its insurrectional realisation. One of its main objectives is quantitative growth in membership. It therefore tends to draw the struggle to the lowest common denominator by proposing caution aimed at putting a brake on any flight forwards or any choice of objectives that are too exposed or risky.

Of course that does not mean that all the groups belonging to the organisation of synthesis automatically act in this way: often comrades are autonomous enough to choose the most effective proposals and objectives in a given situation of struggle. It is a mechanism intrinsic to the organisation of synthesis however that leads it to making decisions that are not adequate to the situation, as the main aim of the organisation is to grow to develop as wide a front of struggle as possible. It tends not to take a clear and net position on issues, but finds a way, a political road that displeases the fewest and is digestible to most.

The reactions we get when making criticisms such as this are often dictated by fear and prejudice. The main fear is that of the unknown which pushes us towards organisational schema and formalism among comrades. This safeguards us from the search

hinged on the risk of finding ourselves involved in unknown experiences. This is quite obvious when we see the great need some comrades have for a formal organisation that obeys the requirements of constancy, stability and work that is programmed in advance.

In reality these elements serve us in our need for certainty and not for revolutionary necessity.

On the contrary we think that the informal organisation can supply valid starting points for getting out of this uncertainty.

This different type of organisation seems to us to be capable of developing — contrary to an organisation of synthesis — more concrete and productive relationships as they are based on affinity and reciprocal knowledge. Moreover, the moment where it reaches its true potential is when it participates in concrete situations of struggle, not when drawing up theoretical or practical platforms, statutes or associative rules.

An organisation structured informally is not built on the basis of a programme fixed in a congress. The project is realized by the comrades themselves in the course of the struggle and during the development of the struggle itself. This organisation has no privileged instrument of theoretical and practical elaboration, nor does it have problems of synthesis. Its basic project is that of intervening in a struggle with an insurrectional objective.

However great the limitations of the comrades involved in the informal kind of anarchist organisation might be, and what the latter's defects might be, the method still seems valid to us and we consider a theoretical and practical exploration of it to be worthwhile.