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ian is a good plan. It is a mistaken idea based on flawed analyses. It is assumed that everyone who shares ideals and goals interprets them in the same way and will generate compatible strategies, and this is clearly not true.

It is very common in our environment to create federations or coordinators that assume they have greater political closeness than they actually do. Not having clearly defined their ideological and strategic premises, and adhering to the term anarchist in an identity-based and uncritical way, they soon discover they neither think the same, nor want the same, nor can collaborate. On the contrary, those broad spaces that work are the ones that do not take affinity for granted and build their collaboration around the explicit declaration of objectives, principles, and strategies.

Obviously, nothing stated here implies a rejection of training processes or the creation of broad spaces where we can collaborate and generate coordination. We are fervent defenders of free association, which precisely means developing the deepest possible understanding of what political spaces are and propose, to verify the degree of affinity and fully informed decision-making on whether it is suitable for each individual. Of course, we advocate for active participation in those coordination and cooperation spaces, and also in those movements that bring together different tendencies but where we can fight for concrete common goals. A clear position is the opposite of a sectarian attitude—it means our decisions depend on a rational process and not on prejudices and clichés.

Miguel Brea, militant of Liza — Plataforma Anarquista de Madrid.

Talking with some comrades from the libertarian movement and sharing the ideas and practices that guide our activism, the question has arisen more than once as to whether it is necessary to define ourselves as anarchists, even though we all are and understand ourselves as such. It is important to start from the premise that anarchism is a very broad movement that encompasses different currents, although some discourses and interested critiques attempt to portray it as a single undifferentiated monster. These currents within the anarchist spectrum stem from specific and distinct theoretical assumptions, analyses, and strategic proposals, placing anarchists from each of these "lines" in separate positions. Although there is broad agreement on principles and values, as well as on emancipatory goals, the interpretations and commitments of each current mean we cannot speak of a single anarchism.

The question of whether it is necessary or counterproductive for a collective to define itself openly as anarchist must be addressed from a strategic, not an identity-based, analysis. In other words, making a position and affiliation to a specific current public is a tactical matter that responds to specific analyses and goals within a broader strategy. Let me explain: a very large part of anarchists believe that libertarian militant activity should take place in mass spaces, as broad as possible, to support processes of self-organization and awareness-raising. So far, this aligns with social and organizational anarchism, especially from platformist or especifist organizations, which support this view. The difference arises because some of us believe that such activity is much more effective when it is carried out in an organized manner with those with whom we share a high degree of strategic and ideological agreement. We call this way of organizing dual militancy and argue that it does not involve any ideological contradiction as long as it operates in favor of building social power, awareness, self-organization, and under clear ethical codes.

As we can see, we understand that making our political orientation explicit in the environments where we are actively involved is also a libertarian and anti-authoritarian guarantee. What we achieve by not hiding that we are anarchists, that we belong to a specific current and organization, that we carry out specific and public conjunctural analyses, and that we propose a determined (also public) strategic line is to make our objectives explicit in contrast to those hidden vanguards that operate in the shadows and corridors and are capable of undermining spaces they do not control. Although we advocate the dual strategy enunciated by Bakunin, we radically distance ourselves from his proposal to do so clandestinely.

Alongside these two benefits of explicit militancy as anarchists—clarity and strength—we find other objectives we can address with an explicit practice: confronting the idea that there is only one anarchism and countering a negative image sometimes associated with anarchists (at times due to the portrayals made by other socialist currents and, in others, due to our own practices).

Why Some Libertarian Comrades Do Not Want to Define Themselves as Anarchists

It is not that they do not want to define themselves as such. In fact, if you ask them, they have no problem admitting it and feel proud of it. What they consider is that tactically it does not add value; in fact, it can even be a detriment. As we said, they try to dissociate themselves from the prejudices created around the figure of the anarchist, which have been constructed by political rivals and adversaries and, why not say it, in some cases, by some militants who identified as libertarians but whose behavior left much to be desired.

Indefinition for the Formation of an Operational Base

There are organizations around us that refuse to construct clear theoretical and strategic premises, or that, despite having considerable production, do not make an effort to spread these positions among their base. And let it be clear that this does not only happen in political organizations with a more classic positioning; there are social movements that use very similar strategies, opening broad spaces where strategic projection and leadership are clearly separated from the "user" spaces. And the most evident symptom that a base of operations is being built to serve a group of leaders is the quantitative rather than qualitative expansion of the base.

But it is not only a tactical matter that prevents us from adopting this form of growth. The problem is even greater. We would be contradicting our values if we adopted that growth tactic, because in an organization where there is not a high degree of ideological and strategic affinity—or if it is imposed from opaque leadership—there can be no real talk of organization. It is either a coordination space where political spaces and actors meet seeking minimal agreements (so minimal that they severely limit capacity for impact), or it involves a radical segmentation between the leaders and those who enter—not because they clearly know what they are joining, but because it is expected they can be trained in the worst sense of the word. A large and prolonged growth based on a lack of political determination can only respond to the construction of either an inoperative space or an operational base to be directed.

Anarchist Organization vs. Synthesis

This is a problem that anarchism does not escape. Within anarchist common sense, the idea is well rooted that bringing together all individuals or organizations that define themselves as libertar-

we defend and the goals we articulate—regardless of whether they are correct, have accepted falsehoods or distortions, have swallowed a straw man, or have made the slightest effort to verify their ideas—will simply reject us.

When we say that defining oneself creates limits to an organization's growth, we also say that some organizations avoid defining themselves or choose to maintain a high degree of indeterminacy and ambiguity because their primary objective is to grow as much as possible. We cannot adopt that growth tactic because we seek deep ideological and strategic unity. We want those who wish to participate shoulder to shoulder with us to do so because they believe in and understand what we think and project.

This problem is closely related to anarchism, though it clearly does not affect only the libertarian movement. It is perhaps the greatest limitation we find in organizations that bet on Synthesis strategies. What is this? Roughly speaking, the idea that we must build broad spaces, integrated by different political sensibilities or different understandings of anarchism, because what unites us is more than what separates us. Antifascist, libertarian, antirepressive coordinators… which are not problematic in themselves, as long as they are understood as spaces where different tendencies meet in search of common goals. The problem begins when they are understood as the only way—or the natural way—to organize. In these cases, we assume a greater political and strategic affinity than actually exists between us. Whether it is because we define ourselves in opposition to something (antifascist, antirepressive…) or because we identify with a poorly defined political subject (generic anarchists, neighbors…). In these spaces, we have seen it a thousand times: disagreements soon arise, endless debates, fights…

Obviously, we support the creation of diverse struggle spaces, as broad and inclusive as possible, but we participate in them explicitly as anarchists organized within a specific organization—not as individuals or under any other ambiguous category.

Here there is a clear tactical difference: as we believe that anarchism is an ideology that can contribute to the workers' struggle for emancipation and the overcoming of capitalism, we believe that behaving in accordance with these objectives is a way to combat that negative image that precedes us, whether constructed or deserved.

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, we do not share the assumption that the most effective and coherent tactic with anarchist principles and objectives is to dilute ourselves among the workers, the people, or social movements. This position is closely related to how we define the revolutionary subject (the people, the proletariat, the citizenry…) and what it means to be vanguardist. To elaborate briefly: those libertarians who believe the emancipatory subject is an interclassist subject tend to adopt less "traditional" or clear self-definitions, unlike those who believe the struggle depends on the creation of class consciousness. At the same time, those who believe that organizing to intervene in mass movements necessarily involves aggression against the principles of equality and freedom defended by the Idea will participate individually, as affected persons, neighbors, and workers. From our perspective, trying to endow mass movements with the most developed class consciousness possible does not imply falling into authoritarian practices, nor does intervening under political pseudonyms guarantee that your practice lacks directive intentions.

It also has to do with whether we believe revolution is possible or not, and what is the path to reach it under the best possible conditions to win. But that is another topic we will address later, although it must be said that we believe revolution is possible and is the only path to real transformation.

Anarchists for Strategic, Not Identity-Based, Reasons

Our identification as anarchists responds to our alignment with a socialist tradition that expresses a series of social and political values and objectives, and which is composed of currents with considerable strategic differences. We are anarchists because we believe that the values that should condition all social reality are those of equality in freedom and vice versa. At the same time, we project our practice toward the achievement of a system that allows these values to govern all social relations. What differentiates us within socialism is what we believe is the path that can take us from where we are to where we want to go without betraying our principles along the way. In fact, we believe that some paths inevitably take us away from the desired destination.

While there are currents within socialism that consider the construction of radically hierarchical organizations to be the most potent tool for political intervention, other tendencies warn that these organizations not only fail to respect the principles of equality and freedom, but also are incapable of producing egalitarian societies and tend to reproduce classist systems. While some comrades believe that temporary and loosely structured associations have enough capacity for social impact while ensuring coherence between principles and practices, others point out that many of the issues they attempt to solve with these less explicit forms of organization are not actually resolved; leaderships, relationships of domination, hierarchies, and authoritarianism persist—only now they are invisible and hidden.

The purpose of this article is not to resolve which organizational strategy has the most political potential and coherence. What we intend to highlight is that a political identification is the explicit adherence to one of these strategies and not an identification based on more or less striking adjectives or emotional bonds with specific historical processes. When our organizations speak of social and organizational anarchism, popular power, and especifismo or platformism, we are making a descriptive exercise of our political positions.

Note: without political descriptions, without strategic affiliations, without clear categories, a deep and honest critique cannot be built—which is a necessary condition for building alliances, coordination, and broad spaces.

Indefinition as a Growth Tactic

Definition, therefore, carries risks, like any tactical decision. Defining yourself clearly and adopting a specific strategy will mean that other political actors will locate you. This delineation of your proposals will conflict with other strategic approaches and, let us not deny it, also with those who define themselves politically from purely identity-based positions.

To be clear: defining yourself politically and strategically creates a limit, a wall. It includes those with whom you share ideas and excludes those who, more or less consciously, opt for other positions. As we have been arguing, the issue is not just that there are people with whom you do not share analysis, a roadmap, or objectives; it is that a significant portion of activists or militants adhere to political labels emotionally—that is, in an identity-based way.

Thus, when we say that our organization is anarchist within the social and organizational current and that we adopt a tactic of dual intervention and a strategy of Popular Power, all those who do not share our conjunctural analyses, who do not agree with our strategic lines, who believe our chosen political subject is incorrect or who do not share our values and objectives, simply will not join our organization.

At the same time, all those who, without knowing our strategic premises, believe that our proposal is incompatible with the values